THE ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION, F.I.T.

THE FASHION INDUSTRY LEADERS

SHIRLEY GOODMAN

Executive Vice President Emeritus
Executive Director of the
Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries

Date of Interview
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Interviewed by
Mildred Finger
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Q: ...the Oral History Collections of the Fashion Institute of Technology, this is an interview with Shirley Goodman, Executive Vice President Emeritus, Executive Director of the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries. The date is February 7, 1984; the interviewer is Mildred Finger.

Shirley, why don't we start talking about all the things that led, ultimately, to your joining what was then not even a college. So, could you start with where you were born and when and what you did?

A: Well, I was born in Virginia and I grew up in North Carolina. When I was four years old my parents moved to a very small town with about 2,000 population. My father at that time was a merchant who had a general store and later became quite prominent in the community, becoming not only a merchant, a justice of the peace, but he owned nine tobacco farms. My mother was very knowledgeable and very talented. She worked in the store as well as managed a household; was President of the Garden Club and the Book Club, and so forth and so on.

I'm Jewish, and there were very few Jewish people in the general community, in fact, practically none in the town where I lived. The closest community to us was 30 miles away, and in those years—because this goes back quite a long time; I'm not very young....

Q: Would you tell us the date?

A: Yes, I was born in 1915. So, from the time that I was about I would say six or seven, when we had our first Model T Ford, my mother would make the trek every week with me and my little sister to Durham, North Carolina so we would know something about our cultural background, and go to Sunday School, and meet other friends of hers and my father. And
that continued for a number of years. My mother died when I was 14, and
there were other incidents in the family which were unfortunate. The
Depression came, and in 1930 my father lost almost everything that he had. I
had one sister younger than I, by five years, and we were 250 miles away
from the closest member of the family, which created something of a problem.

I finished high school when I was 16, and I had studied music and
had been in state competitions and had been successful and hoped to go on
and study music at university in North Carolina. But it was necessary for
me instead to move to Washington, D.C. with my little sister to live with
the only sister my mother had left. So she made a home for us, and in
Washington I went to business school. I continued, however, studying music.

When I finished business school, of course I had to earn a living
and I had to support myself and my sister. My father at that time was unable
to. I was very fortunate. I was in Washington at the right time, in the
right place, and I was able to get a first job which was truly beyond my
capabilities but I managed to hold it and to learn, and that was in the
Public Works Administration with the man who was the first General Counsel.
He had been a very important corporate lawyer, in St. Louis, Missouri and
had come to Washington to help set up the legal division of the Public Works
Administration under President Roosevelt. The office was in the Office of
Interior. In fact, my office was next to Secretary Ickes at the time, and
while I was extremely young (I was 18) I was taught a great deal, and I
managed to stay with that job as long as Lloyd Landau, who was holding it,
wanted to keep it. He had decided to go back into private practice and I
moved on to the Federal Housing Administration in the office of the Deputy
Administrator and stayed there, learning much more. It was a whole new field
of housing, and I learned about banking and about insurance and I continued to learn about legal matters. I stayed there, working with a man who came from New York, who was a protege of George McAneny, then President of the Title Guaranty Trust Company and also President of the Regional Plan of New York. That was in the beginning of 1936, and Mr. McAneny came to Washington and asked Leslie Baker, the man with whom I had been working, to come to New York and be Executive Secretary of the First New York World's Fair. And Mr. Baker asked me to join him and be a member of his staff. I had nothing to keep me in Washington at that time. I thought it would be fine to move on to New York, although I didn't know the city. I had visited here but I didn't know it. So I came to New York in January, 1936, and it was funny. I remember my first experience. I had to report to work at the office, which was downtown, at 120 Broadway, and I found myself uptown in the Bronx. I obviously got on the wrong subway, going in the wrong direction, and that was my introduction to my first work day in New York.

In the spring of that year, Mr. McAneny became Chairman of the Board of the foundation, and Grover Whelan, who was well known to most people, became President, and I thought, "Well, there's no place for me. I guess I'll have to go back to Washington." But fortunately Mr. Whelan asked me if I would stay, and he said that he needed in his office two executive secretaries, one who handled foreign relations, because part of the World's Fair would deal with foreign countries, and the other part would be responsible for the construction of the Fair. That person would coordinate the activities of the office of Chief Engineer and the office of the President. He took a friend of mine who was working there, Frances Kross and me, to dinner, and he flipped a coin. Frances Kross got foreign
and I got domestic. And I must say, I'm grateful, because in those years that I worked, in the pre-fair period, I met and worked with some of the most important people in the City of New York, from Mayor LaGuardia to Robert Moses to the engineers who built the fair to Mr. Whelan, who taught me a tremendous amount about public relations and handling special events. It was a great education. I worked many, many hours. I didn't have much of a social life, but I was not unhappy.

In '38 Jack Maddigan, who was the President of the firm Maddigan-Highland, and had been basically responsible for much of the development of the financing for the public projects that Robert Moses had been interested in—the large roads and bridges and huge construction projects that benefited the city and state so much—asked me if I would go with Mr. Moses to the Constitutional Convention of the State of New York. Mr. Moses had been elected a delegate and it was to be a summer job, and he assured me that it would be great fun and that I would have an opportunity to meet many, many important people in Albany who would be coming from all over the State. I accepted. I went with the man who was his legal representative, his name was Highland, and together we spent that summer working with Mr. Moses in Albany at the Constitutional Convention where, indeed, I did meet almost everyone of importance in the State, politically, from the Governor and his Counsel down to judges and other important people who had been appointed delegates, one of whom was a man by the name of Edward Weinfeld.

Q: The judge?

A: He was then a lawyer. Today he is a Federal Court judge. But he was a very close friend of Governor Lehman's. In fact, he was almost like Governor Lehman's protege. They were extremely close friends.
Q: Shirley, I want to interrupt you for just a moment. I think it's very interesting... Everything that you're saying indicates that you discovered what networking is before that word was ever coined?

A: That's right.

Q: Through everybody you met, you met someone else?

A: That's right. And I think that that's extremely important. Now, some people call that being opportunistic. I don't see anything wrong wrong with being opportunistic. I don't think you need to be pushy about it, but I think it's very helpful, if you're going to have a career, to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself. And as I've said many times, timing is terribly important.

When the Constitutional Convention was over, I continued to work with Mr. Moses, because he was interested in legislation that had to do with grade crossing elimination.

During that time I had an accident. I broke my back and I was put out of commission in New York for a considerable period of time. I was in New York Hospital for three months, didn't know whether I'd walk again. Fortunately, for me, I was able to. But I went back to Washington to recuperate. My father then had a home in Washington, and I was able to live there. For a year I was in a steel brace, and I wasn't supposed to work. But I couldn't be idle, and I had the opportunity to have the great experience of working on the Paul McNutt for President campaign. And there again, because I worked for two men who were pretty wonderful, a later opportunity came to me from the White House, which I'll get to, I suppose.

But at any rate, at the end of that year, I came back to New York because Edward Weinfeld had been made State Commissioner of Housing, the
first State Commissioner. And he called and asked if I was ready to come back and if I would come and help staff the state offices and work with him. I had fallen in love with a young doctor in New York, and I was anxious to come back, and so of course I did, and we worked together very happily until the War. I had meanwhile been married and had a child—a son—and in 1942 my husband having gone overseas, I was asked by the White House, through the person with whom I had worked on the McNutt campaign, to come down to Washington to become the Executive Secretary of the Rubber Survey Committee which was being chaired by Bernard Baruch, Mr. Conant and Mr. Compton, the presidents of Harvard and MIT. And I accepted that offer and went down to Washington again, having a really wonderful experience.

But, at that time, the young lawyers whom I had met, when I first went to work in Washington, had become extremely important. Like Ben Cohen, Tommy Corcoran—they were all my friends. And I, fortunately for me, have been able to keep friends through the years. So that experience was a very good experience.

I had to come back to New York because I had no way to take care of my child, and I was supposed to stop work in, I think, 1943; my husband didn't come back from overseas until the end of '45 (I didn't see him for over three years). I did what I could to manage. I ghost wrote a book, and I did a lot of typing to earn some money. But basically those years were ones of taking care of my child and my home. I hadn't expected to return to work.

After the war I had a second son, and one day I got off the bus at 57th Street and Fifth Avenue, and someone yelled, "Hey, Shirley," and it was Grover Whelan, and he said, "Come on, take a walk with me up the
street to the Metropolitan Club because I want to show you something," and I did, and he said, "You know, I've just rented all this space. We're going to have a golden anniversary for the City of New York in 1948 (this was in '47). How about working for me for two or three weeks and hiring the people to staff this place and putting it together?" And I said, "You know, my husband doesn't want me to work, Grover." And he said, "Oh, just for two weeks." So I went home and discussed it, and of course I went to work for Grover for the two weeks and I've been working ever since.

Now, during the Golden Anniversary, there were three things that were done. The first was to pay tribute to the major industry of the City and State of New York, which was the fashion industry. That meant a history of the industry, which was done by Professor Allen Nevins from Columbia and a fashion show which was produced by Eleanor Lambert and Tom Lee that was then presented in Grand Central Palace (no longer in existence) twice a day for 30 days. That event, Grover said, "Shirley, you coordinate." Well, we had to have an industry committee, and many people were invited to meet with Mr. Whelan, some of whom represented the union and some represented retailing and some represented manufacturing. And out of that group, one man, Sam Deitsch, who was then the President of the coat and suit firm, Deitsch and Coppola, objected to every suggestion that was made. And when the meeting was over, Grover said to me, "What shall we do?" and I said, "Make Mr. Deitsch the Chairman of the industry committee," which he did. And from that moment on, Sam Deitsch and I were very close friends.
Now, Sammy had been one of the founders of the Fashion Institute of Technology when it was a post-high school technical institute. The industry founded the school because they needed talented young people who would have careers in design and in management, and they weren't getting them from other institutions, even from colleges like M.I.T. So they founded their own school of higher learning with the Board of Education to provide them with the personnel they needed. And it was an experiment that was to last five years, and paid for by the industry, from grants from different segments of the industry.

In 1948 the State University of New York came into being. The school was then in its fourth year. The industry knew they had an experiment that was working and they wanted their school to become a college under the State University program. So when the Golden Anniversary was over, Mr. Deitsch and others who had been founders of this school, persuaded me to come down to F.I.T. to help write legislation that would have to be passed in Albany in order for this institute to become a community college under the State University of New York, and I agreed to come for six months. I've been here for 35 years.

Q: Before you go on, I just wanted to make a point. It seems to me, from what you've talked about so far, that by that time you had worked for city, state and federal agencies, and had a sense of the structure of all three things.

A: I had a sense of the structure of all three, and I knew most of the people who were important in the various agencies, and they were basically my friends. I never had a problem meeting or having people work with me in any of those areas. When I came to F.I.T. and I worked with the counsel for the college, (the institute at that time) Fred Kuper,
we got along very well. I also found that the foundation which held the original charter for the founding of the institution was very limited in its scope. The original institute had programs only for manufacturing of clothes, the design of clothes, and the design of textiles. It didn't cover any other area of fashion. And I knew that if we were to become a college, we would have to broaden the base of the institution and we would have to get far more people involved in the industry to support the program. And also, I felt very strongly, as did the founders, about establishing F.I.T. as a community college. It was extremely important to keep the integrity of the industry and to keep the support of the industry as a partner in the operation. So the legislation was written that way. It was quite unusual, but it was written that when F.I.T. became a community college under the State University of New York, it would be supported in part by the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries.

As a community college, the college had its own Board of Trustees, four of whom were appointed by the Governor and five by the local sponsor, which is the Board of Education. But the Educational Foundation had its own Board of Directors, and together there was a liaison between the two, and the two together operated the college. The operating costs of the college came basically from the State, the City and tuition, but scholarship assistance, monies for special events, for publications—for all those things for which public money could not be used—came through the foundation. That has not changed. That has grown extensively. It's now a vital part of F.I.T. I feel, now as I did then, that... because of the support of industry, because of the interest of the calibre of the people who make up the directorship of the Foundation, F.I.T. has had its flexibility, has had its ability to grow, has had a lot of its success and
acceptance.... I think had it been a traditional college, just as an educational institution without this close involvement with the community it serves, it would have been quite a different kind of institution.

Q: Was it then called The Educational Foundation?

A: Originally it was called the Educational Foundation for the Apparel Industries, and several years later we changed it to Fashion Industries when we broadened the programs of the college. Many times we tried to change the name of the college, but it had become so well known as F.I.T.--employers were advertising "for so many years of experience or an F.I.T. graduate"--that no other name suggested ever took its place, and we remained the Fashion Institute of Technology.

Q: Were you yourself ever on the F.I.T. payroll, or were you...

A: I was always on the F.I.T. payroll.

Q: Oh. You were never on the Educational Foundation?

A: No. Never until recently. Always on the F.I.T. payroll. When I first came I was an administrative.... It's very funny. Because we have our 40th birthday coming up, this year, in 1984, I was down in the dead files looking for some information and I found a great deal that interested me and I even found what my first titles were. For instance, I have the dedication of the first and installation of the first president of the college, Mortimer Ritter, and I find that on that I was Secretary of the Board of Trustees and Assistant to the President. And then as I looked at the next year, I became Administrative Assistant to the President, but always stayed Press Secretary of the Board of Trustees. And as the Foundation came to be more important, I became the Executive Director of the Educational Foundation. But until 1978, I was always on the payroll of
the college. I had been Executive Vice President and then acting President. Still, at the same time, I managed the Educational Foundation, the Student-Faculty corporation and the dormitories. I was on the Board of both the housing projects that we had. I didn't find that difficult because they were all inter-related.

Now it is true that at one period the Foundation did give an additional amount of money to certain administrators of the college, subsidized certain expenses, and I was one of those so privileged, but it was never a large amount of money. Today, however, since I have retired as Executive Vice President and I am not on the payroll of the college, I do receive a salary from the Educational Foundation.

Q: I'm sorry. I just wanted to get a little bit...to have something to put on tape about that subject. Let's go back to your chronology, which is quite good. You had just joined F.I.T...

A: Well, when I joined F.I.T. I really didn't know anything about fashion, and I had to learn a great deal about the industry. Oh, I knew surface information because of the year that I had worked with the industry. I had learned who people were and what they were responsible for and whom to go to for certain kinds of advice. But when I became involved with the college I needed to know much more. I needed to know how products were produced, both in the textile industry and the apparel industry. I had to know the differences in quality and certain mass production items. I had to understand the relationship between the retailer and the manufacturer, and I had to understand the communications of the industry. And I was very lucky in that the founders of the college were wonderful people. Sammy Deitsch; Max Meyer, who had been a coat and suit
manufacturer and then became a banker; Morris Haft, who was one of the largest coat and suit manufacturers in the country; other people in retailing, people in the union were all my teachers. They took me by the hand. I think at one point I could have laid out a factory and understood how clothes should function in production. I went with Mr. Deitsch to Europe. I learned to judge collections, to be able to interpret what was being shown. I went with Mr. Meyer to many places. He always said to me, "If you don't go out, Shirley, you can't bring anything back. Don't ever let anybody keep you at your desk." Well, it was very good advice in those days. Today it's a little difficult. But they were wonderful. There was nothing that they would not help me with. There was one man in the industry who was the Director of Public Relations for the Coat & Suit Industry; his name was Bertram Reinitz. Bert Reinitz gave me very sound advice. He used to say to me, "Don't let anybody push you. Don't let anybody make you do anything until you're ready, until you think you're ready to do it." And he, of course, was talking about publicity. Because many people wanted a lot of publicity at that time about the school and we really weren't ready. We didn't have a sound product. He said, "Build your product before you talk about it." And I had to struggle against many people for many years in order to hold back until we really were ready. But when we were ready we went forward.

Now, shortly after I came to F.I.T., unfortunately the first President, Mortimer Ritter (who, incidentally, was the principal of the high school that these same people had founded in the early '30s, the Central High School of Needle Trades) had a heart attack and he never really got well again. He wasn't able to really devote much time to the institution, and he died not long after I came. Actually, at that point, we didn't
have a president. We had to search for a president. Max Meyer, who was Chairman of the Board of Trustees, became acting president and we had a search committee, of which I was one member, and we found through Lawrence Jarvie, who was the Executive Dean of the State University of New York, a man who was the President of the New Haven College on the campus of Yale University. His name was Lawrence L. Bethel. We were using his textbooks on management in our management production program. We persuaded him to take a year's leave of absence and to come to F.I.T.

He was a fine educator. He was extremely well known in the United States for his belief in the two year college program, because that's what we were when we were founded. We were a two year community college with an Associate Degree in Applied Science. He was highly respected in the field of junior colleges and he did come with us with the understanding that if we could not provide him with a campus and a future for the institution, he would return to the Yale faculty. He was ready to go back when we were finally able to persuade the City and the State that we needed our own facility because we were then housed in two rented floors in the high school building on 24th Street. And I want to take credit for having persuaded Mayor Robert Wagner that we needed the facility, that we needed the land. I brought him to the site that we had chosen and he did go along with all of it and we were able to show Lawrence Bethel that we would have our own campus and could build an institution.

Q: What year was that?

A: We started to do that I believe the year was 1954... We got approval to construct our first building in 1954, because he would have gone back at the end of that year. We then had to, of course, choose the
architect. We were given a choice of several firms by the Board of Education and we chose Young & Moscowitz, and I began to work with them, from the very beginning on the plans and the construction of the first building, which is the building where my office is and has been since that building was completed in 1959.

Q: And that was the first of the buildings?
A: That was the first building, and that building was built....

We thought at the time.... We had a great study done for 1,200 students. When we began plans for the building we had 400 students, and we didn't perceive that we would need a facility larger than one to accommodate 1,200 students. We moved the students into this building for the first time in September of 1959, when I had just come back from Russia. I had been the Director/Liaison Officer for the American National Exhibition in Moscow representing the fashion industry. The students came in here for the first time and...

Q: Who picked you for that, by the way?
A: Leonard Hankin and an industry committee. Within two years we had outgrown this facility. We were filled. And so we had to begin to plan....

Q: What were the dormitory facilities?
A: We didn't have a dormitory then, no. We had to begin to plan for the future. Larry Bethel built our educational programs. He got us accredited as a college; we received full accreditation. The first dormitory came on stream in 1962, that was Nagler Hall. And Larry really helped to establish a firm educational base for F.I.T. But, unfortunately, he died in 1965, just after we had been to Israel and done a survey and helped Israel establish the program which eventually became the Shenkar College in Tel Aviv. He died of cancer in 1965, and again we were without a president.
Samuel Deitsch became the acting president, and we started a search for a president. We went to many people, we interviewed many people, and finally we went back to the man who had helped us in the very beginning, Lawrence Jarvie. He was no longer Executive Dean of the State University. He was then Superintendent of Schools in Flint, Michigan, but he had also the junior colleges under his supervision. We persuaded him to come back to New York and to be our president. It was a very wise decision because he was extremely knowledgeable in terms of the State University and the City of New York and at that point in our growth we needed a president who could work very closely with both government agencies.

He came back and we had thought he would stay for quite a long while, but at the end of five years he felt that he needed to leave. And we had grown considerably. We had all our new buildings on stream. A ten year study committee that had been chaired by Mr. Fairchild - Louis Fairchild of Fairchild Publications, had proved that we needed to grow and that we needed to expand our base programs and so we had planned the additional facilities which now encompass the campus to accommodate a maximum of 10,000 students. Again, we worked with DeYoung & Moscowitz and I was asked to coordinate the entire construction program, which I did. And these buildings, the new buildings, began to come on stream. I believe the first one was in 1972. It was completed in '72. We had many delays along the way.

Meanwhile, when Larry Jarvie left, I became acting president. It was not my choice. I did not want to be president of F.I.T. I felt that my strengths were those of working closely with the industry and the various industrial programs rather than in administrating an institution which had great problems in dealing with unions and finance and other things, which I
didn't particularly enjoy. But I was acting president for a year until we found Marvin Feldman. And we found him through the Chancellor of the State University of New York who was then Ernest Boyer and Marvin came in as president and has been here ever since. And during his term of office we have continued to grow. We have continued to add to our programs so that we cover almost every aspect of the total fashion industries. There are now some 12,000 students at F.I.T. We've outgrown this facility. We certainly have outgrown our dormitories. We house about a thousand students.

And incidentally, that's a very significant factor. Because one of the things that we insisted upon in the very beginning was that there be no geographic boundaries to F.I.T.; that the fashion community was a world wide community and that it was our responsibility to find talent and bring it to F.I.T. and keep it, if possible, in New York to keep our industry strong. That has always been our goal and it hasn't changed. It's true that some students who come from other parts of the world go back to the countries from which they came, but for the most part, through the years, we have kept the largest percentage of our graduates in the metropolitan New York area. And the largest number of our students have come from New York State, and, of course, within commuting distance of New York City.

Q: Could you expand a little bit about the work that you did with Grover Whelan on the events for the Golden Anniversary of New York?

A: Yes. Following the first event, which had to do with the fashion industries, the second was to be a cultural event and we brought over the Paris Opera/Ballet from Paris. That was the first time they'd ever been here and it was a very exciting experience. And the third event was the opening of what was then Idlewild, the airport--now Kennedy International Airport. And I'll never forget that. Because we were to have
a luncheon for the President of the United States preceding the opening of the airport, and Mr. Whelan had asked me to seat the dais. We had a five tier dais and I was locked up with Secret Service for two days because they had to know where absolutely every single person was going to be. And that was quite an experience in the Waldorf, because we seated the balconies and the entire grand ballroom and the adjacent areas, and then the President didn't arrive. Instead, at that time Governor Dewey was in Albany and Truman was President, and the two of them didn't want to arrive at any place at the same time. It was really very funny. So they both came from opposite directions in helicopters landing at the airport, and I was left with a bus cortege to take out to the airport and for the first time, on the first seat of the first bus, I rode with Cardinal Spellman, who had never been on public transportation before. He had never been on a city bus. So that was a very exciting event. Those were the three major things that happened during that year.

Q: But I don't think you talked much about the kind of salute that was done, and I think it's interesting,... in the events of recent years involving the fashion industry, it hasn't really been united.

A: Well, the fashion industry salute was a very important one and it was a united effort. The history which was then published by American Fabrics Magazine was a very beautiful publication and it did tell the story of the fashion industry, how it originated with immigrants coming to this country, building large organizations and firms, and not having the need to have the second generation follow in their footsteps, but having the second generation become professional people--lawyers, doctors, dentists, etc.; and, the recognition of the fact that they had to build their own generation of people to continue the success that they had built in establishing the
fashion industries. So the industry came together to support that project. It was done...the publication was done through paid advertising, and contributions.

The fashion show itself was a wonderful fashion show. It was the first time.... And I must say that Eleanor and Tom did a superb job.

Q: Eleanor Lambert?
A: Eleanor Lambert. Eleanor brought to the public the fact that you could buy beautiful fashions, well produced, at any price you could afford to pay. I remember seeing.... I can't remember, I think they were 30 Suzy Perette dresses, the same style on the runway at the same time, in different sizes, to show that for a very modest price, you could get a well produced fashion garment from our industry. So that fashion show, which took place twice a day in Grand Central Palace to very large audiences, was made up of a cross section of what our industry produced. And the industry did cooperate. They made their things available and it was a wonderful show. It was staged by Tom Lee, who was a Display and Interior Designer at the time, and I think it was extremely successful. It went on for 30 days, twice a day, and to very large audiences. I think the industry appreciated it, I think they understood what the City was saying. Mr. Whelan was a master of public relations and promotion. There has never been anyone like him in the City of New York since. No one who understood the City the way he did and who was able to tell its story so that it could be accepted, and liked and appreciated. He had a knack for getting people to do things together. It's true, he never hesitated about cost. Sometimes he was very extravagant, but he always felt that the result was worthwhile. He had a love affair with New York City and he wanted everybody in the world to know it.
Q: Well, he obviously had a great public relations gift.
A: He had a tremendous public relations gift. At the time he was Chairman of Coty. Prior to that he had been Police Commissioner; he had been the President of Wanamaker's; and he had a good knowledge of the fashion industry. He had also been President of Schenley Industries, so he had a broad business experience. But through that entire business life of his he had always been involved in being "Mr. New York," as it were. He was the official "greeter" for the City of New York. And he did that with great love. He thoroughly enjoyed it.
Q: And had great flair.
A: And had great flair.
Q: Let's .... Could we talk about what you did in the USSR in '59 and '67?
A: Yes. In 1959 the industry, again as a coordinated effort, showed.....
Q: This is the apparel industry?
A: The apparel industry, the fashion industries only. It was our part of the Exhibition at Sokolniki Park. We decided to produce a show that would show how America lived through the clothes that we wore. We had 84 members of the group, from age 4 to age 70. All ethnic people. All ethnic races were involved, who made up America. It was a show that was produced by Bert Shevelov and directed by Joe Layton. It was their beginning. It was rehearsed right here, at F.I.T., in an empty building, before anybody came. And we took the group to Russia. We were to give the show twice a day...
Q: Eighty-four people?
A: Eighty-four people. We had a charter flight going over. We had a tremendous wardrobe of clothes. Everything from the most inexpensive
to the most expensive, worn in what was a very lively presentation. It was actually a Broadway show. It was danced and sung and clothed and had Russian interpretation, and it was done twice a day at Sokolniki Park to I cannot tell you how many people. Thousands and thousands of people stood for hours waiting to see that show. In fact, Kruschev came and I was the one who was selected to give him a fountain pen, from the runway, which was very funny. And it was just after the conversation with ex-President Nixon—the Kitchen Conversation—where I was also.

But the show was very successful in Russia. The group, which had high school kids and little kids and professional models and a nurse and some man who is now a television commentator—Gilbert Noble—all members of my cast. As a matter of fact, I got Gil and his wife married in Russia, which was quite a thing to do because they didn't want it to happen in Russia. The Nobles wanted it, but the Russians didn't want it. Ambassador Thompson, our Ambassador, had allowed me to use his home, his residence. He and Mrs. Thompson were very helpful. They were away part of the time, and through a great deal of complicated red tape we managed to get a civil ceremony for the Nobles, Jean and Gil, and they've been happily married ever since. But that was a great experience, because Russia was not easy in 1959. It was the first time that the country had been open. We had to keep my group together, so we had to be housed in the same place. Transportation was difficult. Food was scarce and not very good then.

And... But we had a successful, as far as we could tell, presentation...

Q: How many days did you say?
A: We were there eight weeks.
Q: Eight weeks!!
A: Yes. It was a very long time. I lost 22 pounds in those eight weeks. It was a harrowing experience. It was very difficult functioning in Russia. But we got back all right. We didn't have the charter to bring us back and we didn't know how we were going to get back. But I managed to sell all the clothes in the show and raise the money and KLM brought us back. It was not an easy time.

I went back in 1967 for a trade show. Again, Eleanor was involved in that particular show but...

Q: Eleanor Lambert?

A: Eleanor Lambert. And I was asked to go, because I had been there before and had learned my way around, to help in any way that I could the person who was responsible for that trade show, and I did go back. Russia had changed a little bit. There was a little more food, a little better... We stayed in a better hotel. All the people whom I had known in 1959 had disappeared. I could not find one person; not one person with whom we had worked.

Q: You mean you had their names and addresses?

A: Names and addresses, and they were obviously important people or they wouldn't have been assigned to us in the first instance. But no one was available. So the 1967 experience was a short experience. I did not stay very long, and I was not unhappy to go back home. I have no desire to return. In the first experience, we had not only the fashion show, we had a hair dressing establishment, so I was responsible also for those people, for the operators, some of whom spoke Russian quite well. And we didn't have too many restrictions at that time. We were able to travel, and we had rubles. We had to go through their travel service, but we were allowed to go to Kiev and to Leningrad and other parts of Russia, and some people even went further. I never had time to...
Q: Because all this had taken place in Moscow I take it.
A: Yes. The Sokolniki Park was in Moscow, but there were weekends where some of us could be free and could take off for two or three days. We tried to rotate. It was very hard, working seven days a week, under the circumstances in which we worked. So I tried to have a rotating schedule so everybody could have some free time. But it was not.... It was an interesting experience but a very difficult experience. I'm not sorry that I had it, but I would not want to repeat it.

Q: I think we have not finished the chronology of your life during this period. So, could we go back a little bit?
A: Well, I was married.....

Q: Incidentally, I'm terribly interested.... I think we are terribly.... We all would be interested in having you discuss, from your own experience at a very early date, how a career woman combined that with being a working mother. Being a mother.

A: It's not easy. I was married to a doctor for 28 years. I went back to work when my younger son was 11 months old and my older son was five years older, almost six. He was in the first grade, I believe at that time, or else in kindergarten. I don't remember.

I was very fortunate in that I had an excellent, responsible woman living in my home whom I trusted, who was knowledgeable, and with whom I felt my children were secure. I... At the end of the Golden Anniversary I weighed very carefully whether I wanted to continue working. To be perfectly frank, I was offered several excellent opportunities in industry at large amounts of money, but I decided that if I was going to work while my children were growing up, I wanted to be able to have time with them. So when I decided to stay with the Fashion Instituute of Technology, it provided
me an opportunity to have my weekends with my children, to have vacations that I could spend with my children as they were growing up, and to have hours that would let me at least have dinner with them most of the time. So that kept me from feeling guilty in terms of having to work and having children unsupervised. My children were well supervised, and I would plan activities around them on weekends and on holidays. Because my husband was a doctor we couldn't always get away, and we developed the fun of fishing because in fishing you can go off with your children on the spur of the moment and do things together that we could all enjoy.

There were many problems in working, particularly as my job became more important and I found that I was having a career. I had not originally wanted to have a career. I had not expected to have a career. But it grew into a career. And it wasn't something then that I wanted to give up. First of all, I needed to work. We needed the income. When you live in the City of New York and you have two children who go to private school, and one income, even though your husband might be a professional person, it was simply necessary at that time to have a larger income. So I worked out of necessity as well as from desire. I don't think it's easy for a woman to build a career and raise a family at the same time. It's a totally different responsibility from that of a man, because you have.... You have to run your home, you have to supervise your marketing and meals. You really have to supervise your children's growth....

End Tape 1 Side 1
A: ...but basically most of the decisions have to be yours, and if there's a problem during the course of a day it's you who are called. So it's not easy. I think we have to be able to more or less categorize activities. You have to put certain things aside when you're doing other things, and then make them all come together. And it can be tiring, because you have, in addition to your job and your children, your husband, whom you love and a social life that you want to have, so I think it's much more difficult for a woman than it is for a man.

And, of course, there are other problems. If your career is a successful career and you become known and fairly important, there are always egos involved. And I'm not a sociologist, but I do know that the male ego sometimes is hurt, if the female is a little more important or is better known, or gets more attention. And this becomes a problem, and I think women have to be aware of this if they want to have a good life together with their husband and their children. I worked very hard at it. I really did work very hard at it. I stayed in my marriage until after my children had completed their college education, until I felt that they could be independent and go on their own. I still love my ex-husband very, very much, but we were moving in different directions. And so we separated. I thought I needed some time to get myself together. Unfortunately, after we separated I became ill and....

Q: That was what year?

A: 1968. And I traveled... I had been in Europe and I had been in the Orient and I came back and I was living alone, temporarily, and an old friend whom I had met through F.I.T., who was also separated, was very attentive and very helpful to me at that time. I later married him, in 1970. Two years after I had separated from my husband, I married Himan Brown.
Q: You met him at F.I.T.?

A: Yes. I met Hi because he had... He owns large studios on 26th Street just behind Nagler Hall. And one day, in the early '60s, after I moved.... After we had moved into this building, he called and said to me, "We're producing on one of the stages a film...." I think it was Butterfield 8, if I remember correctly, with Elizabeth Taylor, and he thought perhaps our students might be interested in seeing how a movie was made, and he invited the students to come over to visit the studio. I invited him to come over here so we could meet and get to know each other, and I did, and we became friends, both he and his wife and my husband and I. We were very good friends. Hi and his wife had separated a long time before I did. Our separations had nothing to do with each other. They were very personal and one thing had nothing to do with the other.

But, because we were alone, we were thrown together at a time when I needed someone, and we really fell in love. We got married in 1970 and it's been a very, very good marriage. Our interests are very similar. We like doing the same things. We don't have some of the distractions which you have when your children are small and growing up. We can devote a lot of time to each other. We are both successful. He is extremely successful in his field, which is radio production. And we don't get in each other's way in any.... As far as I can tell. I haven't been aware of it. So I think I have again been extremely fortunate.

I have a wonderful family. My children are grown. My oldest son is an artist, and is an Associate Professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology. My youngest son is in California and he designs software for computers, a very responsible company. He was with Walt Disney. He's now with a new firm in San Francisco. I have one grandson, the son of my older son,
who is 17 and lives in Connecticut with his mother, who remarried after an early divorce. Everyone is well and happy and moving forward.

My husband has two children, a son who lives in California and produces commercials, and a daughter who is... I don't quite know how to describe her. I guess she's a parapsychologist. She has a number of clients and she moves about the country. She is not now married; she has been married ---three times. He has two grand-daughters, both of whom are in New York. They're in their early twenties. My ex-husband remarried, happily, and we are still extremely good friends. We see each other and talk quite often.

Q: You really have an extended family.
A: A very extended family.

Q: Well...1968 must have been a very busy time, because you had things going on not only with your personal life, but there also were things going on, I assume, at whatever level at the college.

A: Yes, '68 was a busy time. It was when Dr. Jarvie was here as President and when I was very much involved in the expansion of the school. In fact, I had been to the Orient to look at textile factories and mills to see if there were ideas that we should incorporate into our laboratories. I had been to Europe for the same purpose. I worked very closely with the architects for the development of the plans for all of the buildings. And, of course, with faculty and chairmen of departments here to assure that their needs would be incorporated into what we were doing, and we were pretty good at it. We didn't have to change very much. It had been pretty much the same, and content. Of course, we must keep pace all the time with the new things that develop.
Q: But previous to that, I really was wondering if there was any impact on this school of the kind of student unrest that was happening in other parts of the country.

A: There was very little student unrest in this school. We have had very little from the very beginning, and very little destruction, and I think the reason is that the students have always been very carefully selected. They've always been career oriented, and to be a student at F.I.T. you have to work very hard, so you don't have time for a lot of extra-curricular activities such as you have at liberal arts colleges. It's a whole different temperament, a whole different kind of student. Now that may change, but until now that has been our experience. We haven't had a drug scene, we've had practically... Well, so few incidents, but I don't even recall any of any significant importance.

Q: No drug scene, no alcohol scene?

A: Not that I know of. There might have been some rare instances in the dormitory that were handled very nicely, but nothing that is prevalent and nothing that we have had any problem with that I know of, and I think the Dean of Students would probably concur on that. I don't know--I think we've been very lucky.

Q: Let's talk about a number of other things that have existed as of the early or mid- '40s, but also have continued to grow and evolve until today. For example, your school population at the beginning (and when I say beginning, I don't mean the day the doors were opened but....)....

A: Well, the day the doors were opened there were 100 students.

Q: That was down at the other school?

A: That was at the other... in the other building. And that was a post-high school technical institute. That grew to be 400 students. We came
into this first building that we built, we came in with 400 students and within two years it had grown to full capacity, which was 1,200.

Q: Was there an outreach program?

A: Well, not too much of an outreach program. We did recruit in some of the high schools and with some of the high school principals in New York, but there was some advance that took place that brought a little attention to the school.... You must remember that we were sponsored by the Board of Education of New York, and in the early years the Superintendent of Schools was the liaison between the Board of Education and the Board of Trustees of the college. He came to all the meetings. Bill Jansen. He was extremely helpful. The president of the Board of Education was always a trustee of the Fashion Institute of Technology. We've had this very close affiliation with the Board of Education of the City of New York, so we had access to the high schools. And our counselors could go into the high schools and talk about the programs and tell about the need for the jobs in the industry and the opportunities for careers in the various sections. And we did some publicity, of course. We made some films that could be shown, and we did some publications that could be distributed, but we didn't have a big program. We didn't have any funding for a major program of recruitment.

There were some wonderful people at F.I.T. at the beginning. The first Dean of Faculty was Rosalind Ritter. She was an amazing lady. She was even tempered, she....

Q: No relation to Mortimer Ritter?

A: No. Her maiden name was Snyder. She had just married a man whose name was Ritter. She was a fine educator. She was an English major, I believe. But she was so good at handling people and at keeping everything
moving. We also had an Associate Dean whose name was Molly Slonim and she was an absolutely wonderful person. She knew more about designing and production than anyone I have ever known. Her standards were extremely high and she kept on top of her technical faculties. We've never replaced...

We've never had a Dean of Technical Faculties since then, but Molly Slonim was a wonderful person. And Rosalind Snyder had married, and at that time there was a consultant who came in after the war, Nathan Brown, who later became Superintendent of Schools, who helped build the liberal arts area. Those three people, truly, put together the first faculty. The chairman of the apparel design division was a marvelous lady, Ernestine Kopp; the chairman of the textile design program was Jenny Morse; I think the chairman of millinery design was Fanny Solar, and if I remember correctly--I'm not sure--the first chairman of production management was a man named Sacco. There might have been one person who preceded him. But we had excellent professional people, who had lots of experience in industry and also education to help build these programs. So it was not pie in the sky. It was very realistic, it was very down to earth, and we always, always had industry advisory committees who worked closely with them. Because our goal was to put our graduates in industry, in jobs that they could do and in which they could grow, and that has always been our goal. That's how we measure our success. It's the only way we have.

Q: It's very interesting.... There was a 1947 classbook, I looked at, and there was a wish for Dr. Ritter that he would have the buildings that were needed, the faculty that was going to handle the enormous amount of students that they hoped would come to the school.

A: He was a very sweet man, Dr. Ritter. A little man. He was a tailor. He was a tailor and he and Max Meyer persuaded LaGuardia, who was
then the Mayor, that they needed skilled workers in the industry, and that was how the first high school came into being. David Dubinsky was involved and many of the people in the union.

Incidentally, there was a wonderful union lady. Her name was Betty Hawley Donnelly, who was extremely helpful in having the Fashion Institute of Technology become part of the State University of New York. I went with her to Albany to meet with Governor Dewey. She was a very powerful lady and a strong supporter of F.I.T. The union's position in the development of the college was that, well, they weren't going to get any workers; they weren't going to get any members of the union, but they were going to get good management. And without good management, you couldn't have workers. So they felt it was their duty to support the development of this institution, and I think that has remained their policy over the years. We've never gotten a great deal of financial support from the union but we've had strong support from them in terms of the need for this kind of an educational institution for the New York fashion industries.

Q: If I remember correctly, you said that the school itself was funded by the City University?

A: No. We had nothing to do with the City University of New York. We are part of the State University system, and the law says that a community college... In the beginning, the law said that a community college was funded a third by the State, a third by the sponsor -- in this case the Board of Education -- and a third by tuition. Now, that formula has changed somewhat during the years, as the State University has grown, but it's basically that. And we have remained a community college although that's not what we are anymore. We are now a specialized institution, but we are financed like a community college because we not only have the two year
degree, which is a community college degree, but we have a four year Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Science degree, and next year, in September, we will have a Master's program. So, really, what we are is a highly specialized institution within the State University program, but financed as a community college. And the reason that it's happened is that we have wanted to keep our relationship with the Board of Education of the City of New York rather than with the Board of Higher Education. We have always had a very good, close working relationship with the Board of Education, and because we had our own Board of Trustees, which we would not have if we were under the Board of Higher Education, we've been able to build the way we have felt we needed to build.

Q: Well, then, in this school, the Educational Foundation had really been instrumental in providing a lot of the services that would not ordinarily be provided....?

A: And still does. It provides now, not only the scholarship fund (and this year it was a half a million dollars), but it provides funding for special exhibitions at the Resource Center, acquisitions in the library and in the design laboratory. It subsidizes certain personnel that cannot be covered in the college budget. It pays for certain publications, for which we can't use public money. It sponsors and produces special events that bring part of the community into the institution. Its budget is composed of those programs for which public money, basically, is not available.

And then, of course, as each new program comes on stream in the educational sense, a segment of the industry finances it. There is no public money for the development of programs. So when we develop new programs, that money comes from industry. For instance, right now... The fur program is new. That money is coming from industry for the development of the program.
Accessories is a new program. That money will come in to help with the
development, the research and the development. It takes about five years
to develop a solid program, and we have always said that when the industry
expresses a need, we are ready to try to fulfill that need, if we have the
support of the industry.

Fashion buying and merchandising, which is the largest program in
the college, came into being because of an endowment from Andrew Goodman,
in memory of his father, Edwin Goodman, of Bergdorf-Goodman. Each program
has come on stream that way, since the beginning.

Q: Fashion buying and merchandising was financed by Andrew
Goodman, but I assume that....

A: Today it's in the operating budget of the college. It's
only the development. However, there is an endowment for that program, so
that the income from the endowment is used for special purposes, like
providing cultural opportunities for certain students. We have opera
tickets for students; certain travel... That money is used as a support.
The person who holds the chair has a travel allowance so that she can bring
back information to the department. Each program that is endowed has an
income that is used for specific purposes relating to the program. The
jewelry program, which is the Norman Morris chair in jewelry—the income
is used for supplies for students, for educational opportunities for
certain faculty members in the program, and for scholarship assistance.
So, each program, when a program is endowed, the purposes for the use of
the income is set forth, and that is done through the foundation.

Q: So that when you talk about "it's done through the foundation,"
it's really done through you and by you.

A: Well, me and....
Q: Which means that....
A: Well, the Foundation has a strong Board of Directors, very powerful officers, and an executive committee that functions....
Q: Is it a Board of Directors or a Board of Trustees?
A: A Board of Directors. The College has a Board of Trustees.
Q: I see.
A: The college has a Board of Trustees of nine-members, four of whom are appointed by the Governor and five by the Board of Education for a period of nine years each. The Educational Foundation has a rotating board, appointed for one, two or three years. And every member of that board, and all the areas of the industry represented, serves on an active committee within the college. There's a curriculum committee, a finance committee, there's a legislative committee, there's a special services committee. There's ..... Every member serves on a committee in some capacity, in addition to being a Director of the Board. So they're all active, they really are.
Q: I was thinking that before we started I said you really are a financial person too, because you....
A: Oh, yes. I handle money. I handle the Foundation endowment fund.
Q: Are you involved with budgeting?
A: I do all the budgeting.
Q: You do all the budgeting?
A: Yes. I do all the budgeting, and I present it to the Executive Committee, which either approves or disapproves, and then it's presented to the Board of Directors at our annual meeting in April. We have.... The Foundation has four meetings a year, with the Board of Directors, and its committees meet when needed. The finance committee also meets four times a year. Now that's to handle the endowment funds, on which I serve as a member.
I'm also involved in how monies are used. If, for instance, we are
paying for special exhibitions in the Resource Center, I'm very much involved
in the budgets of those exhibitions and the control of those budgets and
what goes into the exhibitions. I feel that's my responsibility, since it's
a function that's being sponsored by the Foundation, I have to be on top of it.

Q: So this goes back to the training you got indirectly by working
for the government; by working in public affairs.

A: That's right. A lot of it came from working both with Bert
Landau and Grover Whelan. I don't know. Some of it I suppose I've learned
myself. I'm very often frustrated, I must say, but for the most part....

Q: Why are you frustrated?

A: Well, because things don't always move as fast as I'd like
them to. As you get bigger, it gets much more complicated. When you were
small and you knew everybody, it was much easier. Today I don't know
everybody at F.I.T. We have a faculty of about 500....

Q: Ah. We haven't done that yet....

A: Yes. Faculty and staff.... So obviously I don't know everybody,
many of whom are adjunct professors and instructors who come in part time,
so I don't even see them. I find it strange to walk into the faculty dining
room and not to recognize faces when I used to know every single one.

Q: Let's go back to do some comparisons before we lose that. At
the very beginning... Not at the very beginning, shortly after the beginning,
you had 1,200 students. Today you have 12,000 students....

A: Yes. Four thousand of whom are full-time; eight-thousand of
whom are part-time.

Q: Do the full-timers live on campus?

A: Not all. Only about a thousand students live on campus.

Three thousand commute.
Q: Is there room for more than a thousand?
A: Not at the moment. Not until we have another dormitory, which, I understand, is the President's priority item. We really need to have another dormitory. Because students are coming from further distances, and it becomes much more difficult to find housing in New York. As you know, there was a time when students could find apartments and share them. You can't do that anymore. So we need another dormitory, and I think President Feldman is working very hard to get that.

Q: When you talk about staff, the ratio of staff to student. How many people on staff? Faculty staff, not administrative.
A: Now?
Q: At the beginning and now. As a comparison.
A: It's very hard for me to remember that.
Q: Can you approximate?
A: No, I think in the beginning we may have had 50 faculty. I knew every one of them so it couldn't have been much more than that.
Q: And how many in administration?
A: When I came? In administration there was the President, Mortimer Ritter; there was the Dean, Rosalind Snyder; there was the Associate Dean, Molly Slonim, and there was me. The departments, the programs themselves, had chairmen, who were faculty members. I don't remember anybody else. There was a Counsel, Fred Kuper. I really don't remember anyone else.
Q: And today?
A: Oh, today. When I was acting President, I initiated Associate Deans who now have become Deans, for each of the major divisions. There was an art and design division, a liberal arts division and a business and
technology division, so you have three major deans. Then you have the Dean of Faculty, which was ostensibly what Dean Snyder had been, and which we now have, which is Janice Weinman. We have the Dean of Students. We used to have a Director of Admissions, and we did have a Dean of Students, Marian Brandriss... I don't remember what year she came. I think after we moved into the new building.

We have a Dean of Students, we have a Dean of Continuing Education. We have a Vice President for Development. We have a Treasurer....

Q: The V. P. for Development does fund raising, I assume....?
A: Well, I don't know whether she will or whether she won't. At the moment I'm not quite sure just how extensively..... At the moment, I think it's the development of relationships within the community. I think she represents the President in all of the various constituencies of the community -- the City and the State and the associations in the area. I know that she's working very hard on the dormitory and other aspects, but I don't think per se it's fund raising. Most of our fund raising is done through the Foundation. And the Board of Directors of the Foundation is about to begin a new campaign to add to the endowment, so that we won't have to worry in the future that we won't have enough money.

Q: Is the endowment fund a large one?
A: Well, it's over $7 million. It's not a large endowment as endowments go, but it's providing what we need at this moment. We think we need to expand that endowment to $10 million, hopefully, over the next three years. That's so that we can increase the financial assistance to students because as costs go up our students, who come from the lower to middle income backgrounds, need additional....

Q: Yes, that's the next thing I wanted to talk about. But let's just finish the figures on the faculty. You think it's about 500 now? And do
you have any idea how many it was then?

A: It had to be under a hundred.

Q: Under 100? In the late '40s?

A: It had to be. Maybe when we moved into this first building with full and part time faculty it went to about 100-150.

Q: And that year was what?

A: 19... Well, the students came in September of '59. Basically we got underway in 1960.

Q: Now, you started talking about the student body. The composition of the student body.

A: It is predominantly a commuting student body, students who come from within a commuting distance. The students who live in the dormitory come from, I believe, beyond 35-40 miles. And, of course, students who come from foreign countries live in the dormitory. As the reputation of F.I.T. grows, applications from more distant areas become more predominant, even from upstate New York, and those students have to be accommodated and we need more housing to accommodate them.

Q: Is there a difference in fees charged?

A: Yes. A New York resident student pays half of what an out-of-state resident would. The tuition has just increased. There is a Board of Trustees meeting this month, which is February, and the Board is being asked to increase the rate of tuition for resident students (that is, New York City-New York State residents) to $1,350 a year. Very low. But for out of State students, it would be twice that.

Q: Including out of country?

A: Yes. It would be $2,700 for non-resident students. $1,350 for resident students.

Q: How much participation....
A: That, incidentally, would be effective in the spring of '85. It's not going to be immediate.

Q: How much participation is there on the part of former students? Alumni?

A: The Director of alumni is Dorothy Hanenberg. She is also the Director of Community Resources in the college, and she has had a very close working relationship with alumni. Until we had resident students, we did not have a very active alumni. Community students are never a very active alumni. I believe she now has, active, about 5-6,000. I'm not sure of the number, but approximately 5-6,000 active members of the alumni, and she is working very diligently to get them more involved in the school. We have two alumni on the Board of Directors of the Educational Foundation. One is Calvin Klein and the other is Ed Newman, of Dan River Mills. There are many alumni who teach at F.I.T., either on a part-time basis or they come in as critics of programs; or, even some who are here full time. We have a number of outstanding alumni, but most of the names that are known are in the field of design. In merchandising you don't recognize the names, they're not promoted. In management, names are not promoted. In communications, names are not promoted. In photography, they are not particularly promoted. Advertising, you don't know the names. The only names that you know are those who design clothes. And of those, most of the young, successful designers (and I say this advisedly) are graduates of F.I.T. Like Norma Kamali, Calvin Klein, John Anthony, Bill Haire, etc., etc., etc.

Q: Could you tell us a little bit more about the composition of the faculty? Because I gather that there are some people who are here as full time professors...but many others who are adjuncts.
A: Yes, that's true in any educational institution. And basically, to begin with, it's because of budgetary restrictions. You don't always have the kind of budget that you require to have a full time faculty for every program. But in our case it's also because we want more contemporary current knowledge from the industry, and adjunct professors bring that. Full time, tenured professors don't always have an opportunity to go back into the industry. This is of course true of our technical areas more so than it is of the liberal arts areas. We insist, when we employ a full time faculty, that they've had at least five years of executive experience doing what they're teaching.

Q: So that everybody who teaches in the school has had....

A: Anybody who teaches any technical subject in this school has had business background.

Q: So if they're English teachers, they....

A: They've had other.... They may have published. They may have had other experiences that compensate.

Q: But it is not that they have been in the fashion industry? There's no special reason for that.

One last question. Two questions. What and who were the major influences in your life?

A: When I was in high school (and this goes back a long time) I had a wonderful English teacher. She was a great influence. She taught me to read. She taught me to appreciate literature. She taught me to speak. There was another teacher, even in an earlier period, who really taught me what it was to be human. To be thoughtful. To care about other people. I needed that during those years. I didn't have a mother, and my father was involved in all of his own problems. Those two teachers were very helpful to me.
When I went to work, I would say that Grover was an influence, and I would say that Jack Maddigan was an influence. And I would say that Edward Weinfeld was an influence. The three men. In business, I don't think I've really been influenced by any particular woman. There are many I admire, there are many I respect, but I don't know that they've had any particular influence on me. I did have a music teacher, in New York as a matter of fact. I continued... whenever I could, to study music. She was very helpful to me, in many ways. She taught me how to enjoy relaxing, and how to enjoy the time that I had with music. And I think both my husbands have been influential in my life. I know that my first husband was very influential. He was a very capable professional. Highly intelligent. I think the most competent diagnostician and doctor I have every known. And at F.I.T., I was greatly influenced at F.I.T. by Samuel Deitsch, who was a close friend, a close associate. He cared about what I could accomplish. He always made me believe I could do more. He was a great influence in my life.

I have many friends. I have really good friends, not just acquaintances. I've rarely lost a friend. If I have, I'm not aware of it. And many of those friends are women as well as men. And I enjoy being with them and I enjoy talking with them. I think early on I mentioned Bert Reinitz. I think Bert influenced me a great deal. He taught me a lot. I don't know if this is the kind of influence you're talking about....

Q: Yes, it is. Sure it is. I was just wondering how you acquired the almost innate feeling about the people that you met. Because, clearly, from your history, one person led to another.

A: Well, I'm a southerner, and maybe because of the way in which I grew up, and the community in which I grew up, I learned to listen. I've always listened to other people. I think that's very important. I think you must hear what other people have to say before they will listen to you.
I don't think I was ever pushy. I don't think I ever tried to step on anybody. I never did deliberately, in any event. If it happened, it happened inadvertently. But I don't know of an incident in which it happened. I don't think I've ever tried to.... I don't know quite how to say this... But I'm not being modest, but to a degree I'm fairly modest. I don't think I have accomplished all that much. Certainly not by myself. I've had lots of help. I'm very proud of what I've done.

One of the proudest things, of course, of my life is the fact that the union and the faculty asked the Board of Trustees to name the Resource Center at F.I.T. for me. I think this is a great tribute and I'm well aware of what it means, and I certainly do appreciate it, in every sense of the word. It's truly a tribute. I don't know that I deserve it but I appreciate it. And to have had that happen while I'm here to enjoy it, and to want to be part of it is certainly most unusual.

Q: Indeed it is.

A: Another thing that... I have a friend right now who influenced me a great deal, and she's my doctor. She happens to be the Medical Director of F.I.T. And you may say, why do I need to be influenced at this late stage of my life? I'm 68 years old. I've had cancer. In 1971, just after the first year I was married, I had to have a mastectomy. And then in 1977 I had two other cancer operations again. I've had to learn to live with that. My doctor now, Martha Cottrell, is a very understanding lady. And when I have certain problems, I can discuss them with her. I don't have a psychiatrist. She acts as my psychiatrist, medical physician, listens to my problems, I listen to hers. But in many ways she's been helpful to me. And I've been helpful to her also. It's a good rapport.

You have to feel your way as you go in this world. I don't think you can ever run before you walk, although sometimes you're tempted to.
Q: One final question: If it were possible to live your life over is there anything you'd change?

A: No, I wouldn't change it. How can you change? How can you change your life? How do you know what would have happened? Sure. When I was young I was gung ho to be a successful pianist and to have great, great, great skill. I would never have become that. My temperament, I know now, is not such that I could ever have done the technical work that was necessary to become a great concert pianist.

Q: You're so much more a people person, that I think that would have...

A: That's exactly my point. I am a people person. I love people. I like to be with people. I like to entertain in my home, which I don't do enough of now. I like all the things that go with being with people. I just enjoy it.

Q: Very good. Thank you.