For the Oral History Collection

of the

FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

an interview with

Annette Green

Interviewed by:

Carol Poll

March 12, 1996
FIT ORAL HISTORY:
AN INTERVIEW WITH ANNETTE GREEN
Transcripts housed in Special Collections:

1. No photocopying without written permission from the oral author or his designee. The Director of the Library will furnish addresses; the reader must write for permissions.

2. Written permission is needed to cite or quote from a transcript for publication. The user must send the Library Director the pertinent pages of final draft; the Director will assist in obtaining the final permission. The form of citation normally used is: "The Reminiscences of ________, (dates), pages ________, in the Oral History Collection of The Fashion Institute of Technology." No fees will be charged for published use. User is asked to furnish Oral History Program with a copy of the published work.

3. In order to see PERMISSION REQUIRED or CLOSED memoirs, the reader must obtain the written permission of the oral author or his designee. Contact the Library Director for addresses. The reader writes for permissions. Written permission if obtained must be presented when the reader visits.
INTERVIEWER: This is the first of several interviews for the Department of Oral History on The Fragrance Foundation. I’m Carol Poll doing the interview, I teach Sociology at FIT. Our filmmaker is Mark Joyner. Today is March 12, 1996. And we have a key person in the development of the fragrance industry, and I would like her to introduce herself, and I turn it over to her now. So, if you would tell us your name and...

GREEN: I’m Annette Green, the president of The Fragrance Foundation and a sister organization called the Olfactory Research Fund, both of them are the non-profit, educational arms of the industry and The Olfactory Research Fund is a charitable, tax-exempt organization which studies the role of odor on behavior. The Fragrance Foundation is a non-profit, educational arm of the fragrance industry. It was started in 1949 by a group of French perfume companies: Chanel, Guerlain, Caron, Coty, and Helena Rubinstein. Oscar Kolin, who was Mme. Rubinstein’s nephew, was also the first president of The Fragrance Foundation. He’s just recently deceased.

INTERVIEWER: What were the activities of the Foundation in the early days?

GREEN: The Foundation was dedicated to sending their director, who at the time was a woman by the name of Miriam Gibson French, around the country, to women’s clubs and schools, to talk about the pleasures of fragrance. American women just didn’t wear fragrance at that time except on special occasions. It is hard to believe today. Mrs. French stayed with the Foundation for a couple of years, and then she was offered a position as Beauty Editor at McCall’s Magazine. It was at the time when television was
just coming along in the 50s, and The Fragrance Foundation decided to do a television commercial. I was a young journalist at the time with Scripps Howard, and I covered the press conference at which they previewed this television commercial. I didn’t know very much, but I knew that it was not very good and wouldn’t be successful. It wasn’t. It cost a lot of money and caused a lot of dissension amongst the members. Everyone resigned from The Fragrance Foundation and it became defunct. A group of men, one of them by the name of Jack Mohr, who was with Revlon at the time, self-appointed themselves to become the saviors of The Fragrance Foundation. Jack Mohr knew me. In 1960, I had just started my own agency, which was called Annette Green Associates, a publicity-promotion-marketing agency. Mr. Mohr told them, “I know a young woman in New York who loves fragrance, and she just started her own business. Maybe she help us save The Fragrance Foundation.” So he called me, I met with the group at Peacock Alley at the Waldorf—it was the one and only meeting that they were going to have with me. They told me that they had no money, but that if I wanted to try to save the Foundation, they would be pleased to turn over all the files. I said I would try because I loved the idea of The Fragrance Foundation. I knew American women were not into fragrance, and I never understood why. I thought it would be a great opportunity. Fortunately my business was quite successful so I was able to support the Foundation. It took me ten years to really bring it around. It was at a very interesting time in the industry’s history, which played to my advantage. Many of the top pharmaceutical companies, like Squibb, and American Cyanamid, and Pfizer, were buying the fine French perfume houses. They really knew nothing about the industry. And there was very little paper on the subject. There was no reference information, nobody knew who knew who owned what, what fragrances were on the market, where they were sold. I started to develop research and informational
materials, which they could call on to tell them what this industry was about. I also started to create seminars and symposiums which they could come to to meet each other. They were very pleased to do it. And slowly but surely the Foundation started to become a thinking, feeling, breathing organization again.

Then I began to analyze how the organization was set up. I realized that to really make it a viable organization, we needed to have a Board of Directors representing the industry. So I was able to rally certain members of the industry. One of them was a man by the name of Alvin Lindsay, who at the time was the president of the supplier company, Roure, which is now Givaudan Roure. He's retired now. There was also a man by the name of Mike Blumenfeld, who was a divisional merchandise manager at Bloomingdale's, and he also was very supportive of what I was trying to do.

But there were just a handful of people who said don't give up, although many people tried to discourage me. They said the industry does not want The Fragrance Foundation. It has no purpose. I realized I must rethink the whole role of the Foundation. Since its mandate was to be educational it seemed to me the first thing that had to be done was to educate the industry, not only about itself, but about the social changes that were taking place which were impacting on people's perception about fragrance. They had no idea. I realized, particularly with fragrance, which is very ephemeral, that the psychological role of fragrance was paramount. Fragrance is not like an automobile, or a piece of jewelry, or a scarf, that somebody can see and decide whether they like it or don't like it. Fragrance is more of an idea, particularly in those days. It was something that women wore on Saturday night. Most women didn't work and when they got dressed up on Saturday
night to go out, put on a string of pearls, a black dress, and put a drop of perfume behind their ears. Most women wanted to be known by their fragrance, just as they wanted to be known by, let’s say, their hairstyle. So they always wore the same fragrance. The crux of the matter was that American woman wore fragrance as a luxury. The industry at the time was called the perfume industry, which perpetuated the image of unattainable luxury. I felt the first thing I had to do was change the name—to the fragrance industry. We were The Fragrance Foundation, after all. In the 60s, I introduced the “wardrobe of fragrance” concept, to encourage women to look at fragrance the way they look at color, or fashion. Fragrance has to do with mood, and occasion, and how people feel about themselves and what subliminal messages they want to project. This philosophy took a long time to take hold, but today it’s a given. Women wear fragrance the way they wear color and clothes. And men now are doing exactly the same thing.

I increasingly held meetings and seminars for industry members. Slowly but surely people started to attend to them. That also helped enlarge and expand attitudes about the importance of fragrance. But I do remember meetings when people said to me, there are more people on the dais than there are in the audience. I did develop a Board, and the Board began to become more active and recruit members. It even started to pay my agency a little bit of money. But I did provide support to The Fragrance Foundation for 20 years of the 35 that I’ve been involved. Today, as you know, The Fragrance Foundation is an internationally recognized organization. Annette Green Associates ceased to be about eight years ago. The Foundation was a client of Annette Green Associates until that time. We moved into these quarters in 1990. We had been in a carriage house before. The really big change in perception of The Fragrance Foundation was when I
thought of the FiFi Awards, which was 24 years ago. I patterned it completely after the Hollywood Oscars, with the balloting and the nominating procedures, the judging and the Awards ceremonies. It was a tiny little event of about 250 people at The Plaza in 1973. The FiFi Awards are really The Fragrance Foundation’s recognition awards, which annually salutes the fragrance introductions of the year before, as well as the best packaging, the best advertising. We have a Hall of Fame Award to recognize an outstanding individual in the industry, who is not only outstanding in relation to his or her business, but makes a major contribution to the community, and to society through various activities. When we had the first awards, I think we had about six. Today, the ceremonies are held at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center. About 1600 people attend from all over the world, and we present about 30 awards. Then we have a big gala dinner under the tent at Lincoln Center.

About 15 years ago, we created Fragrance Week in New York, in which all the retailers and members participate. Our goal is to educate the consumer every day during the week. So that Fragrance Week became a time when consumers purposely went to the stores to learn about fragrance--how to use it, how to buy it, how to take care of it. Because it’s a given, that nobody wakes up in the morning and says, “I have to go buy fragrance.” It’s an impulse purchase, it’s something that happens when you’re shopping and you walk into a fragrant environment.

Concurrently, I wrote and published a variety of educational materials for the consumer and the industry. We published a lot of booklets and materials on the history of fragrance and antique perfume bottles, and the bath--we’re just revising our bath booklet. The
painting that you see on the wall is a flower clock, showing which time of day to harvest flowers used in perfumery. It was the symbol of an exhibition which I created called "Scents of Time," which opened in New York at the Museum of the City of New York about seven years ago. It traveled to museums and science centers in Washington, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Dallas. It was designed to show how changing trends in society influence people’s perceptions of fragrance and packaging. It covered the years from about the 1700s to 1960. The New York Times gave it a rave review and it received great reviews everywhere it went. We borrowed ads and packaging and historical bottles from museums and private collectors, and made an incredible video to accompany the exhibition which people still call upon today. Helping the industry to appreciate the importance of the role of society on the development and use of fragrance became one of my big goals. The exhibition really brought it to the finest point. It made the industry begin to think about fragrance in connection with changing social morays. The exhibition really did that. Since then, I include social trends in all Fragrance Foundation meetings. We rarely talk only about fragrance or the industry itself, but how society is changing. And it could not be changing more than it is right now, and to really understand the consumers’ attitudes about shopping, about the products they want to use, about the role of products in their lives, is completely different than it was even five years ago.

INTERVIEWER: In what ways?

GREEN: People today are looking at fragrance plus; fragrance that does something for them, whether it’s to reduce stress, or to increase alertness, it makes people feel more successful, or energetic. To scientifically undertake the study of such behavioral changes is
the work of the Olfactory Research Fund, which supports work of clinical psychologists in universities and hospitals around the world which do such scientific research. We did a big study at Memorial Sloan Kettering, which is the famous cancer hospital in New York. People were very stressed out when they had to take the MRI test. By allowing patients to smell vanilla, there was a 73% reduction in stress. Recently there have been a number of vanilla fragrances coming out which are enjoying immediate success. We’re also seeing more citrus and peppermint type fragrances, which are energizing. The industry, in response, is working on such fragrances for the car, and for airplanes to keep drivers and pilots alert. So the research and application have endless potential.

INTERVIEWER: How do you spell the name of the Foundation’s Awards?

GREEN: FiFi. It’s just a nickname. John Ledes, publisher of Beauty Fashion Magazine and Cosmetic World was the first to call the awards the FiFis. The awards ceremony is held the first week in June every year, and that’s also the week for Fragrance Week. And Fragrance Week now is national. It used to just be in New York, and several years ago we introduced it in about 16 cities. We got so many requests that now it’s a national event. We always give the week a theme, and this year it will be themed to our first public awareness ad campaign, “Stop and Smell the Memories.” That will be theme of the week, it will be the theme of the awards ceremony, and exciting things should be happening around that. Next year is our 25th anniversary of the awards and the theme will be “Celebrating 25 Years of the ‘FiFi.’”

INTERVIEWER: How do you develop the theme?
GREEN: Well, it just seems to grow out of current activities. Our theme for the ad campaign just seemed like a logical thing to do. We’re making a video in which we ask people in the streets what fragrance memories they have. This video will be played in stores around the country. We also held contests in the stores across the country asking people to recount their fragrance memories. They’ll be a national drawing for a trip probably to Paris and to Grasse, which is the old fragrance flower-growing capital. It’s more of a historic landmark today and it’s something to be seen, but it really isn’t the center of flower growing anymore. The whole world contributes ingredients today. New York is certainly the center of the fragrance industry, from a marketing point of view.

INTERVIEWER: Where does sandalwood come from?

GREEN: India. Sandalwood trees are such a precious commodity that all trees are owned by the government. No one else is allowed to grow or cut down any of these trees.

INTERVIEWER: Is New York really the capital of the fragrance industry?

GREEN: Yes, as I said, it’s the center for marketing fragrance and also the making of fragrance. Most of the laboratories are in New Jersey. Because of the computer, perfumers are able to communicate with each other, in France, in Italy, in Spain, and share creative concepts as they develop a new formula. The process has become much more scientific, yet people still pick the ingredients the way they have from the earliest times,
the fruits, the flowers, the herbs, the grasses. But the making of fragrance today has become a technological miracle.

INTERVIEWER: Could you discuss the connection with the cosmetics industry, are they separate industries...

GREEN: They’re totally separate industries, except that many of the cosmetic companies have fragrance divisions, and they also use fragrance in most of their products. But I don’t get that involved in that area. My concern and dedication, is really, to fragrances for the body and fragrances for the environment.

INTERVIEWER: From the beginning has it been separate.

GREEN: Yes, it really basically has, because it was the French perfume companies, like Guerlain, Lanvin, Coty and Chanel that created The FragranceFoundation to separate fragrance from cosmetics. But today many also have cosmetics and treatment products as well. But there are houses that still exist which only have fragrance.

INTERVIEWER: You’ve discussed how technology has really impacted the creation of fragrance. Anything else you’ve seen over the years?

GREEN: I guess the biggest change was the development of the aerosol, by Robert Abplanalp. He invented the aerosol in the 60’s and that did make a major change in the industry. Women and men enjoyed using the product more, because it was easier to use.
Americans had never been too comfortable with their understanding of exactly how to apply fragrance. The aerosol made it very easy. As the years went by, freon, which was used to propel the fragrance, became an environmental problem. I brought the early warning signs to the industry’s attention, and today, natural pumps are used.

I suppose that the biggest industry change that took place was in the late 60s, was the musk revolution, led by the hippies. It was the first time that the influence of fragrances came from the street instead of the fashion salons. And it was the kids in Haight/Ashbury in San Francisco, and kids all over, who were getting into jeans and rejecting the fashion of their parents. They started to wear musk. Actually it wasn’t such an innocent beginning, because they were actually burning it first, to cover the smell of pot. But then a couple of entrepreneurs got hold of the idea, and filled little bottles with musk oil. They bought an old bus, and filled it up with the bottles of musk oil and drove around the country selling musk oil to head shops. Musk became the rage. Then Jovan, which was a company out of Chicago, recognized the trend and developed a musk fragrance for the rest of us. It became one of the country’s biggest selling fragrances and is still extremely popular. Actually, musk is an ingredient which has always been used in fragrance. It was never a product to be worn. Today it is a major fragrance category. Then, Patchouli, another fragrance ingredient, came along, and kids started to wear that, but it never took on the importance of musk.

Another turning point, when Mrs. Lauder introduced Youth Dew in 1953. It was the first time a concentrated fragrance in an oil base, instead of an alcohol base, was created for a fine perfume. It was appealing first, to older women, who might be losing their sense of
smell, and didn’t think fragrance lasted on their skins, because they couldn’t smell it. It was the beginning of a real upsurge in oriental-type fragrances, which is the name of this category of fragrance. It doesn’t mean these fragrances are from the Orient. Opium, by Yves St. Laurent is another one of the great orientals. These fragrance types are the strongest, most pungent, dramatic fragrances. They usually have musk, jasmine and Bulgarian rose as ingredients.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned other trends today.

GREEN: Telecommunications is a major trend. And there is an important movement toward working at home and being connected to the office via computer. Offices, in ten years will not be what we know them as today. They’re not going to be populated by many people. I believe there are going to be satellite units in communities, to which people may come to feed into with their computer, or to work on the computer. The overriding question is, are they going to get all dressed up in the morning and put perfume on? I doubt it. People’s attitudes about how they look have become quite different, and this whole dress-down Friday trend is going to be nothing compared to what’s it’s going to be like when people don’t have to go into an office. So I see the importance of behavioral fragrances as monumental. It might even be bigger than the fragrance industry is today, which is about $5 billion retail, here in the States. A third of that, by the way, is men’s fragrances. But I think that the behavioral fragrances will be critical when you’re sitting there by yourself in your home offices. Everyone will want fragrances that give them a lift, fragrances that reduce stress, that make them feel more alert, and as the day ends, to help them make a shift to a more social mood. When a husband or wife comes
home, one would probably want to put on a fragrance that is much more likely to reflect a 
more personal mood, whether it’s romantic, or sensual, or just comfy. Comfortable 
fragrances will be really important. So, the way fragrances are going to be marketed, the 
way they’re gonna be developed, are going to be very different.

INTERVIEWER: It sounds like a version of aromatherapy.

GREEN: We call it aroma-chology, which is quite different from aromatherapy. Aroma-
therapy’s a massage technique based on folklore using natural essential oils. Aroma-
chology is a science based on research in leading hospitals and universities against which 
fragrances are specially created with psychological end results. They either can be put in a 
room environment, or they can be put on your body, as you would any fragrance. But it 
has nothing to do with massage, although in a lotion or cream form they can be used for 
massage. The new aroma-chology oil formulae can be enjoyed in the bath or shower.

INTERVIEWER: Could we just go back... I’d like to hear, for the record, about your 
role. It sounds like you worked in advertising, or around advertising.

GREEN: Well I did do some advertising, but it was more public relations/marketing. I 
had a wide variety of accounts, Max Factor, Sea and Ski, Renauld Sunglasses, Blue Ridge 
Winkler Textiles, Breck Hair Care Products, Round the Clock Hosiery, and Olga 
Sleepwear and Lingerie. Then, of course, The Fragrance Foundation, which I was 
babying along.
INTERVIEWER: Did you develop The Fragrance Foundation?

GREEN: Exactly, I was mentoring it. Fortunately, I was able to do that. As I said, slowly but surely it became a paying client, a small paying client. But as the years went by and it started to grow in the most astounding way, I started to drop clients. And when contracts came to an end, we didn’t renew them. The last client I had, which is probably ten years ago, was Olga. Since it had no connection to the industry, there was no problem. They were in California, and I was their New York voice. Today, of course, my commitment to The Fragrance Foundation is total.

About four or five years ago, it became apparent to me that we were facing a global marketplace. This industry was not, except for a few companies, global. I began to structure meetings about this challenge. In fact, approximately six years ago I held “Summit 2000,” an examination of the first global society. I got together with a professor at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, a wonderful man, Howard Perlmutter. Professor Perlmutter is the greatest, I think, authority on the subject of the first global civilization and society. He and I just have exactly the same vision. So together we planned to hold a weekend retreat for the industry, to really look at this subject. We had environmentalists, and ecologists, and city planners. It was focused on all the social changes taking place around the world. We had people from the Middle East looking at what was happening, and the shifts of power, and how people in third world countries would grow and develop and have an impact here on the States. We had a few people speak from the industry, but more in regard to how life was changing, and as it does, how it affects the male and female roles in this global society. Then I took all that
information, and I re-edited it for the industry, and presented it at Lincoln Center at a meeting held at Avery Fisher Hall the following year. We looked at how all these changes would impact on the industry; how the industry had to begin to think globally. I have to tell you, the information was not well received. People really thought that I was off-skew. It was poorly attended. The industry didn’t understand. They were having enough trouble maintaining their markets here. But in a year or two everybody began to rethink the importance of the information presented and wanted me to repeat it. I said that was impossible. It was a moment in history. But what I do each year, is a special version of Summit 2000 focusing on the globalization of the senses and a particular subject. For instance, last year it was “Women Around the World,” and we had a very good meeting. In September, 1996, we will do a Summit 2000 on what fragrance means to people of different cultures, different languages, different attitudes about fragrances in their lives, and about the industry, which is now introducing products globally, and is totally involved in global marketing. Even small companies are making alliances with big companies in Europe, or the Far East, or wherever it might be. Today’s management must be able to understand and deal with these major technological changes. They are second nature to young people. It’s quite a challenge. Also, I think that language has become absolutely critical. People are going to be hired who have two or three languages, people who understand the Internet and the World Wide Web, and things that we don’t even know about today. There are shifts from technology to technology every day.

End Side One
GREEN: I always felt that people should really have someone on staff who is a societal expert, who keeps the marketing people fully aware of what's happening out there. I dedicate an awful lot of my time to the study of the future of society. I've spoken about it. I talk to people who are in that business. It interests me tremendously. The major trend for the future is fulfilling one's inner self. Our product, fragrance, is perfect, because it speaks to this inner self. We all have basic desires, needs and goals, even in this changing, world. In fact, I see fragrance as almost essential to keeping us human as we move into such a technological world. It's the ultimate soft touch, touching ourselves with fragrance. I think all the senses become critical, totally interrelated. So the things of the senses will, I think, be the products of the senses, and will be the most successful in the 21st century. I was talking, as a matter of fact, to Buzz Aldrin, who was the second man on the moon, and he said, "the worst part of being in a spaceship, is the unpleasant odors." We all need to be in positive smell environments. The industry is a little bit behind the curve of the wave, but they're moving in the right direction. They're trying to understand, trying to get a grip on it, and to be able to meet the financial requirements of their businesses, to the stockholders and to the bottom line, and, at the same time, be adventuresome enough to do the things we've just been discussing. It's hard, it's very hard. But they're all doing it, because it's become a necessity.

INTERVIEWER: Is this true for the rest of the world?
GREEN: Absolutely. Brazil is turning out to be a major market area for fragrance as are the mid-European countries. Companies are setting up divisions there, and making liaisons.

INTERVIEWER: By European you mean...

GREEN: Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Russia is becoming a big fragrance and cosmetic market. They all are. As people begin to stop worrying about the lack of food and fear of the military, they start thinking about their senses. In the very beginning of time, primitive amoeba came out of the sea. It was dark, and the sense of smell was critical to survival. As humankind developed and stood up, necessities of life changed. Soon, sensory pleasures became important. People started to decorate themselves with flowers and began to become more aware of this persona. That’s what this industry is all about; how people feel about themselves. That’s why, no matter how bad the economy gets, usually people will buy a lipstick, put on some fragrance, splash on some after shave, or get their hair cut.

When I was in Beijing, it was just before the Tienammen Square tragedy, I was talking to a number of people. I was so impressed with the young women on the streets, who were all going to work on their bicycles. They had lovely black skirts on, clean, pressed white shirts, great makeup and hair cuts. They looked really wonderful. I was surprised. I conducted a mini-survey. Everyone I met I asked the same question. "If a girl only had money for a lipstick or perfume, which would she buy?" Much to my surprise, everyone
said perfume. I didn’t understand. They explained that during the Mao revolution, the
dangerous Red Guard period, women were not allowed to wear makeup, they were not
allowed to cut their hair, they had to wear those dull grey, Mao suits. Because it couldn’t
be seen, perfume was worn as an invisible badge of courage. It gave them a lift, and it
made them feel like women. They have a real connection, a feeling about fragrance,
unlike the Japanese, who, until recently, didn’t wear body fragrance very much. They’ve
always used a lot of fragrance in the environment. They use it in the bath. But they
always felt because Japan is such a crowded island, that if they wear fragrance, it might
intrude on someone else’s space. So they’re very careful about it. But young people
today want to wear fragrance. They love the new light ones. That’s happening really
globally, that people want to lower the volume from the eighties. They want to wear cool
fragrances, transparent fragrances that are very light and give one a lift. I think if there’s
any big fragrance trend today, it’s that people are increasingly wearing fragrance for
themselves. If I put a fragrance in the air, if I’m sitting alone at my computer in my office,
or in my car, it’s to give me a lift, or to reduce any stress I might be feeling at the moment.
In a romantic situation, that’s completely different. But in my daytime life, it’s really for
me. That’s a big change. The industry is responding in a big way with lighter and lighter
fragrances.

INTERVIEWER: When you say a big change, what do you mean?

GREEN: Well, people wore fragrances for other people, they didn’t wear it for
themselves. If a woman puts on fragrance, or a man puts on after shave, it was to please
someone else. And that’s not true anymore at all. As I say, it’s a big change. More
dramatic and sensual fragrances are, of course, still important for very romantic or inter-
personal situations.

INTERVIEWER: Could we discuss the development of the program at F.I.T.? You were
instrumental in developing the Fragrance & Cosmetics Department at F.I.T.

GREEN: Yes, that’s true. I got to know Shirley Goodman, who was, of course, the head
of the Shirley Goodman Research Center. I admired her greatly. It really just nagged at
me that FIT had no curriculum at all for the cosmetic and fragrance industry. One day I
called her and told her I’d like to come by and talk. This was in the early 80s. I said, you
know, Shirley, I don’t know why you don’t have a curriculum or a course, which would
help young people enter the cosmetic and fragrance industry. She said our industry had
nothing to do with fashion. I stressed it had everything to do with fashion. We all now
know that cosmetics, fragrances and fashion are totally interrelated. Not only do they all
make fashion statements, they make personal statements as well. Shirley said, “Well look,
if you want to teach a course, be my guest. I’ll make you an adjunct professor, and we’ll
offer the course to those young people who don’t have a specific fashion goal. I agreed to
teach a course. I did for several years, one afternoon a week. It was sort of a
promotional, marketing, public relations course. It just took off. I did something very
unusual. I created teams. I had each team take a product, a city, a store in that city, and
develop a whole promotion for that product in that store. Students had to make believe
they were in touch with the store, they had to create the in-store promotion, develop the
publicity materials, create a charity event in the city tied to the product. They actually had
to develop all the materials. Then I had a competition, to which I invited industry members, to vote for the best. Each team got up on stage, and presented its product. It became a real competition. The students did some really creative things. The industry got interested. Some of the students were offered jobs because of what they did. So one day, Dean Jack Rittenberg, with whom I'd become friendly, said, you know, this really is an interesting area of opportunity for our students. It is taking off. The fashion business seems to be having a lot of problems. Maybe we should be thinking more about industries like yours in relation to the potential for jobs in the future, and really get someone to teach this as a full blown curriculums. I said I'd think about it and try to get the right person. So eventually, I put him together with Hazel Bishop, who had been the founder of the Hazel Bishop Company in the 40s. She had gone into the investment business and had become a financial analyst for our industry. She was wonderful and thrilled at the idea of this third career in her life. So I did put them together. Actually, I had them sit next to each other at one of our Fifi Award dinners and galas. By the time it was over, they had made a deal.

INTERVIEWER: Jack Rittenberg and...

GREEN: and Hazel Bishop. So she came in as head of the program and as the recipient of the Revlon chair, which had been established several years before. But, she did have a very hard time. She couldn't receive money even for books. She came crying to me many a day, saying, you know, I can't even get the smallest budget for the class. I thought, this is just ridiculous. I started to urge them to use the interest from the Revlon monies for the cosmetic students, or else, I told them, we're never gonna get this program off the
ground. Eventually, I talked them into doing just that. It was very, very hard. It was an ongoing struggle. But we finally established our own fund. Then, I started an entity called the ACTION Council, the Cosmetic/Fragrance ACTION Council at F.I.T. which I chaired, and still do. I brought in a number of members from the industry, not only to oversee the money, but to oversee the development of curriculum. Top people joined together to look at what was being taught, to teach, to really get involved. Then I decided I needed a fund-raiser to build additional money, and I created the Cartier Scholarship Luncheon, which is ten years old. We now have about $100,000 in that fund. We use the money to send students overseas for a study program in France and England, for an internship program, and a mentor program. We also have established a substantial library at FIT. I send the library tapes after we have our Awards ceremony. All the commercials go to F.I.T. so that the students can see them. It’s just become a department, with a four-year bachelor’s degree in cosmetics and fragrance marketing, under the direction of Professor Peg Smith. Now, we’re working on a masters degree program.

INTERVIEWER: There is going to be a Baccalaureate degree program for Cosmetics and Fragrance majors.

GREEN: Yes. the Baccalaureate degree is really thrilling. They had a major event a couple of years ago at which they honored me as “A Person Who Makes a Difference,” at which we raised about $700,000. It was really marvelous. Then, a couple of years ago, they created the Annette Green Fragrance Foundation Studio, which is actually a hands-on laboratory. The class learns how fragrance is made. They can also learn how to be evaluators. They created a lovely fragrance a year ago which we called “Scentwear.”
Bloomingdale’s sold it, and now it’s selling in the FIT bookstore. We’re looking forward to growing, and developing. Most of the students are placed. I would say about 98% are working in industry, which is thrilling. Everywhere I go, they come running over, Miss Green, Miss Green, I was in the Class of whatever year, and it’s very exciting. It took me a long time to get the industry to focus on this. I remember being at our fundraising luncheon, which is part of Fragrance Week. When I started to describe the program, I could see the audience wasn’t really that interested. But they are certainly into it now, and are hiring these wonderful young people, and they are doing a terrific job. Most of us got into this industry by accident. How wonderful it is now to have young people who are absolutely trained to make a real contribution to the industry. They’re focused, the industry is where they want to be.

INTERVIEWER: When you talk numbers in terms of the industry, mention a figure.

GREEN: It’s a $5 billion industry, at retail, one-third of which is men’s fragrances. That’s only fragrance in this country.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. We’re winding down. Is there something else you’d like to make sure goes in the archives, so to speak.

GREEN: I guess, my latest effort, a book I have written with fashion journalist Linda Dyett on the history of jewelry which has held fragrance. The French art book publisher Flammarin will bring it out in Fall 97. It features rings, bracelets, necklaces, and clips not only from a historic jewelry point of view, but also how this fragrance jewelry has been
incorporated commercially through the years by companies in the industry. So we’re looking forward to creating a new category for wearing fragrance. Because a lot of people want to carry fragrance, to have it ready whenever they want to apply or smell it. I think we will see jewelry used in a completely new way in the fragrance industry, in a really important way, beyond the flacons that grace dressing tables. It’s all part of the new-age person, who’s wearing crystals close to the skin, and fragrance inside the crystals, intensified by the warmth of the skin. It has an aura of protecting, like an amulet. So there are lots of new things happening. Although, if you’d asked the industry, I’d say ten years ago, they’d have said this is a mature industry with no place to go. I don’t see it that way at all. I think there are many, many places to go. It’s just that they are only just beginning to see these places themselves. Of course, new, young people coming in will see it even more so. I do think ours is a big growth industry, a durable industry, and inter­spatial. If we look at the possibility of people traveling to stations in space and living there for long periods of time, fragrance will certainly go with them to remind them of home.

INTERVIEWER: Just to clarify an impression-- I really get a feeling that it’s now a global industry that was once identified with France alone.

GREEN: Yes, that’s true. Even the French are beginning to join the global movement. Fragrance labels are passé, as far as country of origin is concerned. I mean, how many women really care about where a fashion comes from? Everyone in every major country sees its business in terms of a competitive global market. So that’s really it.
INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much.

GREEN: It’s been a pleasure. Let me reiterate. I consider our industry one of the most international businesses in the world. In fact, when I was first in this business I was invited by the United Nations to hold a symposium there for the public on the fact that there isn’t a part of the world that doesn’t contribute to fragrance. Whether it’s Ethiopia, Bulgaria, or China. As the world opens up, we’re getting fabulous new ingredients that never were available before. We’ll really be selling fragrances that are completely different in the years ahead, full of sensory surprises and delights.