

# Report on the 2008 Wisconsin Records Assessment Project Survey

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## Introduction

In 2006, the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board (WHRAB) published a strategic plan for the next five years which outlined four major goals including one “to promote the collection of historical records that document the diverse history of Wisconsin, from 1945 to the present.”

The first step in realizing this goal was to conduct a statewide survey of Wisconsin historical records repositories in order to find out what documentation already exists for the latter half of the twentieth century, what subjects are presently being collected by which individual repositories and where the gaps in documentation lie.

The next phase in the project will be to conduct a series of visits to participating repositories to clarify survey answers and to gain additional background information.

The following report summarizes the information gathered during the Wisconsin Records Assessment Project survey (Phase I) conducted by the Wisconsin Historical Society on behalf of the Wisconsin State Historical Records Advisory Board in 2008. A second report will be produced after the site visits to repositories (Phase II) are completed and will include a more detailed and interpretive analysis.

## Survey Design and Execution

*Methodology.* Using the fourteen broad topical categories (listed and described in Appendix A) from the Wisconsin Historical Society’s manuscript collecting policy as the framework, the survey sought information from historical records repositories about their post-1945 Wisconsin manuscript holdings including the subject areas their collections document, the cubic/linear measurement of collections in each area, the formats included in their holdings, about collection access and information retrieval at each institution, and their current and future collecting plans.

The survey focused on papers created by individuals and organizations and did not include records created by state and local government. Examples of the types of materials included in manuscript collections are letters, diaries, ledgers, minutes, speeches, business records, records of community organizations, and legal papers. Other significant historical collections included in the survey contain photographs, video recordings, audio recordings, and moving images.

Seventy-one repositories, identified as having substantial Wisconsin focused manuscript holdings, were initially contacted via electronic mail and were sent the survey on-line using SurveyMonkey software. The survey participants included archives at University of Wisconsin campuses, larger county and regional historical societies, archives at private colleges and universities, corporate archives, and several museums and public libraries that have manuscript collections.

The survey remained open for thirty days from May until June 2008, but was reopened to accommodate repositories needing an extension. Additionally, five paper surveys were sent out in order to accommodate those repositories with limited access to the Internet. Of the seventy-one repositories sent surveys, sixty-one responded. Six of the total respondents answered only a portion of the survey, while fifty-six completed the survey in its entirety. A copy of the survey sent to historical records repositories can be found in Appendix B.

*Repository types* . The survey included a cross-section of the different types of repositories holding manuscript material which documents Wisconsin history. The types of repositories have been divided into five categories based primarily on the function of the institution.

The category "Academic" includes private and public universities and colleges. "Historical Societies and Archival Repositories" (referred to from here on out as Historical Societies) is meant to include local and county historical societies and state and city historical societies, but thus far the Wisconsin Historical Society is the only state archives and is not included in the analysis; city archives are often held in public libraries and are thus included in that category. "Public libraries" which hold original manuscript material were included and at times are the repository for city records. The category "Museums" includes organizations specializing in the collection of 3-dimensional objects which sometimes includes local or county historical societies. The category "Records Creators" includes corporations and businesses; Native American tribes which do not maintain museums; and religious organizations including dioceses, but not academic institutions. Although attempts were made to include a broad range of repository types, Academic institutions and museums dominate the survey with Historical Societies as the next largest group.

Two other surveys of historical records repositories were completed by the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board, one in 1996 which included a total of 157 repositories and one in 2005 which included 133 repositories. These surveys lend additional data to the number and types of historical records repositories in the state. However, the total number of historical records repositories statewide, including all repository types, is estimated at being close to 450. A breakdown of repository types included in this survey and in the WHRAB 2005 survey is shown in Figure 1.

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**Figure 1. Repository types**

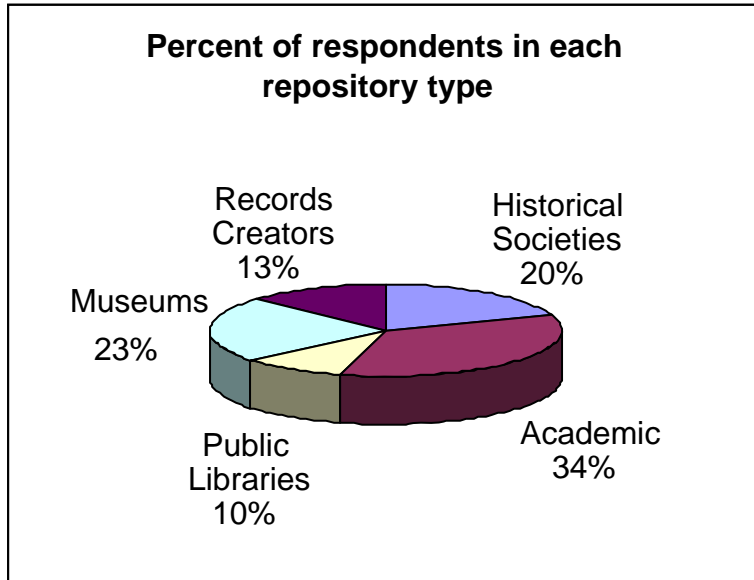
This table shows the number of respondents in each repository type category as defined above.

<b>Repository Type</b>	<b>Total number of respondents 2008 survey</b>	<b>Percent of total respondents 2008 survey</b>	<b>Total number of respondents 2005 survey</b>	<b>Percent of total respondents 2005 survey</b>
Historical Societies and Archival Repositories	12	19.7%	25	19.1%
Academic (Colleges and Universities)	21	34.4%	14	10.6%
Public Libraries	6	9.8%	50	38.2%
Museums	14	23%	12	9.2%
Records Creators, including businesses, religious organizations (excluding academic institutions), and Native American tribes.	8	13.1%	30*	22.9%*
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*The 2005 survey included 16 government archives and 4 other types of records creators.

**Figure 2. Repository types**

This chart shows the percentage of respondents in each repository type category.



*Geographic Distribution.* Repositories included in the survey are located in the state of Wisconsin, with the exception of one museum which holds records related to the Potawatomi Tribe of Wisconsin. The geographic breakdown is based on the locations of the Wisconsin Historical Society's fourteen Area Research Centers, a network of loaning and borrowing repositories located at UW campus libraries throughout the state, at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center and at the Superior Public Library. Each Area Research Center serves a specific geographic region and the remaining repositories included in the survey have been categorized into the established ARC regions based upon their county of residence. The regions with the highest proportion of repositories include Region 8 served by UW Milwaukee and Region 6 served by UW Green Bay. The regions with the lowest proportion of repositories include areas served by UW River Falls, the Superior Public Library, UW Platteville, and the Northern Great Lakes Center (Fig. 3).

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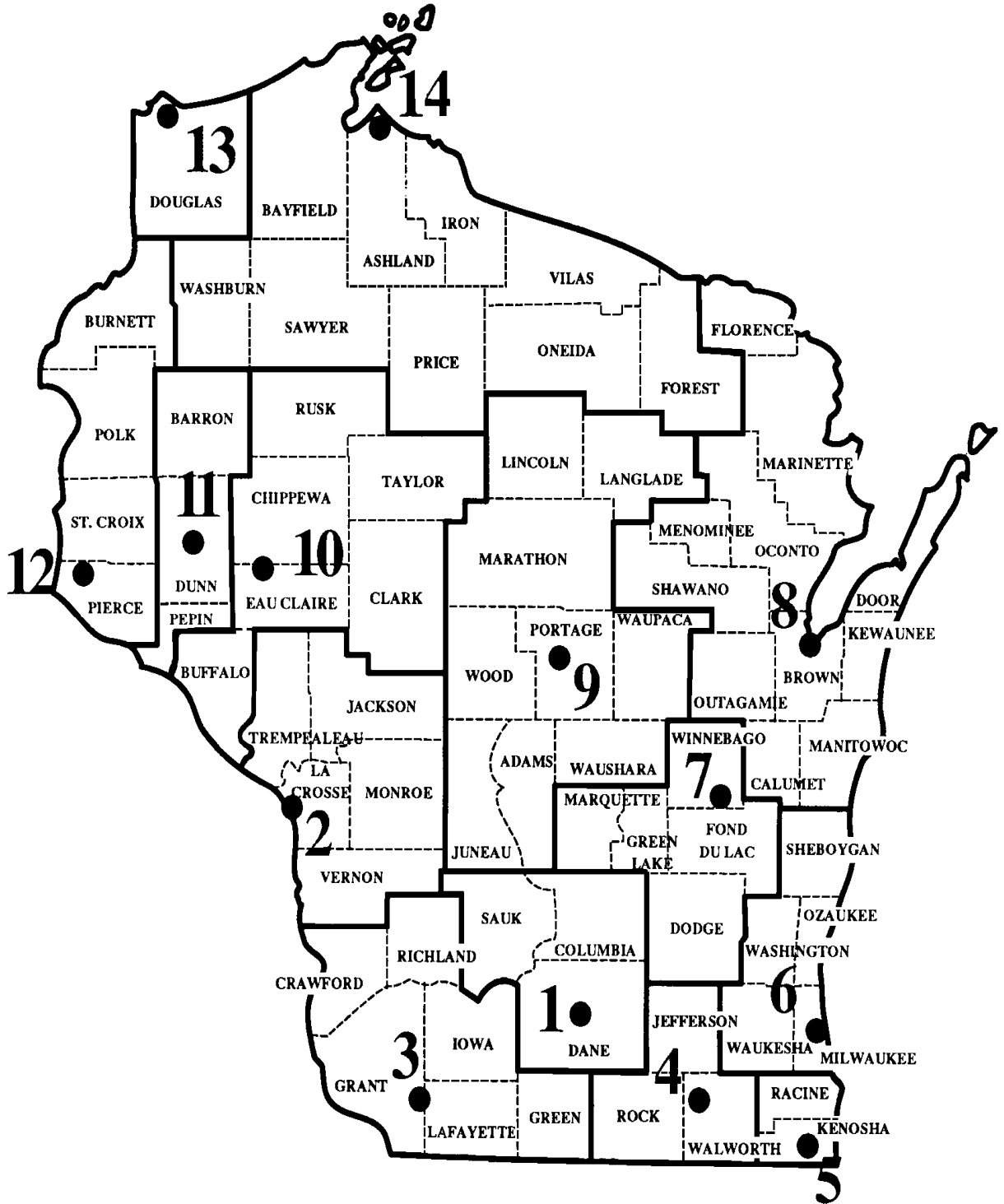
**Figure 3. Geographic regions**

The number of respondents located in each of the fourteen Area Research Center regions.

Regions	Number of repositories
0-Out of state	1
1-WHS serving Columbia, Dane, Sauk counties.	6
2-UW La Crosse serving Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, Vernon counties.	3
3-UW Platteville serving Crawford, Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland counties.	1
4-UW Whitewater serving Jefferson, Rock, Walworth counties.	3
5-UW Parkside serving Kenosha, Racine counties.	2
6-UW Milwaukee serving Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington, Waukesha counties.	17
7-UW Oshkosh serving Marquette, Winnebago, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, and Dodge counties.	2
8-UW Green Bay serving Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano counties.	16
9-UW Stevens Point serving Adams, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Portage, Waupaca, Waushara, Wood counties.	3
10-UW Eau Claire serving Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Eau Claire, Rusk, Taylor counties.	2
11-UW Stout serving Barron, Dunn, Pepin counties	2
12-UW River Falls serving Burnett, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix counties.	1
13-Superior Public Library serving Douglas county.	1
14-Northern Great Lakes Center serving Ashland, Bayfield, Forest, Iron, Oneida, Price, Sawyer, Vilas, Washburn counties.	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>

Figure 4. Geographic regions

Map of the fourteen Area Research Center regions.



## Survey Results

### Part I-Questions 1 through 11-Repository Information

Repositories were asked about intellectual and physical access to collections for research by the public at their institutions and about the types of bibliographic tools used to describe archival materials, about staff time spent on the acquisition of new material for their collections, the institution’s collecting policy, and the subjects they are actively and currently seeking.

*Access to collections.* The majority of repositories surveyed are open to the public (Fig.5), yet many of the smaller repositories such as local historical societies recommend appointments to use collections at their repository. Forty-six or 75% of the respondents have some portion of their collections described, either in a public catalog or elsewhere, however there is still a significant number of repositories (25% of respondents) reporting that none of their collections are described for public access (Fig. 6). This can be partially explained by the inclusion in the survey of private corporations and businesses which often do not allow public access to their collections.

Figure 5. Question I. 2

Are your collections open to research by the general public?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.2%	52
No	14.8%	9
<i>answered question</i>		61

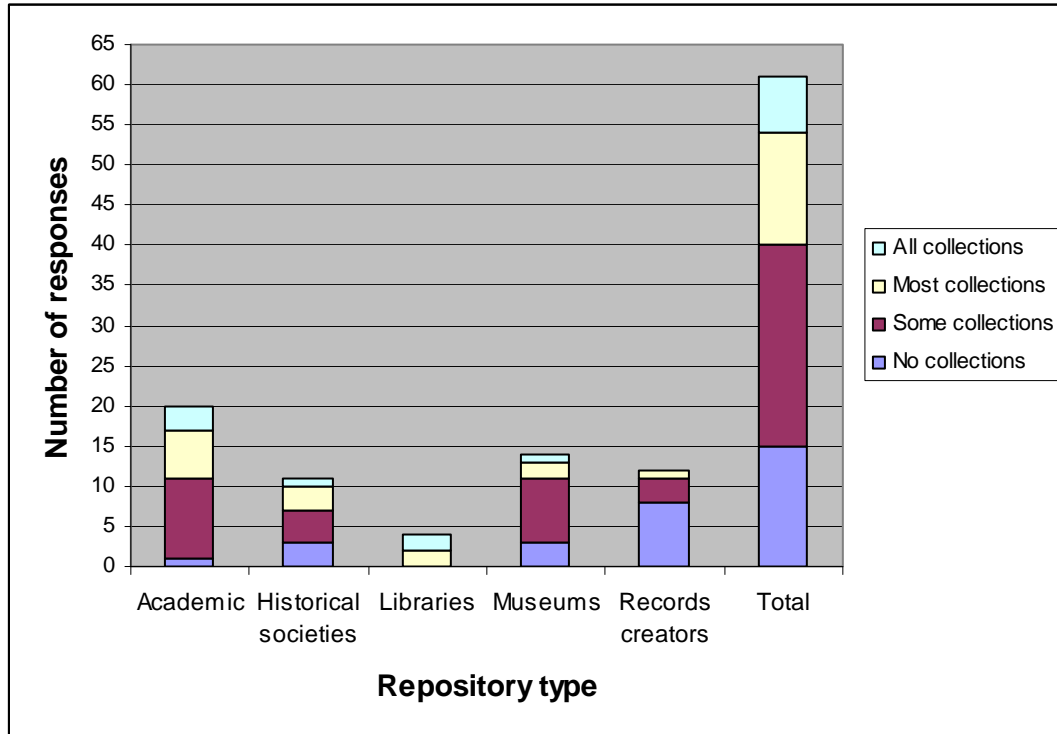
Figure 6. Question I. 3

How many of your collections are described in a public catalog or somewhere else?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
All collections	11.5%	7
Most collections	23.0%	14
Some collections	41.0%	25
No collections	24.6%	15
<i>answered question</i>		61

Academic institutions and public libraries report that most of the collections they own are described. Historical societies are evenly distributed between the

number with no collections, some collections, and most collections described (Fig. 7).

Figure 7. Portion of collections described by repository type

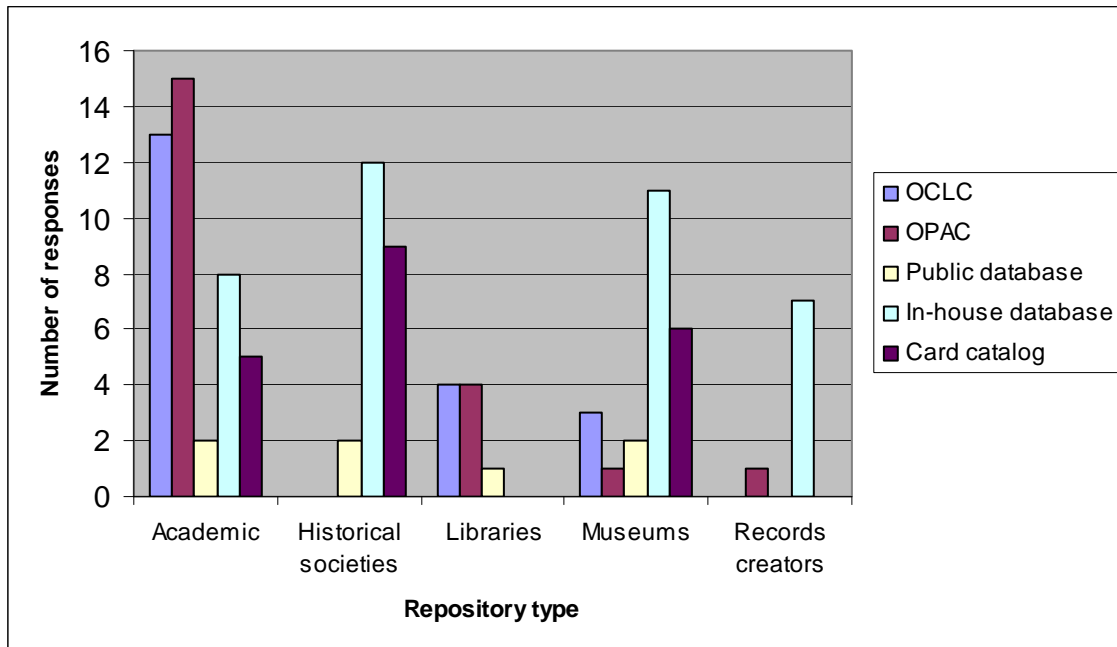


*Bibliographic Tools.* Paper and electronic finding aids and private in-house databases are the most common tools used for archival description at the repositories surveyed (Fig.8). The type of cataloging system used most frequently is an in-house database, with Online Public Access Catalogs (OPAC) and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) the next most often used systems. Looking at which catalog systems are used by repository types, in-house databases and card catalogs are used most often by historical societies and museums and online catalog systems are used most often by academic institutions and public libraries (Fig. 9). Considering the advances in technology and tools available for describing collections on the Internet, 61% of the repositories surveys do not have finding aids to their collections in electronic format. Academic institutions account for the greatest use of electronic finding aids with 57% of the total number of academic repositories using them and they account for 20% of the total respondents using electronic finding aids.

Figure 8. Question I. 4

Which of the following bibliographic tools are used to describe collections in your repository? Check all that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
OCLC (Online Computer Library Center)	32.8%	20
OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog)	34.4%	21
NUCMC (National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections)	4.9%	3
Publicly available electronic database	11.5%	7
In-house (not public) electronic database	62.3%	38
Card catalog	32.8%	20
Paper finding aids	63.9%	39
Electronic finding aids	39.3%	24
Paper pathfinders or bibliographies	23.0%	14
Electronic pathfinders or bibliographies	9.8%	6
Paper subject guides	29.5%	18
Electronic subject guides	18.0%	11
None	3.3%	2
<i>answered question</i>		<b>61</b>

Figure 9. Catalog systems used by repository types



*Acquisitions Staff.* The majority of repositories have a designated staff member responsible for the acquisition of new material (Fig. 10) with most reporting that they spend between 0%-20% of their time on this task excluding accessioning and cataloging (Fig. 11). It was noted by some respondents that records are acquired through a collections committee or a records management program and not by an individual staff member. Almost 30% of the respondents reported that new materials are brought to them and not actively collected due to the lack of staff and time to seek out donors and follow leads.

Figure 10. Question I. 5

Is there a staff member at your repository who is responsible for acquiring new collections?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	70.5%	43
No	29.5%	18
<i>answered question</i>		61

Figure 11. Question I. 6

How much time does the person responsible for acquiring new collections spend on this task (excluding accessioning and cataloging)? Please provide an approximation based on overall job duties.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0%-20%	67.2%	41
21%-40%	13.1%	8
More than 40%	1.6%	1
Not Applicable	18.0%	11
<i>answered question</i>		61

*Collecting Policies.* Forty-five or 73.8% of the total respondents have collecting policies (Fig. 12) and of those forty-five, thirty-six or 80% report that the collecting policies state that they collect materials related to Wisconsin people, places, and events (Fig. 13). Those institutions which have collecting policies that *do not* state that they collect materials related to Wisconsin are typically businesses, academic institutions, or museums that have narrowly defined policies specific to their organization or that collect materials which are national in scope rather than local. Sixteen repositories do not have collecting policies and when asked whether there was a plan to create one, twelve answered in the affirmative (Fig. 14).

Figure 12. Question I. 7

Does your repository have a collecting policy?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	73.8%	45
No	26.2%	16
<i>answered question</i>		61

Figure 13. Question I. 8

Does your collecting policy state that your repository solicits and/or accepts collections related to Wisconsin people, places, or events?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	59.0%	36
No	16.4%	10
We do not have a collecting policy	24.6%	15
<i>answered question</i>		61

Figure 14. Question I. 9

If your repository does NOT have a collecting policy, is there a plan to create one?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	19.7%	12
No	6.6%	4
We already have a collecting policy	73.8%	45
<i>answered question</i>		61

*Subject Areas Collected.* Respondents were asked to choose all the subject areas in which they are seeking new material. Business/Industry and Social Organization/Activity are subjects sought by the most repositories with 57.4% of the respondents marking these as being collected. Additional subjects being sought most often by repositories include Military, Populations, Religion, Recreation/Leisure, and Transportation. The least sought subjects are Agriculture, Natural Resources/Environment, and Labor. Although Business/Industry and Social Organization/Activity stand out as being subjects collected by the greatest number of repositories, the rest of the subjects are evenly distributed as to the number of repositories collecting them (Fig. 15 and

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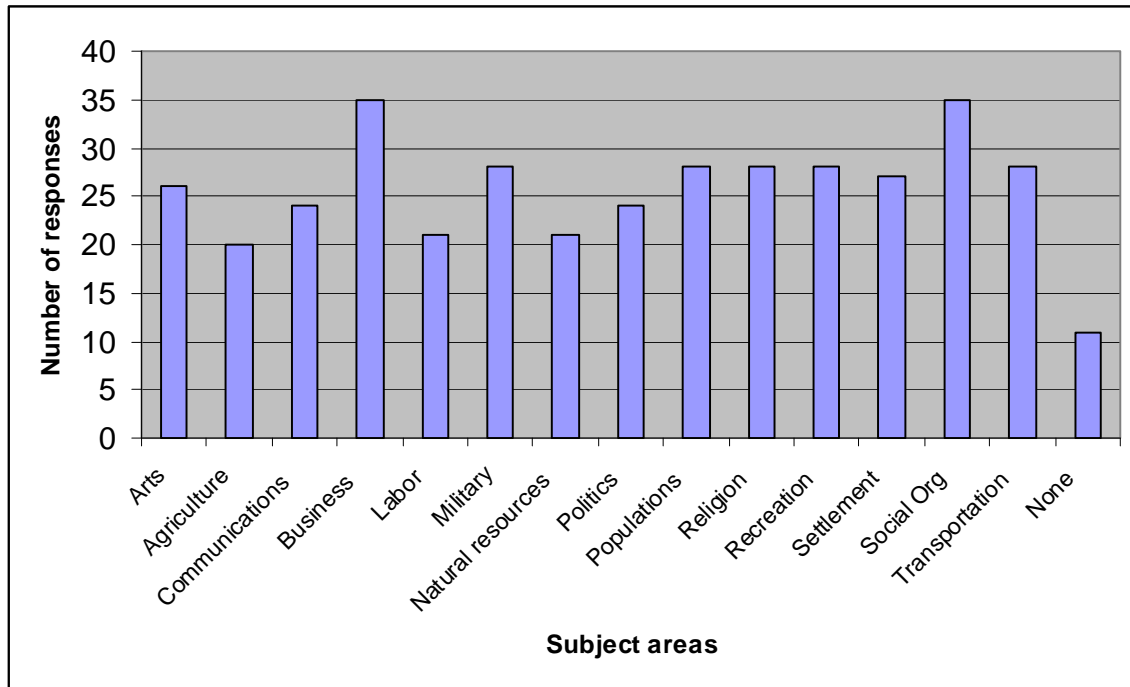
Fig. 16). Additionally, the category “None” was selected eleven times and “Other” was selected twenty-one times. “Other” was a category used primarily for comments which referred to the subjects collected as being limited to specific geographic areas (i.e. county specific) or to intra-institutional records.

**Figure 15. Question I. 10**

The subject areas used in the survey are from the Wisconsin Historical Society’s collecting policy.

<b>From the list below, choose all the subject areas that are actively being sought by your institution.</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Arts: Including fine and applied arts, architecture, music, literature and performing arts	42.6%	26
Agriculture: Including farming, farm production and processing, animal husbandry, agri-business, agricultural organizations and cooperatives	32.8%	20
Communications: Including print journalism, commercial and non-commercial broadcasting, new media, advertising, and other aspects of publishing	39.3%	24
Business and Industry: Including commerce and manufacturing, processing and service industries, and businesses	57.4%	35
Labor: Including labor leaders and unions, related organizations, and labor education	34.4%	21
Military: Including military history, veterans and veterans' groups, military organizations and units, and war protests	45.9%	28
Natural Resources and Environment: Including use of natural resources, environmentalism, and ecology	34.4%	21
Politics and Government: Including political parties, groups, movements, and politicians	39.3%	24
Populations: Including ethnicity, ethnic history, and other diverse population groups	45.9%	28
Religion: Including religious organizations, movements, and denominations	45.9%	28
Recreation and Leisure: Including hobbies, social and cultural organizations, vacation, and travel	45.9%	28
Settlement: Including pioneers, urban and rural settlement and development	44.3%	27
Social Organization and Activity: Including education, family and domestic life, social and cultural organizations, and social action	57.4%	35
Transportation: Including air, ground, and water	45.9%	28
None	18.0%	11
<i>answered question</i>		<b>61</b>

Figure 16. Subjects being sought by respondents



**Part II-Questions 12 through 15-Assessment of Current Holdings**

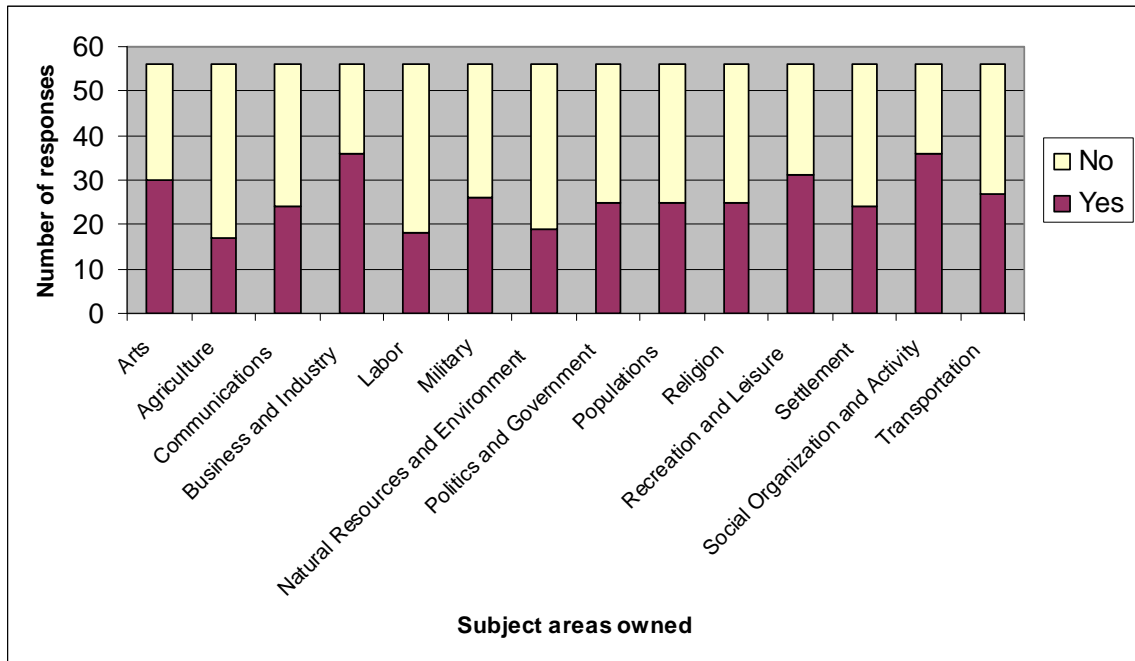
Survey participants were asked about the subject areas their collections document, how much material is owned in each subject, and about the importance of the subjects to their overall holdings.

*Subjects Owned by Repositories.* Business/Industry and Social Organization/Activity are the top two subject areas most owned by survey respondents with 64.3% of repositories reporting collections. Following these subjects, Recreation/Leisure is reported as owned by 55.4% of respondents and Arts by 53.6%. Agriculture is owned by the fewest number of respondents, with 30.4% reporting that they own collections in this area. Labor, Natural Resources, and Settlement follow as subjects owned by the fewest number of repositories with 32.2%, 33.9%, and 42.9% of respondents reporting they own collections in these areas (Fig. 17 and Fig. 18).

Figure 17. Question II. 13

Does your repository own post-1945 Wisconsin collections in the following subject areas?			
Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count
Arts	30	26	56
Agriculture	17	39	56
Communications	24	32	56
Business and Industry	36	20	56
Labor	18	38	56
Military	26	30	56
Natural Resources and Environment	19	37	56
Politics and Government	25	31	56
Populations	25	31	56
Religion	25	31	56
Recreation and Leisure	31	25	56
Settlement	24	32	56
Social Organization and Activity	36	20	56
Transportation	27	29	56
<i>answered question</i>			56

Figure 18. Number of repositories with and without collections in each subject area



**Wisconsin Records Assessment Project Report-16**

*Estimates of Cubic Feet of Material in Each Subject Area.* Repositories were asked to give an estimate of the linear or cubic footage of the collections they owned in each subject area. The answer choices were given as ranges of cumulative cubic feet, i.e. 1-10 c.f., 11-20 c.f., 21-30 c.f., and more than 30 c.f. The number of repositories reporting they own more than 30 c.f. was greatest for Business/Industry with Social Organization/Activity, Religion, Politics/Government and Recreation/Leisure following (Fig. 19).

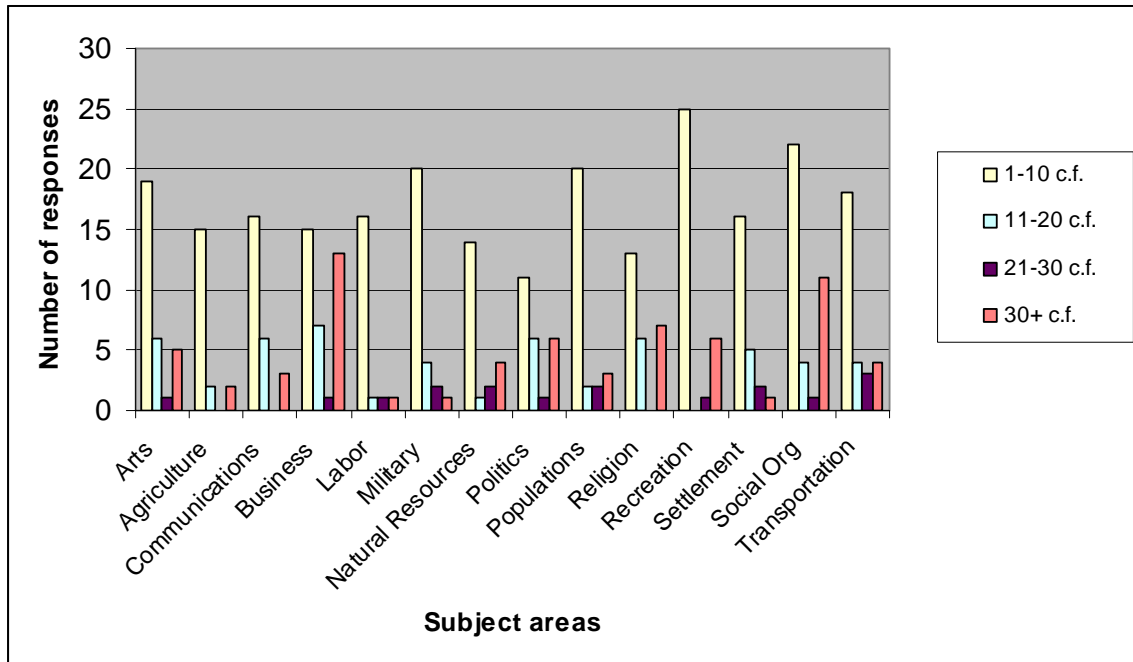
Using the 1-10 c.f. category, the number of repositories reporting collections is greatest for Recreation/Leisure with Social Organization/Activity, Populations, and Military following. Overall, there are many repositories dispersed across the state owning very small amounts of material in subject areas and few repositories owning large amounts of material in subject areas (Fig. 20). Generally, libraries, museums, and historical societies tend to have small collections documenting a wide range of topics while academic institutions and records creators hold large collections documenting a smaller breadth of subjects.

Cumulative total measurements for each subject area were calculated using the high end of the measurement ranges excluding the more than 30 c.f. category. Based on these estimates for total cubic/linear feet of material which are grossly underestimated, the greatest amount of material, listed from high to low, is owned in Transportation, Military, Arts, Social Organization/Activity, Settlement, and Business/Industry with total c.f. more than the 300 c.f. mark.

**Figure 19. Question II. 14**

<b>Approximately how many cubic or linear feet of post-1945 Wisconsin material does your repository own in each subject area?</b>						
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>1-10 feet</b>	<b>11-20 feet</b>	<b>21-30 feet</b>	<b>More than 30 feet</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Arts	25	19	6	1	5	56
Agriculture	37	15	2	0	2	56
Communications	31	16	6	0	3	56
Business and Industry	20	15	7	1	13	56
Labor	37	16	1	1	1	56
Military	29	20	4	2	1	56
Natural Resources and Environment	35	14	1	2	4	56
Politics and Government	32	11	6	1	6	56
Populations	29	20	2	2	3	56
Religion	30	13	6	0	7	56
Recreation and Leisure	24	25	0	1	6	56
Settlement	32	16	5	2	1	56
Social Organization and Activity	18	22	4	1	11	56
Transportation	27	18	4	3	4	56
<i>answered question</i>						<b>56</b>

Figure 20. Number of repositories owning subjects in terms of cubic feet



## Wisconsin Records Assessment Project Report-18

*Importance of Subject Areas to Overall Holdings.* Repositories were asked to weigh the importance of each subject area, in which they owned collections, as to its overall importance to their holdings. The rating scale used was 1=Not Important; 2=Somewhat Important; 3=Important; and 4=Very Important. Using the rating average, the subjects identified as most important across institutions are ranked as follows: Populations, Business/Industry, Settlement, Social Organization/Activity, and Military (Fig. 21-Fig. 24).

**Figure 21. Question I. 15**

How important to your institution's overall holdings are post-1945 Wisconsin materials in these subject areas?							
Answer Options	Not Important (1)	Somewhat Important (2)	Important (3)	Very Important (4)	We do not have collections in this subject area		
						Rating Average	Response Count
Arts	7	12	10	7	18	2.472222	54
Agriculture	8	6	7	6	25	2.407408	52
Communications	9	6	12	7	21	2.5	55
Business and Industry	10	5	11	18	11	2.840909	55
Labor	8	5	10	6	24	2.482759	53
Military	6	9	8	10	20	2.666667	53
Natural Resources and Environment	11	6	7	8	21	2.375	53
Politics and Government	9	5	9	10	20	2.606061	53
Populations	6	4	11	14	18	2.942857	53
Religion	7	6	10	8	22	2.612903	53
Recreation and Leisure	7	11	12	8	16	2.552632	54
Settlement	7	4	9	12	21	2.8125	53
Social Organization and Activity	6	9	14	13	13	2.809524	55
Transportation	7	9	9	10	18	2.628572	53
						Other (please specify)	7
						<i>answered question</i>	<b>56</b>

Figure 22. Importance of subject areas to repositories' overall holdings

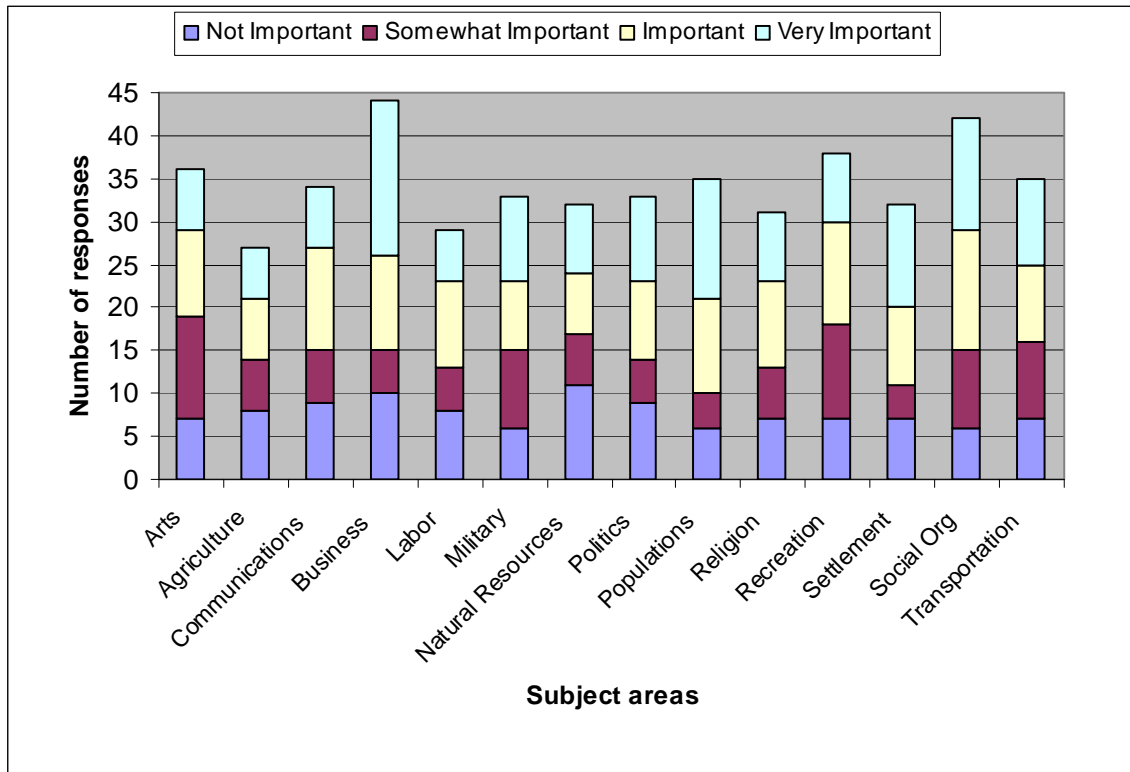
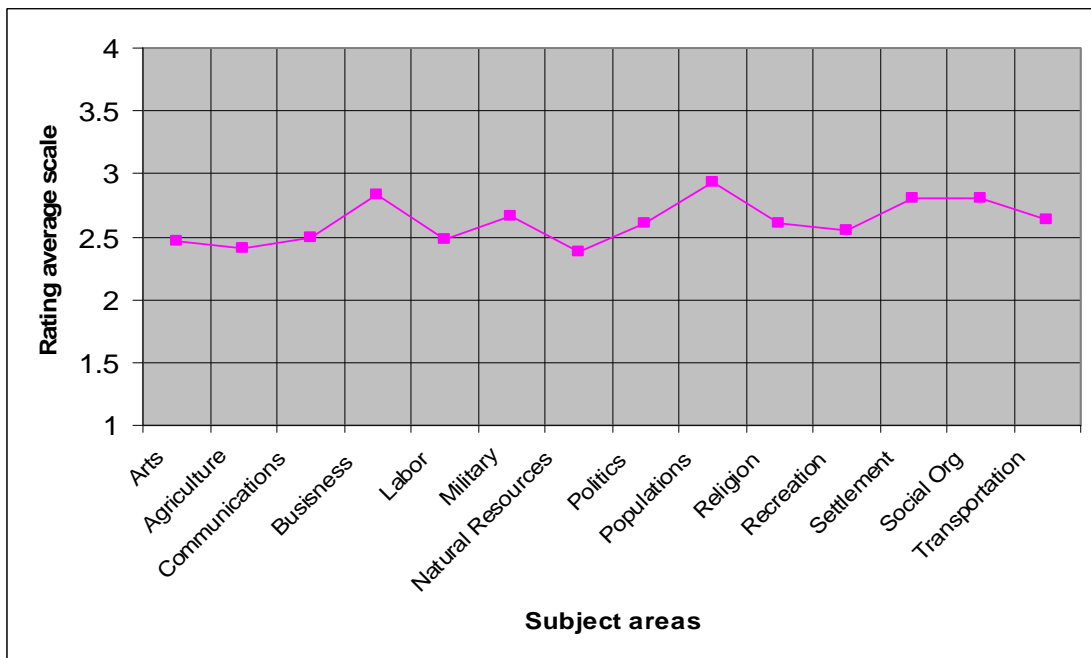


Figure 23. Plot of rating averages for importance of subject areas to repositories' overall holdings



## Wisconsin Records Assessment Project Report-20

**Figure 24.**

Table showing percentages of respondents that chose Very Important or Important (combined); Very Important; and Not Important for importance of subject areas to overall holdings at their repository

Subject	Very Important or Important Combined (% of Responses)	Very Important (% of Responses)	Not Important (% of Responses)
Arts	47%	19%	19%
Agriculture	48%	22%	30%
Communications	56%	21%	26%
Business	66%	41%	23%
Labor	55%	21%	28%
Military	55%	30%	18%
Natural Resources	47%	25%	34%
Politics	58%	30%	27%
Populations	71%	40 %	17%
Religion	58%	26%	23%
Recreation	53%	21%	18%
Settlement	66%	35%	22%
Social Organization	64%	31%	14%
Transportation	54%	29%	20%

### Part III-Questions 16 through 20-Current and Future Collecting Interests

Survey participants were asked to gauge the need for improved documentation in each subject area at their repository and statewide. Additionally, participants were asked to identify subject areas their repository would be interested in collecting in the future and to list three subjects they considered to be most important to understanding post-1945 Wisconsin history in the future.

*Repository Need for Improved Documentation in Subject Areas.* Survey participants were asked to weigh the amount of need for improved documentation in each subject area at their repository with 4=Strong Need; 3=Moderate Need; 2= Low Need; and 1=No Need at All (Fig. 25). There was a fifth choice for "I Don't Know" which was not figured into the rating averages for overall need across repositories.

Using the rating average, subjects with the strongest need overall include Populations, Social Organization/Activity, Business/Industry, Military, Communications, Natural Resources and Recreation/Leisure (Fig. 26). Subjects with lowest need overall include Arts, Agriculture, Politics, Transportation, Labor, and Religion. However, the rating averages for overall need for improved documentation for each subject all fall close to the mean of 2.5 with the range of scores falling between 2.21 and 2.63 (Fig. 27). These scores show that repositories feel that on some level they need to improve documentation in most subjects.

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Figure 25. Question III. 16

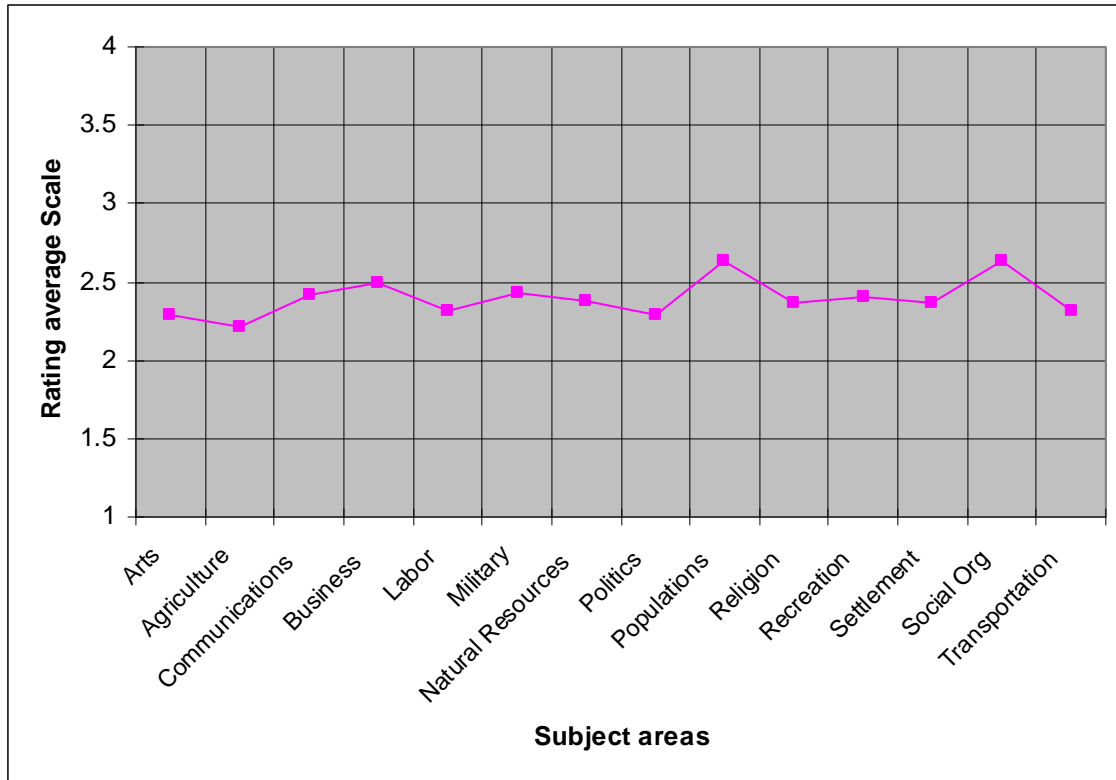
Within the context of your repository, do you think there is a need for improved documentation of post-1945 Wisconsin history in the following subject areas?						
Answer Options	Strong Need (4)	Moderate Need (3)	Low Need (2)	No Need at All (1)	I Don't Know	Response Count
Arts	5	17	18	12	4	56
Agriculture	9	15	7	22	3	56
Communications	9	18	12	14	3	56
Business	11	17	14	12	2	56
Labor	7	17	9	16	7	56
Military	9	18	10	14	5	56
Natural Resources	14	10	10	18	4	56
Politics	4	22	11	15	4	56
Populations	16	16	5	15	4	56
Religion	7	19	11	14	5	56
Recreation	8	19	11	14	4	56
Settlement	13	11	9	18	5	56
Social Org	16	13	11	12	4	56
Transportation	7	15	15	13	6	56
<i>answered question</i>						56

Figure 26.

Table showing the rating averages and percentages of respondents that chose Strong Need or Moderate Need (combined); Strong Need; and No Need at All for improved documentation in subject areas at the repository level

Subject	Rating Average	Strong and Moderate Need Combined (% of Responses)	Strong Need (% of Responses)	No Need (% of Responses)
<b>Arts</b>	2.29	42%	10%	23%
<b>Agriculture</b>	2.21	45%	17%	42%
<b>Communications</b>	2.42	51%	17%	26%
<b>Business</b>	2.50	52%	20%	22%
<b>Labor</b>	2.31	50%	14%	33%
<b>Military</b>	2.43	53%	18%	27%
<b>Natural Resources</b>	2.38	46%	27%	35%
<b>Politics</b>	2.29	50%	8%	29%
<b>Populations</b>	2.63	62%	31 %	29%
<b>Religion</b>	2.37	51%	14%	27%
<b>Recreation</b>	2.40	52%	15%	27%
<b>Settlement</b>	2.37	47%	25%	23%
<b>Social Organization</b>	2.63	56%	31%	23%
<b>Transportation</b>	2.32	44%	14%	26%

Figure 27. Plot of rating averages showing the need for improved documentation of subject areas at the repository level.



*Statewide Need for Improved Documentation in Subject Areas.* Survey participants were asked to weigh the amount of need for improved documentation in each subject area statewide with 4=Strong Need; 3=Moderate Need; 2= Low Need; and 1=No Need at All (Fig. 28). There was a fifth choice for “I Don’t Know” which was not figured into the rating averages for overall need across the state. However, there was a high rate of respondents who chose the “I Don’t Know” category averaging about half of all respondents in each subject area.

Using the rating average, subjects reported as having the strongest need overall include Populations, Natural Resources, Settlement, Agriculture, Recreation, and Social Organization/Activity (Fig. 29). Subjects with lowest need overall include Communications, Military, and Transportation. The rating averages for overall need at the state level for improved documentation for each subject were more pronounced than those for improved documentation at the repository level with the range of scores falling between 2.18 and 3.44 (Fig. 30 and Fig. 31).

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Figure 28. Question III. 17

Based on your knowledge of existing archival collections statewide, is there a need to improve post-1945 documentation in the following subject areas?						
Answer Options	Strong Need (4)	Moderate Need (3)	Low Need (2)	No Need at All (1)	I Don't Know	Response Count
Arts	6	13	4	1	32	56
Agriculture	8	13	2	1	32	56
Communications	2	12	6	2	34	56
Business	4	15	6	0	31	56
Labor	5	13	5	0	33	56
Military	7	13	6	2	28	56
Natural Resources	11	10	2	1	32	56
Politics	4	10	9	1	32	56
Populations	15	9	3	0	29	56
Religion	4	16	4	1	31	56
Recreation	7	13	3	1	32	56
Settlement	11	11	4	1	29	56
Social Org	9	12	5	1	29	56
Transportation	3	11	8	1	33	56
					Other (please specify)	4
					<i>answered question</i>	<b>56</b>

Figure 29. Table showing the rating averages and percentages of respondents that chose Strong Need or Moderate Need (combined); Strong Need; and No Need at All for improved documentation in subject areas at the state level

Subject	Rating Average	Strong Need (% of Responses)	Low and No Need (% of Responses)	Strong and Moderate Need Combined (% of Responses)
<b>Arts</b>	3.0	25%	21%	79%
<b>Agriculture</b>	3.17	33%	13%	88%
<b>Communications</b>	2.64	9%	36%	64%
<b>Business</b>	2.92	16%	24%	76%
<b>Labor</b>	3.0	22%	22%	78%
<b>Military</b>	2.18	25%	29%	71%
<b>Natural Resources</b>	3.29	46%	13%	88%
<b>Politics</b>	2.71	17%	42%	58%
<b>Populations</b>	3.44	56%	11%	89%
<b>Religion</b>	2.92	16%	20%	80%
<b>Recreation</b>	3.08	29%	17%	83%
<b>Settlement</b>	3.19	41%	19%	81%
<b>Social Organization</b>	3.07	33%	22%	78%
<b>Transportation</b>	2.70	13%	39%	61%

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Figure 30. Plot of rating averages for the need for improved documentation of subject areas at the state level

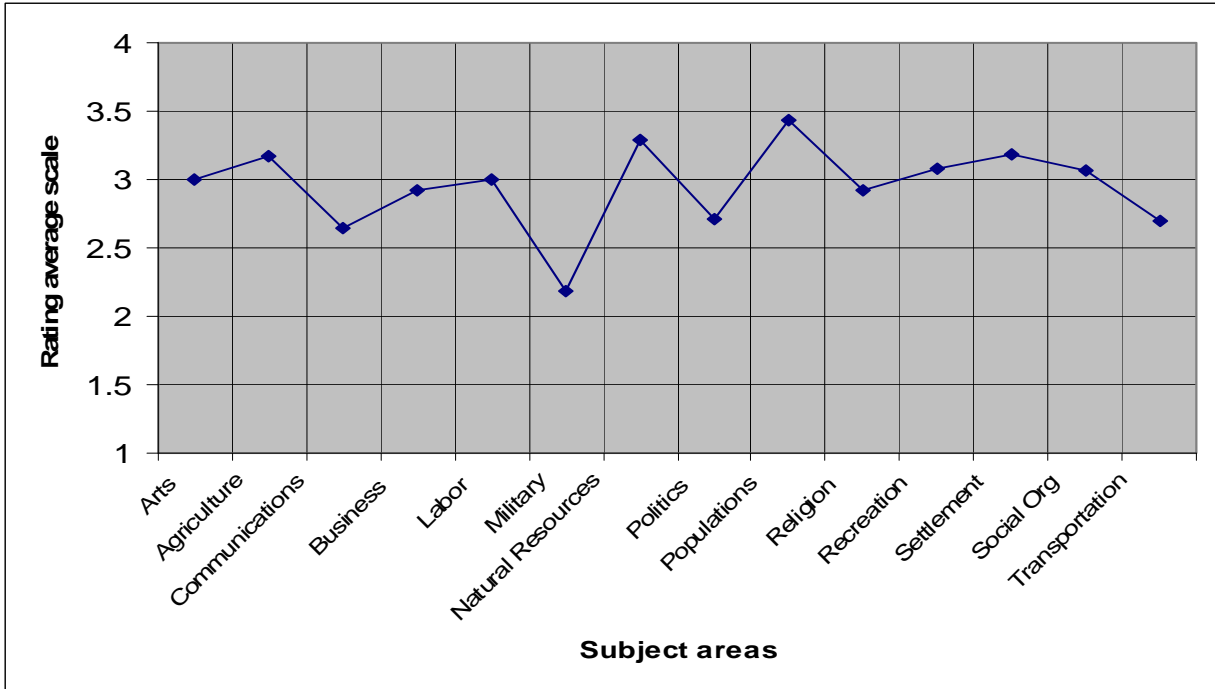
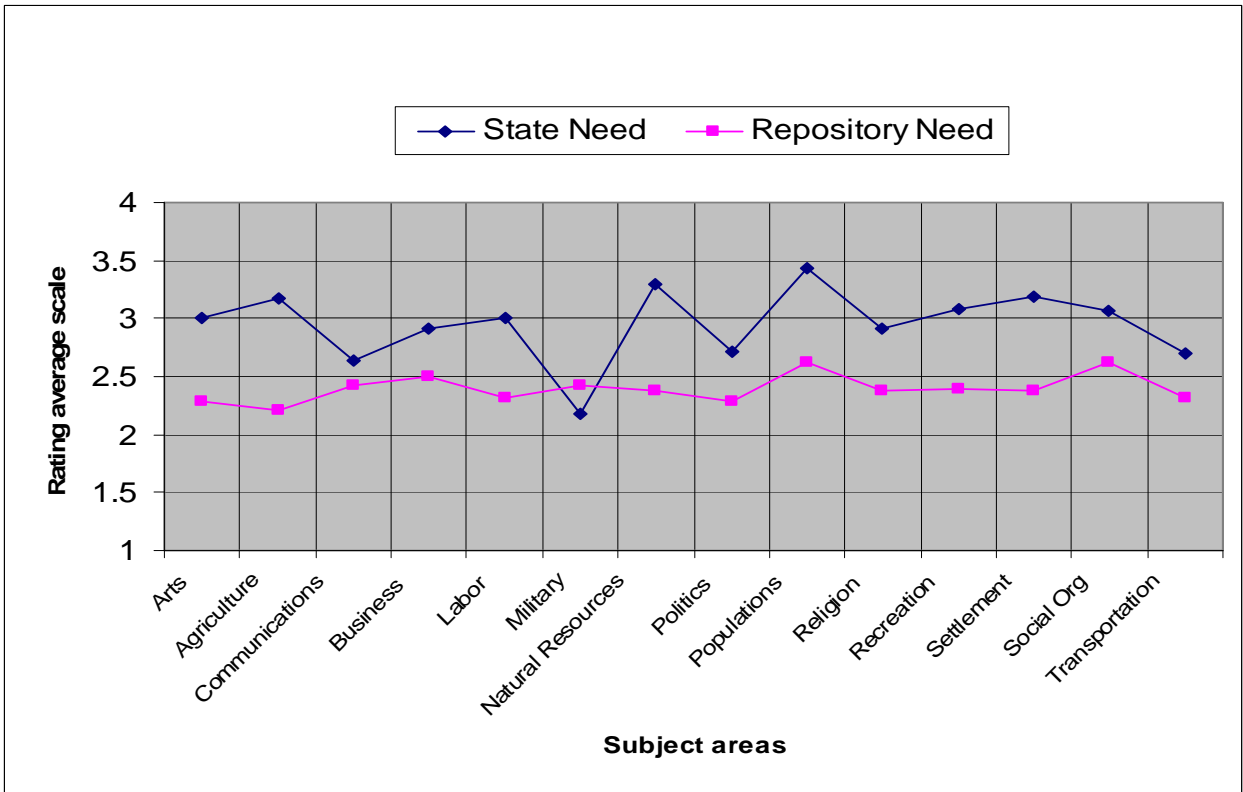


Figure 31. Plot of rating averages for state need against repository need for improved documentation in subject areas



*Future Collecting Interests at Repositories*

Survey participants were asked to list the top five subject areas their repository would like to collect in the future. Agriculture, Business/Industry, None, Social Organization/Activity, Settlement, Populations, and Military were chosen by the greatest number of respondents overall as subject areas they would begin collecting in the future, if given an option (Fig. 32). Based on the number of responses as a percentage for subjects chosen as the first or second choice, Agriculture comes out on top; Business/Industry second; None third; Populations fourth; and Settlement fifth (Fig. 33). Based on the number of responses as a percentage for subjects chosen as any of the respondents five choices, Social Organization/Activity comes out on top; Populations second; Settlement third; Business/Industry fourth; and Military fifth (Fig. 34). Agriculture (17%), Communications and Politics/Government (both 21%) and Religion and Arts (both 23%) came out as the bottom choices overall using number of responses as a percentage for any choice.

Figure 32. Question III. 18

If your repository could begin collecting post-1945 Wisconsin materials in any subject areas, what would they be? Check your top five choices from the list.						
Answer Options	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Fourth Choice	Fifth Choice	Response Count
Arts	3	0	2	4	3	12
Agriculture	4	2	0	2	1	9
Communications	1	3	1	1	5	11
Business	8	4	1	4	2	19
Labor	2	2	3	1	3	11
Military	2	6	4	4	1	17
Natural Resources	4	2	4	3	3	16
Politics	2	2	0	4	3	11
Populations	7	8	9	3	2	29
Religion	2	2	4	2	2	12
Recreation	2	2	4	2	5	15
Settlement	8	3	3	3	5	22
Social Org	3	10	9	7	5	34
Transportation	2	1	2	4	2	11
None	2	1	1	0	1	5
					Other	2
<b>Answered Question</b>						<b>52</b>

**Figure 33.**

Tables showing rank order of the top five subjects overall that repositories desire to collect in the future using percentage of responses for First or Second Choice (combined)

<b>Top five subject areas overall as determined by First or Second Choice</b>	<b>First or Second Choice (combined % of responses)</b>
Agriculture	67%
Business	63%
None	60%
Populations	52%
Settlement	50%

**Figure 34.**

Table showing rank order of the top five subjects overall that repositories desire to collect in the future using percentage of response for any choice (first, second, third, fourth, or fifth) combined

<b>Top five subject areas overall as determined by Any Choice</b>	<b>Any choice (% of total responses)</b>
Social Organization	65%
Populations	56%
Settlement	42%
Business	37%
Military	33%

*Three Most Important Subjects to Better Understand Post-1945 Wisconsin History.* Survey respondents were asked to choose three subject areas they thought were most important in understanding post-1945 Wisconsin history. Social Organization/Activity came out on top using the number of responses as a percentage; Populations second; Business/Industry third; Natural Resources fourth; and Politics/Government fifth. The bottom choices include: Transportation, Religion, Military and Arts (Fig. 35).

Figure 35. Question III. 19

Please choose the three most important subject areas YOU think will contribute to a better understanding of Wisconsin's history since 1945?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Arts	8.0%	4
Agriculture	18.0%	9
Communications	14.0%	7
Business	40.0%	20
Labor	14.0%	7
Military	8.0%	4
Natural Resources	36.0%	18
Politics	30.0%	15
Populations	44.0%	22
Religion	6.0%	3
Recreation	20.0%	10
Settlement	18.0%	9
Social Org	46.0%	23
Transportation	2.0%	1
Other (please explain)		2
<i>answered question</i>		<b>50</b>

### Conclusion

The information gained from the Wisconsin Records Assessment Project survey provides an excellent overview of the post-1945 historical records landscape in Wisconsin and will guide the conversations with individual repositories during the site visits. The intent of the site visits is to develop a more detailed understanding of the types of historical records available at repositories and what those collections document or more importantly what they do not document. From there, the project will include a one day symposium to discuss the findings of the survey and the site visits. The end goal of the project is to provide a framework for future, collaborative collecting of modern historical records in Wisconsin which will focus on subject areas presently absent or under-documented with regard to post-1945 Wisconsin history.

## **Appendix A. Wisconsin Historical Society Collecting Areas**

### **Arts**

Including fine and applied arts, architecture, music, literature and performing arts

### **Agriculture**

Farming, farm production and processing, animal husbandry, agri-business, agricultural organizations and cooperatives

**Communications:** Print journalism, commercial and non-commercial broadcasting, new media, and other aspects of publishing

### **Business/Industry**

Commerce and manufacturing, processing and service industries, and businesses

### **Labor**

Labor leaders and unions, and related organizations

### **Military**

Military history, veterans and veterans groups, military organizations and units, protest movements

### **Natural Resources/Environment**

Use of natural resources, environmentalism and ecology

### **Politics and Government**

Political parties, groups, and movements

### **Populations**

Ethnicity, ethnic history, and other diverse population groups

### **Religion**

Religious organizations, movements, and denominations

### **Recreation/Leisure**

Hobbies, social and cultural organizations, vacation and travel

### **Settlement**

Pioneers, urban and rural settlement and development

### **Social Organization and Activity**

Education, family and domestic life, social and cultural organizations, social action

### **Transportation**

Air, ground, and water

**Appendix B**

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/libraryarchives/whrab/pdfs/RecordsAssessment-Survey.pdf>