Mirra Komarovsky, from page 1

the director of the women's studies department. She needed the coveted Gregory Award for teaching excellence, the Barnard Distinguished Alumna Award and the Medal of Distinction. She really was a Barnard woman.

In books like Blue-Collar Marrige, Dissidence of Masculinity, Women in College, Shaping New Feminine Identities, Mirra explored the dynamics of family and gender. The concerns of her thinking are evident in her 1946 article in the American Journal of Sociology, "Cultural Contradictions and Sex Roles." She showed that women's ambitions was a response to institutional contradictions that stifled women's sense of self: that progressive attitudes without institutional rearrangement would not guarantee sexual equality. That women's playing dumb was a way to cope with the paradox—higher education committed them to the service of men; that male respondents explained in research described reality as accurately as the empirical scientist, she set about researching the possibilities of her spirit and her substance. It is no cliche to say that Mirra was ahead of her time; I close with a few selections from fifty years ago that echo her spirit and her substance.

"Women in the Modern World did not re-ignite the women's movement the way a decade later, Friedan's The Feminine Mystique deservedly did. The title was not ripe but much more importantly, my book was written in tones of sweet reasonableness; it was friendly to men. It did not, as a revolutionary tract must, summon the reader's rage. In fact, its..."