

2012

## Interview of Gerard Molyneaux, F.S.C., Ph.D.

Gerard Molyneaux

*La Salle University*, [molyneau@lasalle.edu](mailto:molyneau@lasalle.edu)

Megan Crowe

*La Salle University*, [crowem2@lasalle.edu](mailto:crowem2@lasalle.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/histdeptohall>

 Part of the [American Film Studies Commons](#), [Film and Media Studies Commons](#), [History of Religion Commons](#), [Religion Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Molyneaux, Gerard and Crowe, Megan, "Interview of Gerard Molyneaux, F.S.C., Ph.D." (2012). *All Oral Histories*. 6.  
<http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/histdeptohall/6>

This Interview is brought to you for free and open access by the Oral Histories at La Salle University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of La Salle University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [careyc@lasalle.edu](mailto:careyc@lasalle.edu).

## FIELD NOTES

**Interviewee:** Br. Gerard Molyneaux

**Interviewer:** Megan Crowe

**Interview date:** Part 1-March 1, 2012, Part 2-March 13, 2012,  
Part 3- March 20, 2012, Part 4- April 2, 2012

**Interview location:** Br. Molyneaux's office room 221 in the Communication Center on LaSalle University's campus

Field notes written on March 26, 2012, Revised on April 24, 2012.

### The Interviewee:

Gerard Molyneaux was born on February 23, 1935 in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania to John Molyneaux and Anne Elizabeth Molyneaux. He had eight siblings. As a child his family moved seven times, so he attended several different grade schools. He graduated from West Catholic High School in 1951. He spent the next summer doing odd jobs until he entered the Christian Brothers in September of that year. He entered novitiate, Christian Brother training, in Ammendale Maryland and took his final vows in 1953. He then attended LaSalle University in 1954 and received a Bachelor's in English in '58 and a Master's in Theology in '59. He then was assigned to teach in St. John's High School in Washington D.C. He only spent a year in that position until he went to Cumberland School in Maryland to teach. After he left in 1966 and taught at Southville Catholic School in Pittsburg and took classes in the summer at Notre Dame University in Notre Dame, Indiana. He received his Master's in English in 1967. A course in film at the Notre Dame inspired him to pursue his Doctorate in Communications. He accepted an offer from Wisconsin University to pursue his doctorate and work as a Resident Hall Advisor. While at Wisconsin Br. Molyneaux was a witness to campus-wide anti-war protests. He worked at Lewis University in 1972 in the English Department. He was recruited by Br. Jack Mondero to teach at LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When he began at LaSalle in 1973, the Communication department was a part of the English Department, which he was an Assistant Chair. In 1985 the Communications Department split from the English Department and Br. Molyneaux became the first Department Chair. In that position he began programs in Athens, Greece and Prague, Czech Republic. He also authored several works on film including *Charlie Chaplin: City of Lights* (1983), *Jimmy Stewart: A Bio-Bibliography* (1993), *Gregory Peck: A Bio-Bibliography* (1995), and *John Sayles: An Unauthorized Biography of the Pioneer Indy Filmmaker* (2000). Br. Molyneaux stepped down as Chair of the Communications Department in 2004, the same year he celebrated fifty years as a Christian Brother. He currently works as Internship Coordinator for the Communication Department.

### **The Interviewer:**

I, Megan M. Crowe (b.1987 in Montgomery County) grew up in the Mayfair section of Northeast Philadelphia. I completed my bachelor's at Rider University in Lawrenceville, New Jersey in Secondary Education and History in 2009. I am currently working to complete a Masters in Public History at LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I worked as a catholic school teacher in West Philadelphia from September 2009 to June 2011. There, I taught seventh grade Integrated Language Arts and Social Studies. I currently intern at the National Archives at Philadelphia with the Education Specialist and Lead Archivist.

### **Background:**

The interview was done as part of a Graduate Oral History course at LaSalle University in the spring of 2012. Under the guidance of the University Archivist, Br. Joseph Grabenstein, I chose to interview Br. Molyneaux. I became interested in the Br. Molyneaux's career at LaSalle after speaking with Br. Grabenstein and reviewing Br. Molyneaux's file in the archives. His work as creator of the Communication Department as well as his Philadelphia roots grabbed my attention and factored into my decision to interview Br. Molyneaux.

### **Description of the Interview:**

My initial contact with Br. Molyneaux was via email. I emailed him a request for an interview and explained how I was referred to him. I offer him the interview question and the assignment guidelines. He explained he was comfortable being interviewed and suggested we set up a time. We corresponded over email to set up an interview and decided on a time and place for the interview.

#### *Part 1 March 1, 2012*

I arrived at Br. Molyneaux's office room 221 in the Communication Center on campus on March 1, 2012 around 2:00 p.m. to conduct the Oral History interview. His office was filled with movie paraphernalia, books, filing cabinets and various framed awards. Br. Molyneaux was at his desk, finishing up some paper work for the courses he was teaching. He instructed me to take the seat directly across from his desk, which I would sit in for the next three sessions. I introduced myself since it was our first meeting and briefly explained my background and course work as a graduate history student. I then began to go over the expectations of the assignment, a life history interview at least two hours in length and transcribe. Br. Molyneaux was surprised at the length of time required for the interview. I offer to use the session as a pre-interview meeting to review the types of questions I would be asking as well as some of the research on his time at LaSalle. He declined my offer and we came up with a plan for four, thirty -minute interview sessions to fulfill the time requirement. Shortly after that initial discussion, we began recording our interview. For this session I relied mainly on the Thompson life

history guidelines for questioning. The session was productive; we wrapped up the session after discussing his secondary education and stopped the recording. I thanked him for his time and we scheduled a time for the second session.

On the recording you can hear some of the other office workers chatting but it does not interfere with the sound quality of the interview.

#### *Part 2 March 13, 2012*

I arrived right on time for the second session of the interview. I greeted Br. Molyneaux, set up the recorder and got my notes ready for the session. Br Molyneaux finished up an email, then we did a quick recap of the last session and went scope of the second interview before we began recording. The interview picked up with a discussion of his leisure activities as a young adult, then moved to his education and work experience before LaSalle. It finished with his arrival at LaSalle as a faculty member in the mid 1970s. After we finished the recording, we briefly spoke about the Penn Relays which was discussed during the session. I was able to build a rapport with him as we had mutual interest in the Penn Relays and St. Francis DeSales School in West Philadelphia. We decided to follow-up in an email to schedule the next session of the interview.

The recording contains minimal background sound.

#### *Part 3 March 20, 2012*

Our initial interview time was moved back from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. because of a scheduling conflict I had with work. We agreed that morning to move the interview time back and it did not interfere with any other scheduling for the day. I arrived and quickly set up, while Br. Molyneaux finished writing comments on student work. We did a quick overview of the last session and topic for the day's recording. The session began with the beginning of Br. Molyneaux's employment at LaSalle as a professor and we wrapped up the session with questions about his academic publications. We finished the recording I thanked Br. Molyneaux for his time, exchanged some pleasantries and we schedule the 4<sup>th</sup> and final session.

There is the faint sounds of sirens on the recording, there are actually sounds from the grounds keepers' landscaping equipment.

#### *Part 4 April 2, 2012*

For the last session, we chose to meet in the morning to accommodate our schedules. We did a quick recap as we did for the other sessions and began the recording. We finished up the interview with a discussion about the numerous awards and honors he has received over the years, as well as a reflection on the time he has spent at LaSalle and his hopes for the continued success of the university and the Communications department. After we stopped the recording, I thanked him again for his time and consideration. I offered him a copy of the finished transcript, which he declined, saying he would "just find it in the archives." I thanked him again. He offered me a piece of candy, which I accepted and left his office.

The recording contains minimal background noise.

### **Note on recording:**

The interview was recorded on an Olympus Digital Voice Recorder WS-500. It was on loan from LaSalle University Technology Department. The recording was originally uploaded as a wav audio file but has been burned onto a CD.

### **Editing the Transcript:**

My editing decisions included:

- 1) eliminating most repeated words, unless the words were repeated for emphasis
- 2) eliminating most false starts, unless the false starts seemed significant
- 3) placing information about pauses and visual cues or nonverbal sounds in brackets
- 4) providing limited additional explanation in footnotes
- 5) placing a time indicator at or near the top of each page and at the beginning and end of each recording session
- 6) frequently eliminating transitional words such as “and,” “so,” and “because” in order to make sentences shorter and easier to read.
- 7) using a dash to indicate an awkward transition in the middle of a sentence or an incomplete train of thought.
- 8) using a period to show a sentence that was not completed and a dash to show a sentence or question that was interrupted.
- 9) capitalizing and using hyphens between letters of words the interviewee spelled
- 10) using quotation marks to indicate reported speech