



Archival Representations of Women in a Congressional Collections Archive

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■ Introduction

Study of women's archival representations in a Congressional Collections Archive

Research Questions:

- How are women's records represented in Congressional Collections?
- What formats are women's records preserved in?
- What themes are prevalent in women's records?

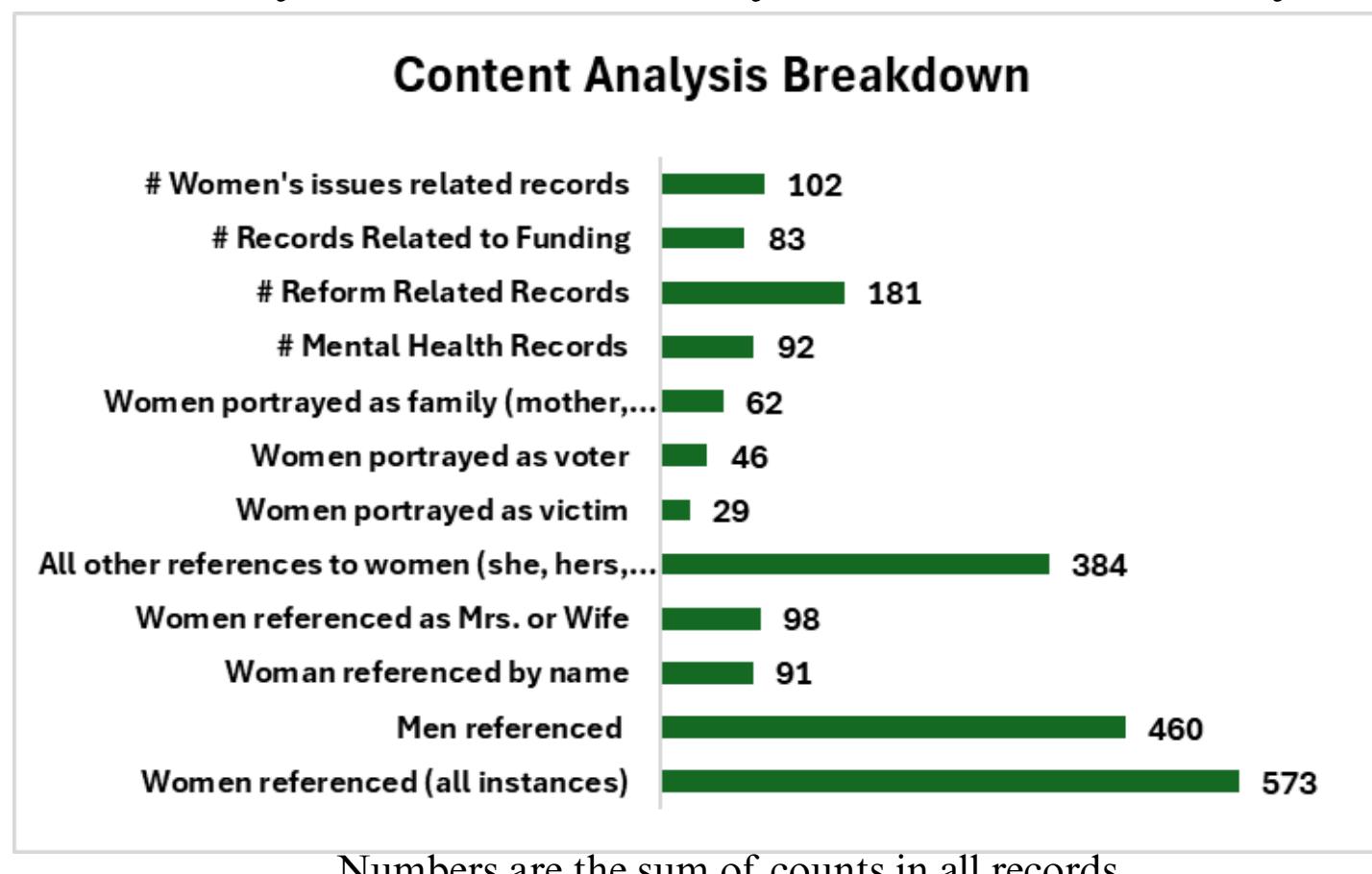
■ Background

Archival representation:

- Processes of arrangement, description, and creation of finding aids and tools (Yakel, 2006).
- Archival representations imbue creators' biases and beliefs
- Archivists determine narratives
- Records influence communal memory
- Women's records are underrepresented
- Underrepresentation has negative impacts
- Congressional collections created by Congress members and staff used as accountable documentation

■ Methodology

- Population: The Carl Albert Center Congressional and Political Collections, including the records of the Julian P. Kanter Political Commercial Archive
- Sample: 243 records
- Data Collection: Keyword searching online finding aids
- Data Analysis: Thematic analysis and content analysis



■ Findings

Representation: minimal to collection wide accreditation (ex. Helen Gahagan Douglas collection).

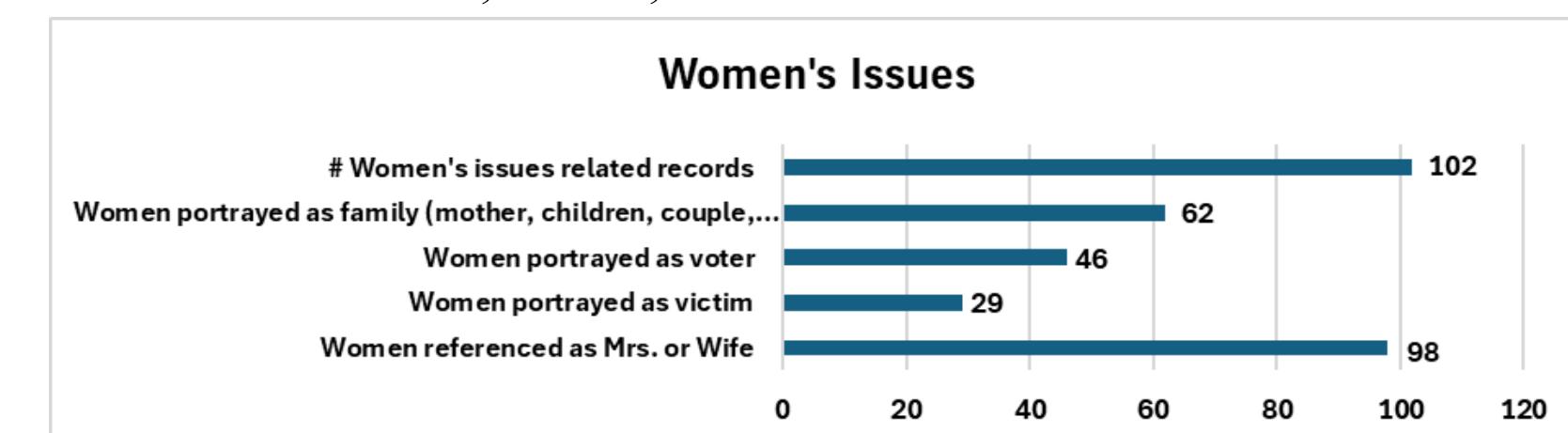
Heavily politicized

Formats:

- Text, film, magnetic tapes, DVDs, photographs, and digital files

Themes:

- Women's issues
 - Records relating to women's reproductive rights, civil rights, education, etc.
- Women's Identities
 - Victim
 - Voter
 - Wife
 - Mother
- Vague
 - Records with missing or problematic Scope and Contents, Dates, or Extents fields.



■ Conclusions

Women's records often contain reform and civil rights themes, and portray women as victims, voters, wives, and mothers.

■ Acknowledgments

Yakel, E. (2006). Archival representation. In F. X. Blouin & W. G. Rosenberg (Eds.), *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar* (pp. 151–164). University of Michigan Press.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3998/mpub.93171.19>