

Spring 2013

## Interview of John J. McGoldrick, F.S.C., Ph.D.

John J. McGoldrick F.S.C., Ph.D.  
*La Salle University*, [mcgoldri@lasalle.edu](mailto:mcgoldri@lasalle.edu)

Christine M. Thieme  
*La Salle University*, [christine.thieme@gmail.com](mailto:christine.thieme@gmail.com)

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

 Part of the [Cultural History Commons](#), [German Language and Literature Commons](#), [Higher Education Administration Commons](#), [History of Christianity Commons](#), [History of Religion Commons](#), [Oral History Commons](#), [Social History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

McGoldrick, John J. F.S.C., Ph.D. and Thieme, Christine M., "Interview of John J. McGoldrick, F.S.C., Ph.D." (2013). *All Oral Histories*. 48.  
<http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/histdeptohall/48>

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).

## **Interview with Brother John J. McGoldrick, F.S.C., Ph.D. Field Notes**

**Interviewer:** Christine Thieme

**Narrator:** Brother John J. McGoldrick

**Date of Interview:** March 25, 2013 & March 27, 2013

**Location:** La Salle University, Lawrence Administration Center, Brother McGoldrick's Office

**Duration:** 2 hours, 1 minute, 18 seconds

**Equipment:** Olympus Digital Voice Recorder VN-702PC

**Field Notes:** Written on April 1, 2013

\*\*\*\*\*

### **The Interviewee:**

Brother John Joseph McGoldrick (b. December 14, 1948), grew up in Southwest Philadelphia with his parents and older brother. Attending Most Blessed Sacrament School and later West Philadelphia Catholic High School for Boys, Brother John was part of a strong Catholic community. It was here at West Philadelphia Catholic High School, where Brother John was introduced to the Christian Brotherhood. It was at this time that he realized that the life of service with the Brotherhood was the type of life he'd like to lead. At the age of fifteen, Brother John attended the junior novitiate and after graduating high school entered the novitiate of the Christian Brothers. He graduated from La Salle in 1971, receiving his bachelor's degree in History, and planned to become a secondary teacher. He also received his master's degree with Millersville University in German, and his doctorate degree from Temple University in Communications. During his professional career, he worked at many secondary schools, including Archbishop Carroll High School, La Salle College High School, and Calvert Hall College High School, teaching German, history, and religion courses. For a period of time, he also worked at Towson University as an adjunct professor, and Christian Brothers University as the Administrative Assistant to the President, Director of Desktop Services, and Assistant Vice President. Since 2001, Brother John has been working as the Assistant Provost at La Salle University. In his free time, Brother John enjoys taking part in his duties and tasks with the Brothers' community, travelling, reading, watching movies, and of course attending La Salle basketball games.

### **The Interviewer:**

I, Christine Marie Thieme (b. 1991 in Passaic, New Jersey), grew up in Clifton, New Jersey, ten miles outside of New York City. During my early adolescence, our family relocated to Churchville, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. I earned a B.A. in History from Arcadia University, where I also minored in Secondary Education and International Studies. I am currently pursuing my M.A. in History at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. For work, I am a substitute teacher at Council Rock School District and Central Bucks School District, each located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. I am also part of the program staff at the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, which is a non-profit education organization dedicated to helping students, teachers, and citizens gain a greater awareness and appreciation for engaged

citizenship, U.S. history, and constitutional rights and responsibilities. During my free time, I enjoy being with my family, traveling to new places, watching baseball, playing and coaching softball, and also skiing.

### **Background:**

I am currently working towards earning my M.A. in History at La Salle University. This semester I am taking HIS 650: Oral History, led by Dr. Allen. The course is designed for students to learn the foundations of executing oral history research projects. A requirement of the course is for each student to undertake independent fieldwork, where they will be able to apply the methods they will be learning in class. I decided to do my interview with Brother John J. McGoldrick who is the Assistant Provost at La Salle University.

### **Description of Interview:**

The interview was split into two sessions, March 25, 2013 and March 27, 2013. Each session started at 8:30 in the morning and took place in Brother John's office at La Salle University's Lawrence Administration Center, located at the Philadelphia Campus.

Prior to the interview I had met with Brother John in early March to gather some background information for our future formal interview. After meeting with him I began my research using both Brother John's own website as well as La Salle's website. I also found La Salle's Digital Commons to be quite useful; I carefully looked through La Salle yearbooks, copies of La Salle Magazine, as well as other Oral History interviews. In addition to these materials, John Rossi's book *Living the Promise* was also valuable in understanding La Sallian history. Furthermore, I corresponded with Brother Joe Grabenstein through email to help formulate useful questions, as well as getting feedback from Dr. Barbara Allen.

Structuring my interview questions revolved around Paul Thompson's "A Life-Story Interview Guide." Focusing on these questions the interview flowed, for the most part, chronologically. The first half of the interview was based heavily on Thompson's questions for background information on family life and childhood. The second half of the interview went into more direct questions for Brother John's adult life, schooling, and professions.

The day of the first interview was quite ugly. That Monday morning, the winter season was still here, with our last snowfall. Travelling from Churchville, PA to La Salle's campus was normally a forty minute drive; however, with the roads being slick, and my careful driving it took over an hour to get to campus. Arriving early, I walked over to the Lawrence Administration Center. The campus was very quiet; with it being early and also the week of spring break, no one was in sight. I walked up to the warm third floor of the building, and was greeted by Brother John in the Provost Office. His kind smile and friendliness quickly put me at ease and calmed my nervous jitters. The interview that day lasted about fifty minutes and covered his family background, childhood, and relations with the Christian Brotherhood.

On Wednesday of that week, we met for our second interview. The weather was gorgeous outside, and it was hard to believe that two days earlier it was cold, damp, and snowing. Again,

the interview ran very smoothly in Brother John's office. This time the interview lasted for about an hour and ten minutes. We covered all of Brother John's educational and professional careers, as well as more on the Christian Brotherhood and his time at La Salle.

One would find this oral history interview to be useful and significant for a number of topics, such as history of the La Salle traditions, the Christian Brotherhood, Philadelphia history, and Generation history. For La Salle's 150th Anniversary, Brother John J. McGoldrick was an excellent person to interview, and his life-story will be extremely valuable for future researchers and La Sallians in the University Archives.

**Note on Recording:**

There are three separate files for the recordings of this interview. The first two parts take place during the first interview session on March 25, 2013. The third file contains the entire interview session from March 27, 2013.

The recordings are of good quality and have very minimal background noises. At all times, the listener can hear both the interviewer and narrator clearly.