

## The media covers U.S. government funding for the humanities as a generalized mix of arts, humanities, and heritage funding.

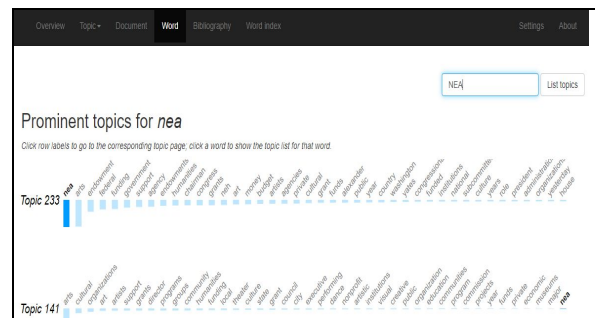
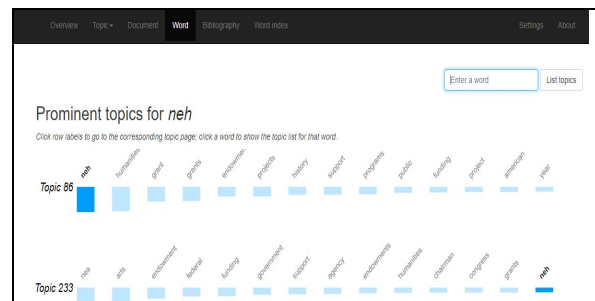
News media covers U.S. government funding for the humanities in ways more confusing and complex than might be anticipated. This is partially because the media portrays both the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as humanities organizations. Articles about the NEA place the agency within a broad spectrum of *arts* programming, occasionally meaning also the humanities. Reporting on the NEH also blurs the margins. The media focuses above all on NEH support for *history* or heritage-based programming, but the NEH also funds arts programming. Thus, humanities funding is not strictly discussed as “arts” and “humanities” in public media, nor is it treated solely in terms of traditional humanities subjects. These conclusions are drawn from a [topic model](#) of our [Collection1](#) of 82,324 unique articles mentioning “humanities.”

For example, Topic [#141](#) is representative of coverage of the spectrum of NEA funding in arts programs. Keywords include *funding*, *grants* and *support for the arts*, *humanities*, *theater*, and *dance*. *Groups*, *children*, and *artists* come together in *museums*, *cultural organizations* and *nonprofits* for *education* and *performances*. (See for example articles: [a](#), [b](#)).

Topics [#230](#) and [#86](#) reflect funded public events related to *history* as *heritage* in *museums* and *historical societies*; through *oral history* and *chautauqua* performances and *cultural exhibits*, *museums* and *displays*. The media here sees that the NEH funds *humanities*, *heritage* and *cultural*

*preservation* while providing public access to humanities education, research and entertainment (e.g., articles: [c](#), [d](#)).

Should U.S. government funding agencies for the humanities and arts such as the NEH and NEA be concerned that a clearer understanding and narrative of how they support their areas has not emerged in the media? How can the story be clarified in journalism? (See also KF-7-2 for what areas of NEH support are visible in the media).



**Document collection studied:** [Collection1](#): U.S. News Media, c. 1989-2019 (WE1S core collection of articles mentioning humanities).

**Topic model of this collection:** [250 topics](#).

**Interesting sample topics in the model:** [86](#), [141](#), [230](#).

**Representative articles:** [a](#), [b](#), [c](#), [d](#).

**Evidentiary documentation for this key finding:** [Topic Model Interpretation Report](#)