

## After 2008, newspapers moderately boosted coverage of the positive economic value of the humanities.

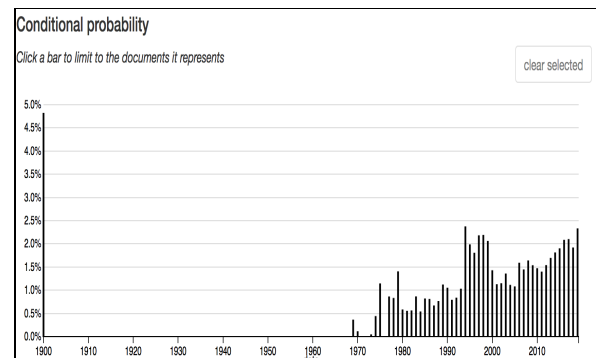
One of our findings is that student university newspapers in particular increased their advocacy of the value of the humanities after the 2008 recession (see [KF-4-3](#)). A complementary finding is that in the wake of the recession newspapers in general in our [Collection 1](#) (82,324 news articles mentioning the “humanities” or science[s]”) increasingly promoted the narrative that humanistic activities have tangible, economic capital (see [KF-4-9](#)).

The topics in our [C-1.250](#) model of Collection 1 where we observe this modest, post-recession rise in discussion of the humanities' economic value draw mostly from student university newspapers or a mixture of such newspapers and mainstream media, such as *The New York Times*. In C-1.250, topics with mostly academic sources are (cited by topic #): [73](#) (humanities grants and funding), [50](#) (humanities jobs), and [204](#) (whose sources treat humanities skills as jobs skills). A number of economically-oriented topics (though representing a wide range of mixed concerns) also touch on the following issues: topic [2](#) (whose documents foreground humanistic pursuits as employable skills), [25](#) (comparing the income benefits of humanities degrees with other college majors), [49](#) (questioning the economic value of humanities degrees), [206](#) (showing the value of distance-learning), [223](#) (about humanities funding and endowments,), and [229](#) (on student debt).

However, we do *not* observe a post-recession rise in such economic discourse concerning the humanities in topics whose underlying documents are

primarily sourced from mainstream newspapers alone. This is evident, for example, in topics [86](#), [131](#), [141](#), [233](#), and [246](#), all of which contain non-university sourced articles discussing humanities funding and grants (see also [KF-1-1](#)).

Just as there is a post-2008 surge of academic writers who affirmed such qualitative values of the humanities as critical thinking and empathy, there is a post-2008 increase among academic sources of attention to the quantitative values of the humanities. We speculate that qualitative and quantitative discourses about the humanities productively reinforce and supplement each other in the media, which raises the following question: in what ways does the media refashion the immeasurable, qualitative values of the humanities into quantifiably economized factors (see also [KF 4-9](#), [KF-4-10](#))?



Proportion of articles in Collection associated with [topic 73](#) increases modestly after 2008.

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

Topic model studied: [C-1.250](#) (350 topics)

Interesting sample topics: [2](#), [73](#), [86](#), [229](#).

Evidentiary documentation for this finding: Team 4 report for summer 2020 & research notes (Lab 4);

[Time Analysis of Topics](#)