

(Shall I insert other portions of your meeting preview e-mails Pat and Jean?)

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## Catholic Research Resources Alliance – Scholars Advisory Committee

Action Notes for November 3, 2015

Present via Audio and/or Video Conferencing (Alphabetical Order): Ron Crown, Paula Kane, Pat Lawton, Jean McManus, Tim Meagher, Jim O'Toole

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- Welcome provided to those in attendance and introductions made between those participating. Thank you to Pat Lawton and Jean McManus for providing logistical and technical support through their respective offices, efforts, and the University of Notre Dame connections to CRRA.
- Jean and Pat proceeded to discuss various details about the newspaper digitization project that has been ongoing for the past few years with a retrospective overview and current status report. When it came to overall participation with the CRRA community it was noted that there are seven new member institutions including: Ave Maria School of Law (FL), Belmont Abbey College (NC), Mount St. Mary's University (MD), Saint Louis University (MO), Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IA), St. John's University (NY).
- Of particular note was the addition of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network headquartered at Notre Dame which broadens the types of affiliate institutions (aside from academic, diocesan, or religious order archives/libraries alone) represented and sought by the CRRA.
- It was then noted once again that the Catholic News Archive is the priority project for the Scholars Advisory Committee.
- Jean then made note that it might be a good idea to highlight services offered by the CRRA to new members and to urge all members to continue placing materials into the portal. Paula Kane then mentioned that it will be a helpful move to funnel information to the Liaisons Council to help share the word with various institutions. Individuals such as Maria Mazzenga from CUA, Tim Achee from SLU, and Jean from ND are part of this group for example. Another goal is to possibly include more representatives from schools in the Western United States down the road. Jean also noted that geography plays a certain part in the newspaper project and moving forward regarding how many different publications might be available for scan and accessibility. The Catholic Newspapers Committee has its own tab on the CRRA homepage at: <http://www.catholicresearch.net/cms/index.php/about/crra-groups/catholic-newspapers-committee/>
- Discussed and launched formally in 2011, the overall goal is to have clearer access lines to additional digital content. Various priorities are being made and negotiations are ongoing

with the *Catholic Service News Feed* and *National Catholic Reporter* for example. The goal is to digitize each newspaper from its first issue to the end of 2013 at this point in time. Overall, this is seen as a \$2.6 million project that is to be done in various phases. Vatican II (c. 1958-72) and European Immigration are the two priority periods covered in this current approach to broader themes of importance. Along with having a connection to more newspapers available to scan is the issue of fund raising. This part is moving in stages as well with outreach to CRRA members and the rest coming hopefully from other sources including successful grant funding proposals. The current mark of \$152,000 is what has been collected to date. Pat reports that the accumulation of capital has gone well so far with high hopes for meeting the goal through additional pledges and money from different places to help the cause. Thoughts on how to find more funding sources are very much welcome! Although fund raising is not directly a Scholars Committee issue, it is one that connects by extension to outreach and advocacy on behalf of the overall project.

- In addition, the immediate goal of preservation according to Jean are 12 priority newspapers of note including the *Boston Pilot* among others, but part of this effort is to recognize publications of greatest interest. A working collaboration has already started with Boston College along with a number of different archives, libraries, and related centers to help the cause.
- Pat further noted that the key contributions of this group along collaboration with the Catholic Press Association will help to define priorities even more. Since not everything can be digitized, it becomes a matter of working with the prime ones at first and have a central repository on the portal as previously noted.
- In regard to an advance question from Paula regarding if Catholic newspapers can be included in the Readex database eventually and potentially under its “Chronicling America” series, this is one that will be explored both for logistics and if there is any cost involved from either end just to be sure this will not be an additional drain on our financial reserves. Readex is a subscription database featuring digitized collections, but might pose a conflict to our portal and a wider means of discovery and access through the Internet. Jean noted that having items from our own site that can be found via Google Scholar and other search engines for example is a more powerful means of finding links to the CRRA site and newspaper content not only among scholars, but the general public as well. Additionally, it is helpful to have our own institutions and those with a similar focus to help with collecting information without having to go through a paid system were some of the questions raised. More thought will go into a possible affiliation in the future.
- It was also mentioned that the CRRA LibGuides Committee could help with the standardization of describing resources that are found in the portal.
- When it comes to the actually format and technical specifications, Pat mentioned that a high metadata standard will be employed whereby items will be done according to high resolution and clarity goals. This means that original copies will be scanned at 400 dpi which is above most minimal publication requirements of 300 dpi. Ron Crown asked about additional requirements and how to learn more about the specs being used and had questions about the project in regard to librarians and how these items could be connected to such factor as

subject indexing, author, keyword, etc. These are all items to be worked upon when it comes to upgrading the site as more content is added according to Jean and Pat.

- In regard to other issues and objectives for the coming year, Tim Meagher noted that Catholic University has done various digitization projects to help the cause of greater accessibility of periodicals including the *Young Catholic Messenger* and their Catholic comic books holdings for example which leads into additional examples from other institutions. Pat then noted that having a simple template in place will help when it comes to members being able to easily upload and have their periodicals available with a quicker turnaround time in the future. Coding made easy and accessible is the goal! Jean also noted in tandem with Tim about academic institutions having scanned copies of unique publications including the *Catholic Boy*, *Catholic Girl*, and early Indiana Catholic monographs of various types. Jean mentioned that a mention of newspaper project updates in the CRRA newsletter would be a good idea to pursue to keep awareness going strong.
- From this discussion point, various individuals from here noted that it is important to have the word go out and promote what people are doing through the portal across committee lines so we can all be in the know regarding latest developments and sources available to the CRRA membership and public alike. Jean also noted that a significant number of Catholic-produced and related pamphlets have been digitized to date and around 5,000 have been completed to date and the rest of the collection will most likely be finished most likely by June 2016. Parish histories are another priority and one that will receive greater attention in the coming year. Jim O'Toole noted that at Boston College there are a number of massive project ongoing at the school and going beyond basic cataloging of materials into a more advanced approach into the future.
- Other potential ties can be had with the ATLA who are current owners of the Catholic Literature Index brand. Other connections can also be made in looking at the history of Protestant-Catholic relations, Catholics in the Gilded Age, Mexico, Latin America, 16-18<sup>th</sup> century life, and various others topic areas of note. Finding additional leads is part of the future objective path.
- At this point we left with a number of different objectives including a continuation of the newspaper project and its importance along with the goal of defining various objectives in the year ahead prior to adjournment of this discussion period.

Respectfully Submitted By,  
Alan Delozier  
Chair