

WELLESLEY COLLEGE
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

H. Kim Bottomly

To: The Wellesley College Community
From: H. Kim Bottomly
Subject: In Memoriam: Blythe McVicker Clinchy
Date: May 5, 2014

I am saddened to inform you that Blythe McVicker Clinchy, professor emerita of psychology and former department chair, passed away on April 22. She taught at the College from 1965 until her retirement in 2000. She was 83 years old.

Professor Clinchy was a much-beloved teacher and mentor, whose courses were sought out by many. She was inspirational and iconoclastic, empowering students and challenging them to think creatively.

Professor Clinchy's teaching and research focused on developmental psychology, and part of her interest included studying the different learning styles of women and men. In her influential book *Women's Ways of Knowing*, which she co-authored in 1986 with Mary F. Belenky, Nancy R. Goldberger, and Jill M. Tarule, she sought to answer the question, "Why do so many women doubt their intellectual competence?" That book received a 1987 Distinguished Publication Award from the Association of Women in Psychology and *The Boston Globe* called it "the sleeper of the decade." She was also co-editor, with the same colleagues, of *Knowledge, Difference and Power*, published in 1996, and, with Julie Norem, the Margaret Hamm Professor of Psychology, she co-edited *The Gender and Psychology Reader* in 1998.

Throughout her long career at Wellesley, Professor Clinchy chaired the Psychology Department, was a Research Fellow at the Wellesley Centers for Women, served as the inaugural Class of 1949 Professor of Ethics, as Psychological Director of the Child Study Center, and as a Faculty Fellow at the Pforzheimer Learning and Teaching Center.

A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Professor Clinchy received a BA from Smith College, an MA from the New School for Social Research, and a PhD in Human Development from Harvard University.

