



# Catholic Research Resources Alliance

<http://www.catholicresearch.net>

## CRRRA Catholic Newspapers Task Force

**Thursday October 13, 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, Steven Szegedi

#### 1. Approve draft minutes from Oct. 6 meeting (attached)

Approved.

#### 2. Discussion items

##### 2.1. Review and confirm decisions from previous meeting

- For the **scan**, include all up North American, broadly defined Catholicity, to the present day
  - Scan focuses on newspapers, not more broadly serials. Definition of newspaper: Timely, current, reflects what's happening. Based on format, such as the Catholic Worker, op-ed articles but physical format says tabloid, newspaper. Frequency is not a good indicator. Will need to give some parameters at beginning of the scan.
  - Survey people to determine what is out there and provide guidelines for them to tell us about what they have. Keep in mind when we do the scan – acidic, covered with dirt? What is critical, fragile or at-risk?
  - National Digital Newspaper program at LC. [National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP): <http://www.loc.gov/ndnp/>] Every paper possible. Microfilmed all newspapers in state, regardless of sponsorship. Use as part of grant. OCLC record? Look for report from NDNP says we excise all Catholic. Mellon would ask about this. LC is digitizing but would not look at smaller ones. Find statement to confirm. Get statement from LC and look at gap. Look at their technical guidelines. Pat will follow up.
  - Get idea of how many Catholic newspapers in OCLC, use NDNP project to make educated guess regarding scope and size.
  - Advertise broadly. In past, would publish in print, now, the scan does not stop. Continually update.
- For **digitization**, focus on two phases: pre-1923 initially (see 2.2.)

- Prefer **OCRed** digitized content; set priorities for selective **metadata and indexing**
  - Metadata. Make it possible for other people to add to the value of the content, provide opportunities to add metadata.
  - Digitization. Will we recommend we receive simulacra of item itself? Evidential value itself. How will we recommend they provide digital materials? Include advertisements? Physical nature? B&W ok if two or three color? Compressed image and transcription of text? Not much point of doing it in a half way, will do all. Things already filmed, take as is, often originals not there. Tell contributors “we will take what you can describe.”

**2.2. Issue of cutoff date of pre-1923. If we were able to do something that brought us closer to the present, that would be useful as well.**

- For digitization, focus on two phases: pre-1923 initially.
- 2 part project: scan and digitize pre-1923. Post-1923 is less urgent and rife with legal issues.

**2.3. Goal of free access to content**

- Goal is free access for scholars, for all.
- Like Internet Archive, not only available free but able to do what they want with it. Encourage folks to do what they want with it pre-1923.
- Safe to put up everything, as long as it is freely available. We are on firm ground with pre-1923 microfilm.
- Photos add to post-1923 problems. Run by a lawyer.
- Post-1923 would have to be careful about downloading, etc. If you wish to reuse, need to contact copyright holder. (post-1923)

**2.4. Discuss the “value proposition” for the prospectus. Brainstorm important points in drafting the statement. Identify different aspects of the value of Catholic newspapers to scholars, possibly even names of scholars who would lend a quote.**

- For prospectus, argue why newspapers – more brittle and not indexed. Under-digitized, under-accessible and endangered. Range of newspapers covers a wider range of subject areas.
- Cite example papers.
- Preservation of content. Statement regarding condition and immediate need to address a particular title.
- Facilitate completion of complete runs, added bonus.
- Newspapers can do word searches, critical.
- What do Catholic newspapers represent? An underclass voice, critical for social history. Class formation, ethnicity, adaptation to new environments, religious discrimination. Parish histories, charitable work, school systems, hospitals.
- *Habits of Compassion* questions theme of welfare history which credits Protestants; Charity Sisters of New York credited – much revisionism going on.
- Giving voice to the other.
- Quotations from scholars – who? Historians? Carl Smith at Northwestern revisits the 19c through newspapers. Another story is told in the newspapers. Haymarket riot. Used newspapers

effectively to tell another story. Tim Gilfoyle Pickpockets' tale, at Loyola. Gay and lesbian, revising assumptions about history.

- Immigration Research History Center, Minnesota. Director is Donna Gabaccia. Many immigrant newspapers which would be Catholic. Talked about use of term immigration and how it changed over time.
- Seek quote from general scholars and specifically Catholic scholars. Of use to all, Catholic community, social historians generally will find useful.

### **2.5. Other: How to**

Make clerical support part of the grant to deal with processing, follow up. Board of advisors, 2-3 scholars assist in identifying but need someone to survey and locate stuff.

Would become an online directory. First grant comes up with a product and will be helpful to scholars. Online and searchable by diocese or topic, ethnicity or whatever. Searchable by state, etc. Let people add names as well, even track those papers you know of but cannot find. Include title changes.

Goal of union list of serials at CLA is to get volunteers in diocese to see where things are located. CLA has up to 1957 in an access database. Overlap here with CLA union list project (CLA project is bigger, includes serials)– making results available publicly. Say to Mellon that other projects can use our work, we will cooperate with other projects, name them.

Use Willinger (19c) as starting point.

### **3. Wrap up and agenda items for next meeting**

Discuss draft prospectus.

4. **Next meeting date:** Thursday, Oct. 20, 11:00 Eastern, 10:00 Central. **Call-in information** is the same as above.

### **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

### **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.