



Catholic Research Resources Alliance

<http://www.catholicresearch.net>

CRRRA Catholic Newspapers Task Force

Thursday October 6, 2011

11:00 a.m. – Noon Eastern, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Central

Call: 1-866-469-3239 Attendee access code: 219 864 93

AGENDA and Notes

Present: Cait Kokolus, Pat Lawton, Malachy McCarthy, Noel McFerran, Susan Ohmer, Darren Poley, Steven Szegedi, Jennifer Younger

1. Welcome – Noel McFerran, chair

2. Review charge and timeline

- Revised timeline is attached and also posted to the Newspaper TF folder in the CRRRA Admin area.
- Charge is to draft a 2-3 page prospectus and submit to a funding organization [Mellon]. We will likely need 3-4 meetings and a series of drafts.

3. Discussion

- 1. Project scope. For example, what will be included in the environmental scan? Will there be chronological parameters? How do we define “newspapers?” How do we define “Catholic?”**
- 2. Digitization: what do we mean by this?**

- Noel added “geographic” and Darren “language” to the discussion.
- Begin with parameters, for newspapers used Union List of Serials, Catholic Press Directory
- “Catholic” definitions and examples of range:
 - Diocesan published newspapers
 - Recognition by local bishop defined Catholic, orthodoxy was important in earlier days in US
 - Publisher is Catholic
 - A Catholic Sunday edition in a secular weekly newspaper
- Timeframe? What is the cutoff?
 - One way is to look at copyright, pre-1923 and post-1923
 - For the scan, include all up North American, broadly defined Catholicity, to the present day

- For digitization, focus on two phases: pre-1923 initially.
- Mellon not necessarily interested in digitizing for digitizing, it is hard to ignore the last century.
- Does project scope include working with different organizations to provide broader assistance? For example, the Southern Messenger (San Antonio) is turning vinegar. Will we want to work with diocesan archives to help with local support?
- Microfilm conversion or newspaper?
 - If already filmed, it likely does not exist in paper
 - Digitize from whatever exists and is in best shape
 - What are the legal considerations when the original paper is out of copyright and is microfilmed? Seem to be no impediments if it is a straight conversion.
- Geography – include Canadians? Yes, for internationalization and value.
- Priorities for digitization, how determine? Circulation of newspaper not a good indicator, major cities and newspapers have impact on national policy.
- Digitization – what do we mean by that? Presenting the digital equivalent of film? Scholar knows title and chooses March 8, 1912 ... or fully OCR'ed, searchable, with metadata, titles differentiated from paragraph, bylines for authors ... not necessary for environmental scan but need some idea of how much we are getting into this.
 - Added value in OCR added value is enormous. Trend in direction that those things most valuable to scholars not at full level, but say we want things searchable.
 - Can put out dirty OCR and set up so users can correct or recommend correcting OCR as being used.
 - There are 2 major newspapers in Toronto which were OCR'd with good resolution but does not allow users to make distinctions between words such as "loyal" and "legal" due to type font. Only metadata helps with that. Old newspapers may not OCR very accurately.
 - The added value of metadata and indexing is very high for scholars, so perhaps again some priorities could be set for selective metadata and indexing
 - Toward a New Age of Partnerships (TANAP) <http://www.tanap.net/> is a huge project – best to have set of recommendations to guide smaller producers of materials, with understanding that we take what people can provide with goal of OCR. At the outset, good digital surrogates and eventually converting to later date?
- Value proposition.
 - Statement on why important, of interest to scholars in fields beyond strictly Catholic Studies, such as sociology, urban studies, community, education, ethnicity, youth culture, immigration
- Nature of materials accepted.
 - Primarily reproduced, opportunity to provide things to supplement? Dominican has materials related to the critic? Could point to change in direction to newspaper might also be of value.
 - Once off ground, worthwhile as secondary scan.

4. Wrap up, suggestions for agenda for next meeting

Meetings are scheduled for **each Thursday in October at 11:00 am eastern, 10:00 central.**

October 13

October 20

October 27

Conference call-in

To join in conference calls, call: 1-866-469-3239

Attendee access code: 219 864 93

Task Force Charge:

On Sept. 21, 2011, the CRRA Board of Directors approved the establishment of a task force charged with developing a project prospectus in support of CRRA [2011/2012](#) goal 1.4/2.2.

The project prospectus will outline the following activities:

- Conduct an environmental scan of Catholic newspapers (print, digital, film)
- Set priorities for digitizing
- Draft a framework for creating a Catholic directory of newspapers or other means of providing access to Catholic newspapers via the Catholic portal
- Identify strategies for members to collaboratively digitize their resources through activities such as collaborative grant projects, harvesting, digitization on demand, etc. The plan will include a statement of core values, vision and mission, the benefits of CRRA in advancing Catholic scholarship, as well as directions and strategies to carry out the mission and deliver value to stakeholders.

Deliverables: The first deliverable will be a 2-3 page prospectus which will include: the value proposition, overview of scope, and a back-of-envelope budget. If invited to submit a proposal, the second deliverable will be the full proposal.

Catholic Newspapers TF roster

1. Cait Kokolus, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary Library
2. Pat Lawton, CRRA
3. Malachy McCarthy, Catholic Library Association
4. Noel McFerran, University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto, Task Force Chair
5. Tim Meagher, Catholic University
6. Susan Ohmer, University of Notre Dame
7. Darren Poley, Villanova University
8. Steven Szegedi, Dominican University
9. Jennifer Younger, CRRA