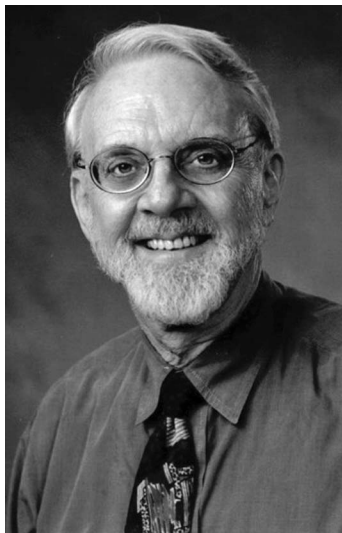


IN MEMORIAM

Franz R. Epting (1937–2023)



Franz R. Epting, emeritus professor of psychology at the University of Florida, passed away in Gainesville, Florida, on June 19, 2023, at the age of 86. Franz had a long and accomplished career as an internationally recognized humanistic psychologist. His work focused on George Kelly's personal construct psychology (PCP).

Franz was born in Meridian, Mississippi, on May 22, 1937, to John Forest Epting and Love Stewart Epting. Raised in Forest, Mississippi, Franz attended Millsaps College in Jackson from 1955 to 1959. He then entered the graduate program at The Ohio State University (OSU), earning his MA in 1961 and his PhD with a concentration in personality in 1967. At OSU, Franz was greatly influenced by George Kelly, who was on the clinical psychology faculty. Kelly would have been Franz's dissertation advisor but left OSU for Brandeis University shortly before Franz graduated. Dr. Saul Siegel took over as Franz's advisor.

Franz joined the psychology faculty at the University of Florida in 1967. He remained there for his entire career. He served as a core faculty member in the counseling psychology program and—for a time—as its director. After 36 years of affectionately mentoring doctoral students and

publishing on PCP, Franz retired from the University of Florida in 2003.

PCP was the unifying link across Franz's scholarship. Franz was a pioneer in PCP research on "death threat," greatly influencing later constructivist investigations of grief and loss. After his wife Lynda died in 1993, Franz's life and work took some new turns. He came out as gay and began applying personal construct theory to LGBTQ issues. With his husband, Mark, he also explored links between PCP and philosophical pragmatism, especially the influence of John Dewey. During his retirement, Franz doggedly undertook writing the first ever book-length biography of George Kelly, eventually contracting with Cambridge University Press. Unfortunately, Franz was unable to complete the project before he died. I have agreed to finish the book on Franz's behalf.

Franz was a fellow of the American Psychological Association, past president of the Society for Humanistic Psychology (SHP, Division 32 of American Psychological Association), and recipient of lifetime achievement awards from SHP and the Constructivist Psychology Network. More importantly, Franz was a kind, gentle, and caring man loved by his colleagues, peers, and students. He is survived by his loving husband, Mark Paris.

Always encouraging others to ask challenging questions to see where doing so led, Franz ended his SHP presidential address with a quote from Kelly. It beautifully captures Franz's approach to psychology and to life:

If I had to end my life on some final note I think I would like it to be a question, preferably a basic one, well posed, and challenging, and beckoning me to where only others after me may go, rather than a terminal conclusion—no matter how well documented. There is something exciting about a question, even one you have no reasonable expectation of answering. But a final conclusion, why that is like the stroke of doom; after it—nothing, just nothing at all!

—Kelly, "The Autobiography of a Theory,"
Clinical Psychology and Personality

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