

The media assesses the value of the humanities both economically and intrinsically -- but the Great Recession changed the balance of the discussion.

In [Collection 1](#), the media tends to discuss the “value” of the humanities in terms of either “extrinsic” or “intrinsic” values.

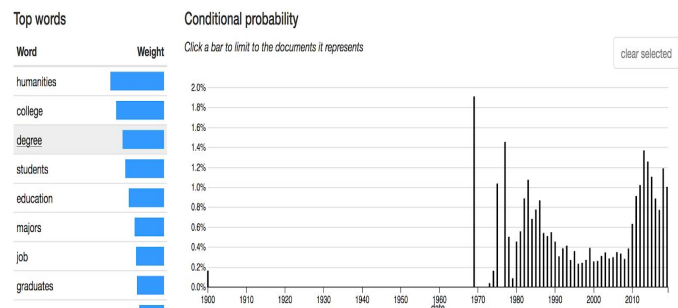
Extrinsic-oriented articles view the humanities in an economic context: how the humanities are related to funding, debt, jobs, career skills, and other quantitative outcomes. By contrast, intrinsic-oriented conversations discuss the innate value of the humanities: fostering skills such as empathy, critical thinking, and analysis. These orientations tend to occur in separate topics and articles in the media. However, their occasional overlaps suggest that the public as represented in the media also values the innate qualities of the humanities as economically productive despite their immeasurability.

[Topic 25](#) is representative of the way the public assesses the extrinsic, economic values of the humanities. Top words include: *job*, *career*, and *business*. Articles associated with the topic discuss issues like jobs and salaries for humanities graduates. Chronologically, the number of articles contributing to this topic in Collection 1 decreased from its high point in the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, plateaued at a low level around 2010, and then sharply increased again at the beginning of 2019 (which marks the end of our Collection 1 corpus). At that point, the number of articles related to the topic surpassed even that of the 1980s. The genres of articles involved vary from blog posts and op-eds to numbers-based news reports (see article [a](#)).

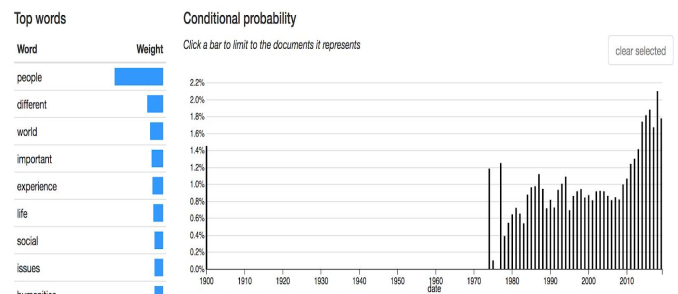
[Topic 61](#), on the other hand, exemplifies the discussion of the innate and immeasurable qualities of the humanities. Articles in this topic frame the humanities as fostering critical understanding and engagement. Top words include *people*, *different*, and *social*, all of which are non-economic. In university student newspapers, the number of articles

contributing to this topic rose after the 2008 Great Recession. (But, significantly, this pattern is not true in the media more generally; see card [KF 4-3](#)). Discussions in Topic 61 mostly take the form of pro-humanities op-eds or articles (see article [b](#)) arguing for the continued relevance of the humanities in a time of economic crisis.

Topic 25



Topic 61



Document collection studied: [C-1](#): ([start page](#))

Topic model studied: [C-1.250](#) (250 topics)

Sample economic value topics: [25](#), [50](#), [73](#), [86](#), [204](#), [229](#), [233](#)

Sample qualitative Value Topics: [9](#), [42](#), [49](#), [61](#), [138](#), [193](#), [220](#)

Representative articles: [a](#), [b](#)

Evidentiary documentation: Documentation node [ID TBD]; [Time Analysis of Topics](#), and [Team 4 Report](#)