Betty Friedan’s analysis of women’s limited roles in American society, entitled *The Feminine Mystique*, was published in 1962. This controversial book galvanized the modern-day feminist movement and led to Friedan’s co-founding the National Organization for Women. Her focus on family values and the role of partnership in marriage continued into the late 1990s as she encouraged the creation of a “new paradigm . . . one based on today’s economic and demographic realities.”

Artist Alice Matzkin arrived at Friedan’s home in Washington, D.C., hoping to have one question answered: “What makes life worthwhile?” Seventy-two photographs and fifteen minutes later, Friedan had entered a reflective state that inspired Matzkin’s rendering of the feminist matriarch.

Alice Matzkin (born 1939)
Acrylic on canvas, 1995
NPG.96.45