Speaking of Downsizing

The use of the term "downsizing" in American news media 1975-2007*

Matissa Hollister

Assistant Professor

Sociology Department

Dartmouth College

*Direct all correspondence to Matissa Hollister, Department of Sociology, HB6014, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03755 (matissa.n.hollister@dartmouth.edu). The author would like to thank Linda Lomelino, Aisha Stewart, Sara Ludin, Anna Greskovich, Adele Maas, Michael Chen, Jamie McCoy, Percy Lee, Marissa Lopez, Adam Holt and Stephanie Acosta for their assistance on this project. The research was supported with funds from the Walter and Constance Burke Research Initiation Awards.

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the use of the term "downsizing" in over 4,000 American news articles between the years 1975 and 2007, using content analysis to examine the prevalence of different article types over time and across four news sources. The analysis shows that the term “downsizing” emerged in the 1970s with introduction of “downsized cars,” referring to efforts by the automobile industry to produce smaller, more fuel efficient cars in response to the oil crisis. In the 1980s, a new corporate practice of permanent job reductions emerged and took on the label “downsizing.” I argue that the selection of this label was a strategic one, as the term carried with it an implied metaphor of fuel efficiency that aided in the acceptance and diffusion of this new practice. These efforts in promoting downsizing as a positive and proactive practice led to its widespread diffusion in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Surprisingly, this new practice evoked little public response until there was a sudden eruption of interest in 1996. The public backlash against downsizing in 1996 was not due to a sudden increase in the prevalence of the practice, but was rather due to a convergence of factors that brought the issue to the forefront. This backlash, however, was short lived and appears to have had only a moderate impact upon the use of the term and the practice since that time.

Youth of America heed this word:

Downsizing.

It is the word of the future. Remember it: downsizing.

Say it three times: "Downsizing. Downsizing. Downsizing"…

Both the verb and the adjective are the same: downsized.

Illustrations:

Verb form: Consolidated has downsized again.

Adjective form: See the downsized 49-year-old man.

"Heavens!" you cry. "Has that 49-year-old man been shrunk…? "

No, he has not been shrunk. He has been laid off from work. We no longer say "laid off." We now say "downsized."

You naturally ask: "Does it follow then that Consolidated, having downsized again, has also been laid off…?"

Not at all. Here is something that is fun to say: Lean and mean….

As we have seen, "lean and mean" is delightful to say, and saying pleasant things puts people in pleasant moods. When Wall Street people are in a pleasant mood they invest in things that have made them feel pleasant.

(Baker 1995: A27)

There is a widespread belief in the United States that we have seen a fundamental change in organizational structures and employment relationships in the last few decades. As the quote above suggests, the practice of corporate downsizing is one the most emblematic features of this "New Economy." The emergence of downsizing in the early 1980s marked an end to the implied social contract of long-term commitment between employers and workers and downsizing continues today, as evidenced by daily announcements of job cuts. American youth have heeded the warnings and now enter the labor market with little expectation of long-term work with a single employer. As the quote above predicted, the practice of downsizing is indeed a central part of our current and likely future labor market.

The quote above is interesting, however, not just because it predicted the continuing importance of the *practice* of downsizing, but also because it pointed to the significance of the

term downsizing, its multiple meanings and connotations, and how the word itself played a role in promoting the practice. In this paper, I analyze the use and spread of the term downsizing in four news media sources since the 1970s: the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *BusinessWeek*. The analysis provides valuable insights both into the strategic use of language to promote organizational practices and into the nature and spread of the practice of downsizing over time.

The paper focuses on the use of the term downsizing in four time periods. First, I explore the origins of both the practice and the term downsizing in the early 1980s. I argue that the choice of the label "downsize" was a strategic use of language because it involved an implied metaphor, and that this label facilitated the acceptance and diffusion of the practice. Second, I use the pattern of downsizing articles in the late 1980s and early 1990s to document the spread of the practice during this period primarily within business circles.

The third part of the analysis examines an unusual pattern in downsizing articles, illustrated in figure 1. The figure shows the distribution of articles using the term downsizing (or downsize, downsized, etc) over time. The top panel in the figure shows the distribution for the four news sources used in this study, while the bottom panel shows the patterns for several other general audience newspapers. A striking aspect of figure 1 is that the downsizing articles in the general audience news sources are highly concentrated in 1996. Upon first investigation, this pattern appears to be typical of management fads. Abrahamson (1996) found a somewhat similar bell-shaped pattern in business news articles on "quality circles." In the case of quality circles, however, the newspaper articles reflected the adoption of the practice, with the height of the bell curve indicating the height of the popularity of quality circles, and the subsequent decrease in articles reflecting an abandonment of the practice (Abrahamson 1996).

In contrast, it is not clear that the pattern in downsizing articles reflects the adoption and subsequent reject of the practice. figure 2 shows the distribution of articles using the term “layoff” (or laid off, layoffs, etc) in the four study news sources as well as the annual unemployment rate. This figure indicates that 1996 was a period of rapidly declining unemployment and very few articles about layoffs. One might conclude from these two figures, that the practice of downsizing is something completely different from layoffs and that its prevalence runs counter to the business cycle. My analysis, however, will show that 1996 was not a period with widespread use of the *practice* of downsizing, but was instead a period of sudden public discussion and mobilization against the practice.

Furthermore, unlike quality circles, the decline in downsizing articles after 1996 does not reflect an abandonment of the practice, but rather a rapid disappearance of downsizing from public discussion. In the final part of the analysis I examine downsizing articles published since 1996. I find modest evidence that the 1996 backlash had an effect on perceptions of downsizing, with business circles moving away from using the term. It is not clear, however, that this backlash had much effect on the use of the practice.

Together, the analysis shows the dynamic interplay between the business world and public opinion in the emergence and spread of corporate downsizing. It shows the social nature of the practice, while at the same time indicating the limits of the ability of public opinion to affect corporate behavior.

Figure 1 about here

Figure 2 about here

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Four previous studies have examined the portrayal of downsizing in news articles. Love (1997) examined articles in *BusinessWeek*, *Fortune*, and *Forbes* magazines between the years 1973 and 1995 that used the term “downsize” or “layoff” in their titles. He used the resulting 53 articles primarily to provide a historical background for a study of the adoption of downsizing by Fortune 100 firms.

Baumol, Blinder, and Wolff (2003) examined 1993-1997 *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* articles for a group of companies known to have downsized during that period, comparing the news reports to data on each firm. Their primary concern was whether the newspaper reports got it “right,” whether the articles were accurate in reporting the causes of downsizing and the types of workers who were dismissed.

Dunford and Palmer (1996) examined articles in popular management literature on downsizing from 1991 to 1994, identifying 74 articles from 43 journals and two books. They examined the use of metaphors around downsizing in these articles, identifying several major types of metaphors used such as military metaphors and the company as body (cutting the fat). They also identified the presence of counter-metaphors during this time period that highlighted the negative consequences of the practice (e.g. corporate anorexia).

Finally, Lamertz and Baum (1998) examined 110 articles in Canadian newspapers between 1988 and 1994 that announced the layoff of middle managers. Their focus was on the form and content of “accounts,” explanations provided by the companies for why they were downsizing. They found that these accounts changed over time as the practice become more accepted and required fewer causal explanations for why the company was downsizing.

While the current study shares some features with these previous studies, it differs from them significantly in both scale and focus. In terms of scale, the previous studies all focused on less than 200 news articles, while the current study involved the examination of 4763 articles. This difference in scale is due to several factors. First, the search parameters were broader, allowing the term "downsize" to appear in the first 300 words of the article text rather than just in the title of the article. This approach allowed me to track the broader use of the term downsizing in multiple types of articles and contexts. Second, the analysis involved a much broader time frame than previous studies, 1975-2007. This time frame allowed me to examine how the nature of downsizing articles changed over the four time periods discussed previously.

Finally, this study has a broader scope because it examines articles from both mainstream newspapers and the business press. Studies of media portrayals of business practices, including several of the studies cited above, tend to limit their analysis to the business press. This approach is understandable, since the focus is often on the diffusion of practices within business circles. This narrow focus, however, misses key opportunities. For instance, institutional theories emphasize concepts such as legitimacy, normative pressures, and public perceptions. These concepts, however, are often measured by proxy (e.g. through the behavior of publicly traded companies or government contractors). An examination of mainstream press sources allows for a more direct assessment of how concepts diffuse into the broader public consciousness. This question is particularly important in the case of corporate downsizing because the practice is not simply a question of management style; the adoption of downsizing had real-world consequences for many individuals outside of business circles.

In addition to differences in scope, this study has a different focus than the previous research cited above. In particular, I focus on the use of the *term* "downsize" and its use over

time with two key purposes. First, I examine the term as an example of the strategic use of language and how this process has evolved over time. Second, I track the use of the term within different news sources and types of articles to provide insight into the practice of downsizing and its diffusion into both business and public discourse.

THE STRATEGIC USE OF LANGUAGE

Numerous scholars in the sociology of organizations, and even more in the study of social movements, have examined the strategic use of language. Whether it's called rhetoric (Suddaby and Greenwood 2005) or framing (Benford and Snow 2000), these studies have shown how language can be used to influence perceptions of events or practices, and that these perceptions can in turn influence behavior and actions.

Metaphors are a particularly powerful tool in this process. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have argued that humans understand the world primarily through metaphors.

> In all aspects of life, not just in politics or in love, we define our reality in terms of metaphors and then proceed to act on the basis of the metaphors. We draw inferences, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans, all on the basis of how we in part structure our experience, consciously and unconsciously, by means of a metaphor (p.158).

In a related process, the practicing of naming or labeling something may also influence perceptions. Safford (2009) argued:

> People rely on these labels to figure out how to behave toward one another. So the power to shape the meaning and application of such labels lies at the heart of politics in both organizations and society more broadly. It's something to be taken seriously.

In this paper, I will argue that the adoption of the term "downsizing" was particularly effective because it was a clever label that evoked an implied metaphor.

The literature suggests that the use of strategic language is particularly important during periods of change and uncertainty, when new circumstances require interpretation and new, non-routine practices are developed (Fiss and Hirsch 2005; Ocasio and Joseph 2005). In these circumstances, strategic language can help accomplish several tasks. Hirsch (1986) suggests that "linguistic framing" can facilitate structural change through three avenues: cognitive, social-psychological, and institutional.

Cognitive. Much of the literature on social movements and framing emphasizes the cognitive aspects of strategic language, since the primary goal in social movements is to affect perceptions of a situation and motivate individuals to action. Examining this literature suggests four ways in which strategic language may affect the perceptions of new practices and facilitate their diffusion:

(1) Making the practice more comprehensible. Similar to Campbell's (1998) idea of "programs," strategic language can provide an argument for why a new practice should work, laying out the expected causes and effects. Metaphors may be particularly valuable in this process because they use familiar terms to describe the unfamiliar, triggering a mental association that makes a situation quickly interpretable and seem more logical (Creed, Scully, and Langstraat 2002; Hirsch 1986; Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

(2) Making the practice appear more desirable. A key task in framing is linking the current issue to broader cultural values. For instance, new practices might be tied to core American values such as freedom, rationality, or efficiency.

(3) Amplification and/or distraction. The act of framing is often compared to a window or picture frame, which focuses our view on certain elements while blocking others from view. Framing, therefore, may focus attention on the positive aspects of a new practice while distracting attention from any negative aspects.

(4) Cultural resonance. Framing often draws upon existing cultural symbols to increase the emotional potency of the message.

Social-psychological. In addition to affecting the cognitive aspects of a new practice, the use of strategic language, especially metaphors, can depersonalize the situation and help distance participants from the action at hand (Dunford and Palmer 1996; Hirsch 1986). For instance, Hirsch (1986) showed how use of metaphors in describing hostile takeovers led the participants to see the process as less personal and allowed the losers in a takeover to lose with dignity. This process is probably quite different from the use of language in social movement contexts, when the goal is likely to personalize the issue.

Institutional. Finally, strategic language can aid in the routinization and institutionalization of new organizational practices. As Meyer and Rowan (1977) commented, "From an institutional perspective, then, a most important aspect of isomorphism with environmental institutions is the evolution of organizational language" (p. 349). Building a common set of labels and language to describe a new organizational practice makes it seem more standardized and therefore more legitimate.

This study will show how the simple adoption of the term "downsizing" was able to achieve many of the functions listed above. I will also show, however, how this process is dynamic and that the meaning and use of the word changed over time.

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

The media can be viewed from two different perspectives. In one way, the media is an independent actor, with its own agenda and influence. From another perspective, the media is a passive forum where competing interests strive to promote their causes (Gamson and Meyer 1996). This study borrows somewhat from both perspectives. On the one hand, the study includes several different types of media sources with the view that each will provide a different perspective, either due to active promotion by the news source or through a more passive catering to the interests of its readers. At the same time, within each news source I divide the articles into several different types (downsizing announcements, articles about the worker's perspective, etc), with the idea that these article types will reflect competing perspectives and interests within each news source. Tracking the use of the term "downsizing" across these different sources and types of articles provides insights both into the use of the term over time and into the views of different constituencies about the practice itself.

DEFINING DOWNSIZING

At its most basic level, downsizing involves the reduction of employment within an organization. A key debate is if and how downsizing is different from layoffs. There are three possible dimensions along which these two terms could be seen to differ. First, some people argue that layoffs are just one of several tools used in downsizing. For instance, job reductions may also be achieved through attrition or voluntary retirement (Budros 2002; Freeman and Cameron 1993). The vast majority of downsizings, however, (at least those covered in the news media) do involve layoffs.

A second possible distinction between downsizing and layoffs is whether the job losses are temporary or permanent. In earlier periods, layoffs tended to refer to temporary furloughs

from work, mainly because these were the most common types of job reductions. Part of the unique nature of downsizing when it was first introduced, therefore, was the fact that the job losses were permanent. Over time, however, the connotation of the term layoff has evolved. For instance, the designers of the Current Population Survey commented:

> In the past, most persons defined layoff as a temporary separation, whereby there was an expectation of recall as soon as business conditions improved. More recently, we have come to recognize that the term layoff has taken on a much broader meaning….In other words, when used in isolation, the term now signifies a degree of permanence to many respondents. (Bregger and Dippo 1993: 7)

It appears, therefore, that this differentiation between the terms is no longer valid.

Finally, some people specify that downsizing must involve specific intentions. For instance, that downsizing is proactive rather than reactive and involves job reductions specifically intended to improve the efficiency of the organization. This definition, however, is particularly challenging to operationalize. For instance, Budros (1997) measured downsizing by first identifying companies that had significant reductions in employment and then examining their annual reports to assess the intentions behind each job reduction. This approach is problematic, however, because it relies upon company self-reports of the reasons for their actions. It seems likely that most companies would try to some extent to portray their actions as proactive and promoting efficiency. In fact, the analysis presented here suggests that the term downsizing was adopted specifically to paint employment reductions that were reactive in nature in a more positive light. In addition, the acceptability of different explanations may vary over time, leading companies to choose different explanations for the same action depending upon the prevailing norms of the period. Indeed, a considerable number of the newspaper articles we

analyzed stated quite frankly that there was little difference between downsizing and layoffs. The authors of these articles felt that the term downsizing was simply putting spin on the situation.

The focus of this study is specifically on the use of the term downsizing in the news media rather than the actual practice. The analysis, however, points to several interesting insights into the nature of the practice and the relationship between downsizing, layoffs, and business cycles.

DATA

The results presented in this paper are based upon a content analysis of articles from four news sources: the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. The study began with the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* and then I sought to add an additional business-oriented source and an additional general audience source. I chose *BusinessWeek* and the *Chicago Tribune* because they are both among the largest circulating news sources in the United States. In addition, both sources showed a distribution of articles over time that pointed to a middle ground between the patterns of the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*, as shown in figure 1. *BusinessWeek* showed a slightly later peak of downsizing articles than the *Wall Street Journal*, while the *Chicago Tribune* had an early increase in downsizing articles and less of a defined peak in 1996 compared to the *New York Times*.

The sample consisted of articles using the term "downsize*" (downsize, downsizing, downsized, etc.) in the first 300 words of the article. A preliminary analysis suggested that articles that do not use the term in the first 300 words were more likely to be mentioning the concept in passing rather than a central focus of the article. The articles were retrieved from three databases: Factiva[1] (current *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *BusinessWeek*), Proquest[2] (current *Chicago Tribune* and historical *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Chicago*

Tribune), and Lexis-Nexis[3] (historical *BusinessWeek*). The time frame ranged from October 1975, the earliest use of the term downsize, to December 31, 2007. The *Chicago Tribune* resulted in a significantly larger number of articles than the other sources. I therefore took a systematic sample of the *Chicago Tribune* articles, examining every other article in chronological order. The total sample size for the analysis was 4,763 articles.

METHODS

The analysis consisted of coding the individual articles based on three factors we called relevance, article type, and article focus. Each article was coded by two separate coders. In cases where the coders disagreed, the final codes were resolved in group meetings with two or more coders. I combined the final codes on these three factors to create a typology, which included five types of articles with a central focus on downsizing ("relevant" article types), and six types of articles that were considered not relevant for various reasons. Table 1 presents the distribution of these article types across the four news sources (descriptions of the article types are below). The "N" column in table 1 provides the count of each type of article. The "tot" column shows the percent of each source's articles found in each type. Finally, the "rel" column shows the number of articles in each "relevant" article type as a percentage of the total number of relevant articles. For example, the table shows that 23 of the *New York Times* articles were coded as announcements. This number represented 1.7% of the 1321 *New York Times* articles analyzed, and 9% of the 255 *New York Times* articles that were coded as relevant.

Table 1 about here

The level of inter-rater reliability for the two coders across these types was not very high. The Cohen's Kappa value was 0.53 across all types and 0.57 for articles where the final code

was one of the “relevant” types. A primary source of this low level of reliability was the "not focus" category. The goal was to identify articles with a primary focus on corporate downsizing, while removing articles that discussed the practice only in passing. A huge number of articles fell into this "not focus" category, almost 40 percent, and the line between relevant and "not focus" articles was fuzzy. Indeed, if one removes the articles where one or more of the coders coded the article as “not focus,” the Kappa level is much higher: 0.70 for all categories and 0.80 for the “relevant” articles. Therefore, while the boundaries between the different types of articles were quite clear, the challenge was in deciding whether downsizing was a central focus of the article.

To further test the value of this typology, I analyzed the content of these articles using General Inquirer, a computerized text analysis program.[4] The General Inquirer program categorizes the text of articles using the "Harvard" and "Laswell” dictionaries, calculating the percent of words in the text falling into the dictionaries’ various categories. Table 2 shows the extent to which articles of a given type are significantly different from other article types along ten of the General Inquirer categories (a description of the General Inquirer categories is in table 3 at the end of the paper). The values in table 2 are standardized deviations from the overall mean.[5] So, for instance, the "announcement" articles had an average percent of positive words that was 0.73 standard deviations below the overall mean. As the table shows, almost all of these differences were statistically significant.[6] The bottom of table 2 also shows the average number of words within each article type.

Table 2 about here

Below are descriptions of each of the article types based upon both the original coding instructions and the General Inquirer results.

Announcements involved articles where the primary focus was the announcement of a downsizing event by a specific company. These articles tended to reflect a combination of the company's own words and a brief evaluation of the company's situation by the news reporter. Announcements tended to be quite short (on average just 288 words). According to the General Inquirer analysis, announcements had high scores in the economic, negative, and quantitative categories and low scores in the positive, emotion, causal, self, "you" and well-being categories.

Company-focused articles examined the situation of an individual company or a handful of companies in the same industry. These articles went into more depth than the announcements, with the average article length over three times as long as the average announcement (947 words). The General Inquirer analysis showed almost exactly the same tendencies in content as the announcements (high negative, economic and quantitative, and low emotion, causal, self, you and well-being), but in weaker form (i.e. the group deviations from the overall means were generally not as large as for the announcements).

Economy articles discussed broad trends in the economy rather than focusing on a particular company. The General Inquirer analysis pointed to several similar patterns to the previous two categories: high in negative, economic, and quantitative words and low in self, you, and well-being words. In contrast to the previous two categories, however, the economy articles used a moderate amount of emotion words and used a high level of causal words, reflecting an interest in the deeper causes and consequences of downsizing.

Worker's perspective articles focused on the experiences of workers who were downsized as well as the experiences of "survivors" (workers who remained in a company after downsizing). This category included articles on laid-off executives and managers as well as front-line workers. The worker's perspective articles showed a distinctly different pattern from

the previous three categories in the General Inquirer analysis. Somewhat surprisingly, the worker's perspective articles were more positive than average, likely due to articles about individuals turning their life around, starting a new business, etc., after being downsized. Less surprisingly, the worker's perspective articles used high levels of emotion, self, you, well-being, and causal words, and low levels of quantitative and power words.

Other relevant articles included articles that focused on downsizing but did not fit into any of the categories above.

In addition to the categories above, a number of articles, in fact the majority, were coded as "not relevant" for various reasons. While these articles are not the focus of the analysis, I will refer to several of these categories in the paper.

Letters were letters written by readers to the newspapers. Interestingly, the letters had high levels of both negative and positive words. In addition, the letters showed high levels of emotion, self, and well-being words and low levels of power words.

Not focus. As discussed earlier, one of the greatest ambiguities in coding the articles involved deciding whether or not downsizing was a central focus of the article. Approximately 38 percent of all articles were coded in the "not focus" category, indicating that downsizing was often mentioned in passing rather than as the central topic of the article.

Government downsizing. These articles discussed the downsizing of government agencies, public institutions, and the military, as well as generic discussions about "downsizing the government." In addition, the category included corporate downsizing that occurred due to cuts in government spending, in particular in the defense industry. The General Inquirer analysis showed, not surprisingly, that the government category used a very high number of "power" words.

Cars. As I will discuss later in the paper, the term downsizing first emerged in reference to downsizing the size of automobiles. This category captures articles that use downsizing in this sense.

Wrong definition. In addition to cars, the term downsizing was used in a number of other contexts besides corporate downsizing. The most common use was downsizing one's house (for instance when the children go off to college). The term was used in many other contexts as well.

Other not relevant. Finally, a small number of articles were coded as not relevant for a variety of other reasons (e.g. the layoffs were temporary or due to natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina).

RESULTS

Figures 3 through 6 show the distribution of different article types over time within each of the four news sources. As the figures show, both the types of articles and their timing vary considerably across the four sources. Figure 7, meanwhile, shows the number of articles in several key "non-relevant" categories over time (the four news sources are combined for this graph). In the following sections I analyze the results broken down into four time periods: before the mid-1980s, the mid-1980s through the early 1990s, 1996, and post-1996. The analysis is based upon the results presented in the four figures, the content of specific news articles of interest, as well as other sources that provide further context for the analysis.

Figure 3 through figure 7 about here

Before the mid-1980s: A new practice needs a new label

The early 1980s were a period of turmoil for many American companies, especially those in manufacturing industries. The recession during this period was particularly severe and it was

clear that a major force behind this crisis, the growth in international competition, was not going away (Love 1997). Companies were looking for a way to become more competitive in this new environment.

The crisis was real and action was necessary, but the best course of action was not clear. The practice of downsizing emerged as a key response to the crisis, but its popularity was not necessarily due to its effectiveness. In fact, research suggests that downsizing often does not bring its promised rewards (Capelle-Blancard and Couderc 2007; Cascio 2007). Why, then, did companies downsize? Campbell (1998) offers a framework for analyzing the adoption of new policies and several elements of downsizing fit well into that framework. Downsizing provided a "clear and concise course of action" (a well-defined "program", p. 387) and followed existing economic theories about how the world works (Campbell's "paradigms"), in particular the idea of labor as just another type of firm asset.

The practice of downsizing faced challenges, however, because it violated the "social contract" of long-term commitment between employers and workers developed during the post-World War II era. This violation of norms made framing the practice particularly important. The proper framing was necessary not just to placate workers who were losing their jobs, but also to assuage the concerns of the managers who had to do the firing as well as maintain positive perceptions among shareholders and the general public.

The labeling of the practice played a key role in its framing; the selection of the term "downsize" had several strategic advantages. The word "downsize" was originally introduced by the automobile industry during the oil crisis of the 1970s. In response to rising fuel prices and competition from Japanese cars, American automakers announced a plan to "downsize" cars to make them more fuel efficient. The Oxford English Dictionary cites an October 15, 1975 article

in *Automotive Industries* as the earliest use of the term (Oxford English Dictionary 2006). Of the 158 downsizing articles in this study that were published before 1979, 154 of them used the term in the context of smaller cars (see the large number of car articles during this period in figure 7). By 1979, the term was well established in the American language and a *Chicago Tribune* article discussed Webster's plans to add the term downsize to their dictionary, describing it as a "Detroitism for smaller cars" (Oppenheim 1979: 1).

Once the term was established within the automobile context, it began to be used in other contexts as well, sometimes for humorous purposes. For instance, articles in 1978 and 1980 discussed the "downsizing" of gumballs and candy bars in response to inflation. The most common use of the term was in articles about the buying or building of downsized houses. Figure 7 shows this mini-surge in "wrong definition" article types in the early 1980s. In all of these cases, the term referred to the shrinking of a physical object (gumballs, houses, boats, retail stores, wood stoves, etc).

The use of the term downsize to mean corporate reductions in employment first appeared in news sources in 1982. Both the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* reported on staff reductions at the Manville Corporation: "The staff reductions reflect what the company calls its 'downsizing program,' which is estimated to save roughly $50 million a year" (Wall Street Journal 1982). Note that the article was quoting the Manville Corporation directly, reflecting the company's preference for this term.

Why would companies embrace the term downsize? The beauty of this label was that it involved an implicit metaphor: companies were reducing employment to become more efficient just like automakers downsized cars to improve fuel efficiency. At the time, people clearly understood the connotations of this label:

> Corporatespeak now offers alternative euphemisms for the process: it's called demanning, delayering, or-- borrowing from Detroit's classic small-is-beautiful attempt to put the best face forward –downsizing (Kiechel 1985: 155).

This implied metaphor achieved many of the strategic language tasks discussed earlier:

Cognitive functions. The label "downsize" evoked the already-existing metaphor of the company as a machine. It explained how the practice would be effective: just as smaller cars are more fuel efficient, smaller workforces would be more efficient. The term also tied the practice to key cultural ideals of efficiency and rationality. It emphasized these positive goals and helped to distract the attention of shareholders away from the fact that the company was in crisis. Finally, it used a trendy term to create interest and cultural resonance. In other words, the term helped promote downsizing as an understandable and desirable practice, and as the only viable course of action.

Social-psychological functions. The downsizing label also served a key function by emphasizing the metaphor of companies as machines and therefore distracting attention away from the emotional and human consequences of the practice. Similar to the metaphors adopted in hostile takeovers (Hirsch 1986), the fuel-efficiency image of downsizing gave a certain dignity to the losers, in this case the workers. It supported the idea that the job cuts were nothing personal, just a necessary mechanical tuning. The mechanical image also aided the managers, who were themselves struggling with the morality of this new practice (McKinley, Zhao, and Rust 2000). The use of technical language distanced the managers from the personal consequences of their actions.

Institutional functions. Finally, settling upon a common label, with the cognitive and social-psychological elements to support it, helped to institutionalize and normalize the practice.

The process of adopting a common label took some time. The number of articles using the term downsize did not really take off until after 1985, and yet the content of these early downsizing articles indicated that the practice had been common since the early 1980s (both in articles from this study and in Love's (1997) analysis). The eventual adoption of the label downsizing helped to turn it into an everyday occurrence and good business strategy rather than a response to crisis.

Mid-1980s through early 1990s: Diffusion

The practice of corporate downsizing continued to spread throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, and there was a slow but steady increase in downsizing articles. Comparing figure 3 through figure 6 we see that most of the downsizing articles during this period were in the *Wall Street Journal* and *BusinessWeek*, and were primarily announcement and company article types. These results suggest that the practice was diffusing primarily within business circles and the term was actively being used by company spokespeople and business reporters.

The practice spread during the late 1980s despite a growing economy and low unemployment rates. The original economic crisis that brought about the practice had eased and yet corporate downsizing continued. The continued diffusion of downsizing might be attributed to two factors. One possibility is that the perception of a threat from international competition continued during this period, as well as concerns about stagnating productivity, despite the strong economy. Companies, therefore, may have felt continuing pressure to improve their efficiency despite a seemingly improved environment. A second possibility is that the strategic packaging of corporate downsizing as a beneficial practice, in which the selection of the term "downsize" was essential part, was so successful that downsizing came to be seen as a beneficial practice even when the company was not in crisis. The continuing use of downsizing during this period is particularly perplexing because of emerging evidence that the practice was not

necessarily effective (Bennett 1991; Downs 1995; Love 1997). This pattern is suggestive of institutional forces, in that the practice persisted even after the original conditions that necessitated it disappeared (similar to Dobbin and Sutton 1998) and despite evidence questioning its effectiveness.

Downsizing was not completely separated from economic crises, however. When the economy worsened in the early 1990s, companies turned to downsizing even more to address their problems. Within the business press (*Wall Street Journal* and *BusinessWeek*), the highest levels of announcement and company article types occurred in 1992 (see figure 4 and figure 6), indicating a widespread use of the practice. It appears, therefore, that downsizing was one of the first tools companies turned to when faced with new economic challenges. This pattern calls into question the definition of downsizing as purely a proactive practice. It appears instead that the practice became a widely accepted tool that companies turned to in both proactive and reactive situations.

Further evidence of the acceptance of downsizing during this period can been seen in its spread to government contexts in the early 1990s (see figure 7). A number of politicians began to talk about "downsizing government" in order to make it more efficient. This phrase was particularly popular during the 1994 congressional elections and the 1996 presidential race. Figure 7 also shows a new surge in "wrong definition" articles in the early 1990s, indicating a growing use of the term in other contexts as well.

Despite the adoption of the term downsizing into political discourse and other contexts, however, the phenomenon of corporate downsizing attracted surprisingly little attention within the more general audience newspapers during this period. This lack of reaction by the broader public to the spread of corporate downsizing is somewhat surprising, especially since millions of

workers lost their jobs to downsizing during the 1980s and early 1990s. In addition, one would think that the initial introduction of the practice, when it was new and a violation of the existing social contract, might have provoked a public reaction. However, there was little public discussion in general news sources of the practice until the mid-1990s.

1996: Backlash

> *Wall Street and Big Business have been in perfect harmony about how in-your face capitalism is making America great. Well, now it may be backlash time.*
>
> (Sloan 1996: 45)

In 1996, public interest in downsizing erupted. As discussed in the introduction, a huge proportion of downsizing articles in general audience newspapers were printed in 1996 (figure 1). The results in figure 3 through figure 6 provide further insight into this 1996 peak. The results indicate that the 1996 peak is primarily comprised of articles on the general economy and, in the case of the two general audience sources, articles from the workers' perspective. The peak does *not* include a large number of announcements or articles about individual companies. If one reads the announcement and company article types as indicators of the actual prevalence of the practice, it seems that the surge in interest in downsizing in 1996 was not driven by an increase in actual downsizings, but rather by an effort to make sense of this practice within the general public.

If the 1996 peak in downsizing articles was not driven by a rapid increase in the actual practice, then what was the cause of the sudden interest by the general public? Multiple factors may have contributed to this movement against downsizing. Three of these factors were long-term trends that existed before 1996. It seems that the convergence of these trends with a few key events was necessary to bring about a strong public response.

One factor that contributed to the public response was the fact that white-collar workers, especially managers, were particularly affected by downsizing. While unemployment rates for blue-collar and less educated workers have always been higher, the gap in jobless rates between college and less-educated workers narrowed steadily between the early 1980s and 2000 (Farber 2008). As a *Newsweek* article commented "That helps account for the uproar. After all, agenda setters like politicians and we media-elite types live in a white-collar universe" (Sloan 1996: 46). The disproportionate impact of downsizing on white-collar workers, however, does not explain the timing of the uproar since white-collar job loss had been increasing steadily since the 1980s.

A second factor contributing to the pushback against downsizing was the slowly accumulating evidence that downsizing did not always achieve its intended effects (Love 1997). As discussed earlier, this evidence began to accumulate in the late 1980s and early 1990s and seemed to have little impact on the spread of the practice. Once other factors converged to bring about a response, however, this evidence was useful fuel for the fire.

A third long-term trend that contributed to this countermovement was the slow wearing down of the downsizing metaphor. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, most people had forgotten about the original automobile connotations of the term downsizing and the term was losing some of its luster. The search was on for a newer euphemism, and this search may have backfired:

> Downsize is a recent example of a [successful] euphemism that found broad acceptance in the language and is not particularly thought of as a deceptive attempt to smooth over the pain of large-scale firings…The attempt to find even more positive-sounding ways to say "downsize" has led business executives… to float a number of alternatives. Companies were being "reengineered" and even "right-sized"…their jobs were said to be "no longer going forward." Most of these

> terms were met with scorn, being regarded as cynical attempts to sugarcoat an inherently distressing phenomenon, and as failed euphemisms they accomplished the exact opposite of what they were designed to. (*American Heritage* 1992: 542)

The term downsize was further challenged by the emergence of counter-terms such as "dumbsize," which first appeared in 1993 (Oxford English Dictionary 2003). Finally, a new form of the term downsize emerged in the early 1990s that emphasized the personal aspect of downsizing rather than the faceless corporate practice: "he was downsized from his job" or "she is a downsized executive" (Malcolm 1991; Oxford English Dictionary 2006). Both the term and the practice, therefore, were losing some of their new charm.

These three long-term trends laid the groundwork for discontent, and three related events brought this discontent to the surface. The first event was the strong economic recovery of the mid-1990s. Downsizing had originally emerged in response to the economic crisis of the early 1980s, when it was widely felt that change was necessary. The continued use of downsizing into the strong economy of the mid-1990s increased perceptions of downsizing as an unjust practice. As discussed earlier, however, the practice of downsizing also spread during the economic expansion of the 1980s with little public reaction. Two other historical events, therefore, were necessary to usher in the backlash in 1996. The first was the 1996 presidential race. One candidate in particular, Pat Buchanan, capitalized on this convergence of historical trends and events to make anti-downsizing a central platform in his campaign. He seized upon the second event: an announcement in January 1996 by AT&T that they were laying off 40,000 workers. AT&T's stock prices shot up after the announcement, increasing the value of the CEO's stock options by more than $5 million (Sloan 1996). Buchanan used this event to gain early momentum in the Republican primaries, although he eventually was defeated by Dole. The

pushback against downsizing did not just occur through the Buchanan campaign. Two popular books were published in 1996 that promoted a public criticism of downsizing: Gordon's (1996) *Fat and Mean : The Corporate Squeeze of Working Americans and the Myth of Managerial "Downsizing"* and Michael Moore's (1996) *Downsize This! Random Threats from an Unarmed American*.

The surge in newspaper articles was partly a response to this public attention and partly a driver of this attention. In March of 1996 the *New York Times* published a series of articles, eventually turned into a book (New York Times 1996) titled *The Downsizing of America*, with article titles such as "Holes Where the Dignity Used To Be."[7] Both of the general audience papers published a large number of downsizing articles from the worker's perspective in 1996 (see figure 3 and figure 5), reflecting a new interest in the personal consequences of downsizing. Finally, figure 7 shows that almost all of the letters to the editor using the term downsize occurred in 1996, showing that the topic evoked a strong response from readers. The 1996 peak of downsizing articles, therefore, reflected a sudden public dialogue about the practice and its consequences for American workers.

Post-1996: Mixed signals and diverging patterns

The 1996 backlash against downsizing was remarkably short lived. As an article in the *New York Times* commented:

> One of the more unusual events in recent American politics was the sudden appearance and rapid disappearance of the Angry American Worker. For a few noisy weeks in the spring of 1996 he was the star of the Presidential campaign -- a decent, hard-working citizen who had been rudely downsized out of a job and was casting about for someone to blame…Then, almost as quickly as he had entered,

> the Angry American Worker left the stage. By the time of the fall campaign between Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, he had ceased to be a topic of discussion altogether. Nor has he emerged very often since. In the thousands of campaigns waged this year for state, local and national office, I know of none that centered on the issue of the displaced worker's plight (Ehrenhalt 1998: 16).

It is unclear exactly why the outcry faded so quickly. One factor was the improving economy, which reduced layoff rates and offered more reemployment opportunities for workers who did lose their jobs. The timing does not work perfectly, however, because unemployment was improving rapidly even before the outcry in 1996 (see figure 2), and the unemployment rate declined only slightly by 1997 when interest in the topic had faded.

Did the public outcry in 1996 have an impact on perceptions of downsizing or the use of the term? Using the General Inquirer program, I analyzed the proportion of positive and negative words in downsizing articles over time, examining both the overall articles and the words immediately preceding and following the term. I found no clear trends in the positive/negative valence of the articles or the use of the term over time.

There is, however, some evidence that business circles moved away from using the term. The most striking evidence of this is in the evolution of the title of an annual report on job cuts published by the American Management Association. The early reports from this survey used the term downsizing unabashedly: *Downsizing and Outplacement* in 1989, *Survey on Downsizing* in 1990, and *Survey on Downsizing and Assistance to Displaced Workers* in 1991-1995. In 1996 the title shifted slightly to *Survey on Downsizing, Job Elimination, and Job Creation*. After 1996 the report titles moved even further away from downsizing, first changing to *Survey on Corporate Job Creation, Job Elimination, and Downsizing* in 1997 and then abandoning the term

downsizing altogether with the titles *Survey on Staffing and Structure* in 1998-2000 and *Staffing Survey* in 2001 (Baumol et al. 2003: 33). The AMA therefore shows a shift from first embracing the term downsizing then to distancing itself from it after 1996.

The results from the downsizing news articles show an interesting mixture of patterns. All four of the news sources show a decline in downsizing articles in the late 1990s and then a resurgence of downsizing articles in 2001 (see "total relevant" lines in figures 3 through 6). In contrast to the 1996 peak in downsizing articles, which occurred during a period of very low unemployment and few articles about layoffs, the 2001 peak in downsizing articles coincided with an increase in layoffs articles and the unemployment rate, as shown in figure 2.[8]

Figures 3 through 6 shows some interesting variation across the four news sources in the content of this 2001 peak of downsizing articles. The *New York Times* (figure 3) published almost as many articles from the worker's perspective in 2001 as they did in 1996, reflecting the paper's strong interest in highlighting the personal consequences of the practice. The paper also published a moderate number of articles about individual companies, but many fewer articles analyzing the economy as a whole compared to 1996. The paper has never had a high number of announcement article types.

The 2001 downsizing articles in the *Wall Street Journal* (figure 4) were a mix of article types, with announcements and company articles being slightly more common. The number of announcement and company articles, however, was less than the number of these articles published in 1992. Figure 2, however, shows that the *Wall Street Journal* published more layoff articles in 2001 compared to the early 1990s. Thus, there were many more job cut articles in 2001 compared to the early 1990s, but in 2001 these cuts were less likely to be labeled as downsizing, perhaps reflecting a move away from the term within business circles.

The *Chicago Tribune* shows a somewhat different pattern. According to figure 2, the *Chicago Tribune* published slightly fewer layoff articles in 2001 compared to the early 1990s, perhaps reflecting its rustbelt location and therefore less of an interest in the burst of the technology bubble. Figure 5, in contrast, shows a higher number of downsizing announcement articles in 2001 in the *Chicago Tribune* compared to the early 1990s. It appears, therefore, that the *Chicago Tribune* was slightly more willing to label job cuts as downsizing in 2001. The 2001 peak of articles in the *Chicago Tribune* also included a sizable number of articles from the worker's perspective, sharing the *New York Times'* interest in the personal side of the practice.

Finally, figure 2 shows that *BusinessWeek* published quite a few articles about layoffs in 2001, many more than in previous recessions. *BusinessWeek* had less of a surge in downsizing articles in 2001 compared to the other news sources, though (see figure 6). *BusinessWeek* has never published many announcements, likely due to the nature of the magazine, but similar to the *Wall Street Journal*, the number of company-focused downsizing articles in *BusinessWeek* was much lower in 2001 compared to 1992. Interestingly, *BusinessWeek* published more articles from the worker's perspective in 2001 than in 1996, but many fewer articles analyzing the economy as a whole. It seems, therefore, that while *BusinessWeek* took considerable interest in the job cuts that occurred in 2001, it labeled very few of them as downsizing. It seems to have primarily reserved the term downsize for articles examining the personal consequences of the job cuts.

In summary, while all of the sources showed an increase in downsizing articles in 2001, the nature of these articles differed considerably. The business press showed some movement away from using the term, especially in describing the actions of companies. The general audience press, meanwhile, used the term to highlight the worker's perspective and, in the case of the *Chicago Tribune*, was more willing to use the term in describing the actions of companies.

CONCLUSION

Both the practice of downsizing and the use of the term "downsize" have evolved over time. The practice initially emerged in response to the economic crisis of the early 1980s. As a practice that was created during a time of uncertainty, challenged existing employment norms, and signaled economic difficulties within the firm, the framing of downsizing was particularly crucial. Corporate actors had to convince themselves and others that the practice was both effective and ethical (McKinley et al. 2000). The label of "downsizing" played a role in this process, using an implied metaphor to help both explain why the practice would work and reduce concerns about the moral questions.

The active promotion of downsizing during this early period was so successful that it took on a life of its own. The business community began to see downsizing as an effective practice that should be adopted as a proactive measure even by financially sound companies. Shareholders rewarded downsizing companies through higher stock prices despite emerging evidence that downsizing was not as effective as people thought. The continued use of downsizing in strong economic periods, however, eventually raised questions about the acceptability of the practice.

The strategic use of language has its limits, meanwhile, and time in particular is its enemy. The implied metaphor in the term "downsizing" lost its effectiveness as the origins of the word faded from memory. The search for new terms to renew the luster only backfired. These factors combined with several others to bring about a backlash by the general public in 1996 against downsizing. The backlash was limited, however, in its duration and effectiveness. There is some evidence that business circles backed away from using the term downsizing after 1996,

but they continued to use the practice. It seems that the practice was too well entrenched in business circles by 1996 to be greatly affected by public opinion.

Despite the continuing use of corporate downsizing, the type of public backlash against the practice that occurred in 1996 has not returned. In 1998, for instance, a *New York Times* article was titled “Downsizing Comes Back, but the Outcry Is Muted” (Uchitelle 1998). During the 2001 resurgence of downsizing the general audience newspapers once again emphasized the consequences of the practice through articles on the worker’s perspective, but at a much smaller scale than in 1996. It seems that, while the public has perhaps never accepted downsizing as a desirable practice, it has come to see it as an inevitable and unavoidable aspect of our modern economy.

The current economic crisis raises new questions about the future of downsizing. Figure 1 shows that most, although not all, news sources showed an uptick in downsizing articles in 2008. This pattern suggests that downsizing continues to be practiced, especially in reaction to economic downturns. While it is too soon to analyze the effect of the current crisis on both the term and practice of downsizing, in the future it will be interesting to see whether the current questioning of the market leads to a change in the use and understanding of downsizing or a continuation of past practices.

Table 3 about here

NOTES

[1] http://global.factiva.com

[2] http://www.proquest.com

[3] http://www.lexisnexis.com

[4] http://www.wjh.harvard.edu/~inquirer/

[5] The standardized deviation from the overall mean was measured as: (mean of group-overall mean)/(overall standard deviation).

[6] I calculated significance using a difference of means t-test comparing the mean of the articles in the group to the mean of all other articles.

[7] The "Downsizing of America" series was not the primary cause of the 1996 peak in articles. Even without the 14 articles in the series, 1996 would have marked the peak of downsizing articles in the *New York Times*. In addition, as already discussed, the 1996 peak occurred in many other general audience newspapers (*USA Today, LA Times*, etc) and therefore was not simply a product of the *New York Times*' series.

[8] The 2001 spike in layoff articles was not due to the events of September 11th; there was a high number of layoff articles even before September.

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Table 1. The distribution of article types in the four news sources: count, percent of total articles, and percent of relevant articles.

	News Source														
	New York Times			Chicago Tribune			Wall Street Journal			Business Week			Total		
		%			%			%			%			%	
Article Type	N	tot	rel	N	tot	rel	N	tot	rel	N	tot	rel	N	tot	rel
announce	23	1.7	9.0	49	2.8	16.7	78	7.2	29.9	10	1.7	6.5	160	3.4	16.6
company	52	3.9	20.4	47	2.7	16.0	70	6.4	26.8	36	6.1	23.5	205	4.3	21.3
economy	60	4.5	23.5	63	3.6	21.5	59	5.4	22.6	71	12.1	46.4	253	5.3	26.3
worker	99	7.5	38.8	111	6.3	37.9	36	3.3	13.8	27	4.6	17.6	273	5.7	28.4
other relevant	21	1.6	8.2	23	1.3	7.8	18	1.7	6.9	9	1.5	5.9	71	1.5	7.4
Total relevant	255	19.3	100.0	293	16.6	100.0	261	24.0	100.0	153	26.1	100.0	962	20.2	100.0
letters	43	3.3		26	1.5		8	0.7		25	4.3		102	2.1	
not focus	498	37.7		525	29.7		511	47.1		262	44.7		1796	37.7	
government	159	12.0		172	9.7		103	9.5		57	9.7		491	10.3	
cars	90	6.8		213	12.0		31	2.9		39	6.7		373	7.8	
wrong definition	256	19.4		531	30.0		152	14.0		45	7.7		984	20.7	
other not rel	20	1.5		9	0.5		20	1.8		5	0.9		54	1.1	
Total	1321	100.0		1769	100.0		1086	100.0		586	100.0		4762	100.0	

Table 2. The General Inquirer scores for different types of downsizing articles.

	Relevant Article Types					Not Relevant Articles							
	announce	company	economy	worker	other relevant	letters	not focus	govt	cars	wrong definition	other not relevant	All Articles	
GI Category	Group deviation from overall mean (standardized)[b]											Mean	Std Dev
positive	-0.72*	-0.47*	-0.18*	0.16*	0.56*	0.52*	0.05*	0.09*	-0.43*	0.03	0.17	4.51	1.72
negative	0.68*	0.24*	0.42*	0.06	0.22	0.48*	-0.01	0.34*	-0.46*	-0.49*	0.50*	3.11	1.61
emotion	-0.43*	-0.15*	0.03	0.53*	0.53*	0.68*	0.05*	-0.07	-0.35*	-0.15*	-0.20	0.35	0.40
economic	0.91*	0.41*	0.64*	-0.14*	0.12	0.30*	0.24*	-0.19*	-0.80*	-0.68*	0.13	8.20	3.91
causal	-0.29*	-0.13	0.29*	0.18*	0.25*	0.18	0.05*	0.00	-0.04	-0.18*	0.00	1.03	0.55
quantitative	0.21*	0.31*	0.50*	-0.32*	-0.08	-0.15	0.01	-0.27*	0.16	-0.01	0.15	4.93	1.70
self	-0.46*	-0.29*	-0.26*	0.81*	-0.11	0.84*	0.01	-0.16*	-0.15	0.00	-0.33*	0.49	0.95
you	-0.42*	-0.31*	-0.24*	0.78*	0.26*	0.18	0.04*	-0.28*	-0.02	0.02	-0.37*	0.42	0.90
power	-0.06	-0.05	-0.36*	-0.49*	-0.29*	-0.41*	-0.07*	1.54*	-0.56*	-0.35*	1.17*	5.60	3.27
well-being	-0.33*	-0.32*	-0.17*	0.22*	0.08	0.36*	-0.02	-0.01	-0.28*	0.11*	0.31*	1.05	0.99
Avg words	288*	947*	796	1,020*	1,008*	315*	834*	722*	863	809	929	804	605
N	160	202	253	273	71	102	1793	491	126	935	54	4,460	

*p<0.05 for t-test of difference of means, articles in group vs. all other articles

[a]The General Inquirer sample excludes articles retrieved from Proquest Historical, which were only available as PDF images (262 articles from years 1976-1985). All but three of these excluded articles were in the "cars" and "wrong definition" categories, so there is little impact on the results for the "relevant" categories.

[b] $\frac{\overline{x}_i - \overline{X}}{s_X}$

Table 3. Descriptions of General Inquirer categories used in table 2.
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Category	GI Label	Description
positive	Positiv	1,915 words of positive outlook
negative	Negativ	2,291 words of negative outlook
emotion	EMOT	311 words related to emotion
economic	ECON	502 words of economic, commercial, industrial, or business orientation
causal	Causal	112 words denoting presumption that occurrence of one phenomenon is necessarily preceded, accompanied or followed by the occurrence of another
quantitative	Quan	314 words indicating the assessment of quantity, including the use of numbers
self	Self	7 pronouns referring to the singular self (I, I'm, me, mine, my, myself, oneself)
you	You	9 pronouns indicating another person is being addressed directly (thee, thou, thy, you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves)
power	PowTot	A valuing of having the influence to affect the policies of others (a sum several power categories)
well-being	WlbTot	The health and safety of the organism (sum of well-being gain, loss, physical, physchological, roles with concern for well-being)

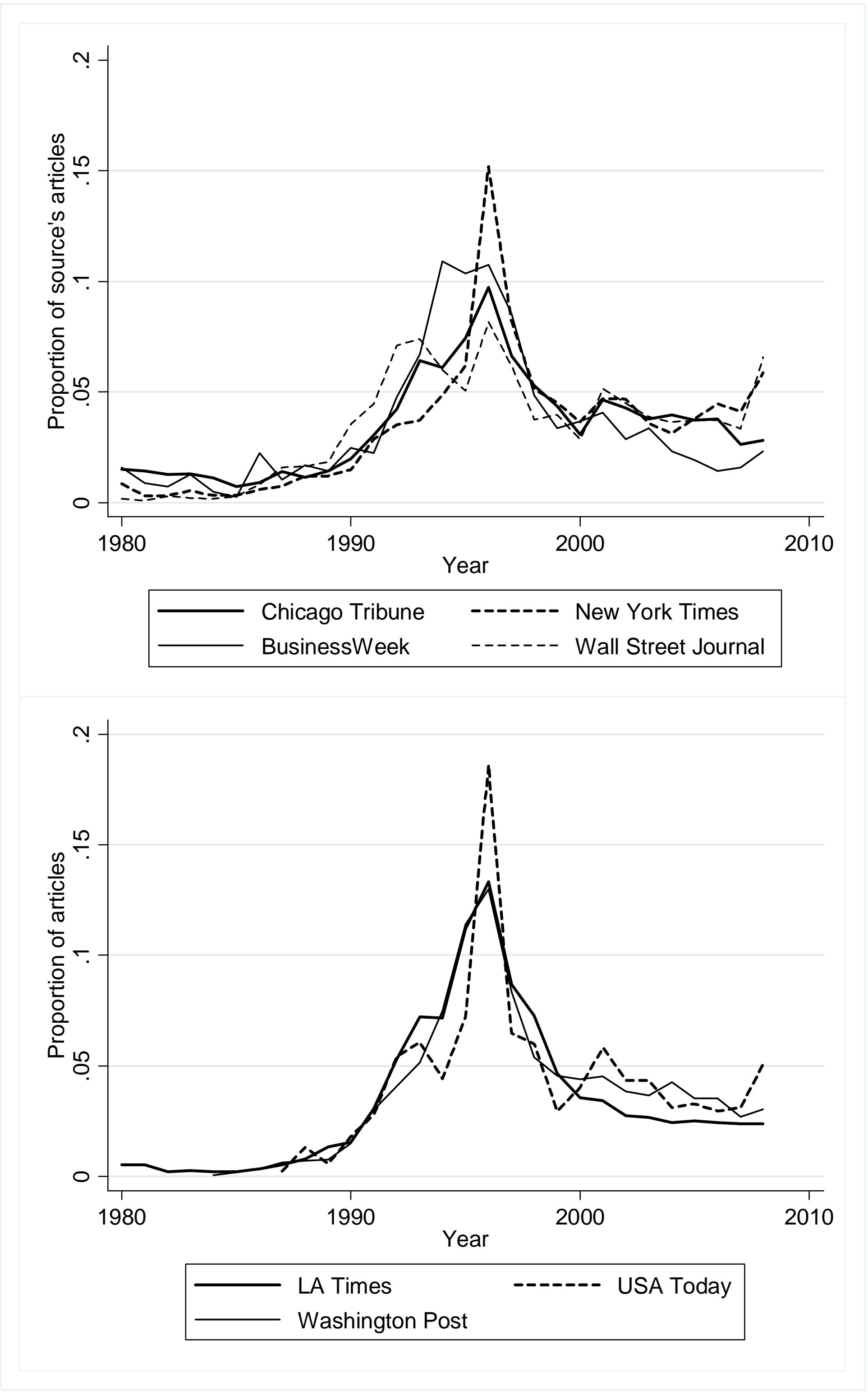

Figure 1. The U.S. annual unemployment rate compared to the distribution of articles on layoffs and downsizing.

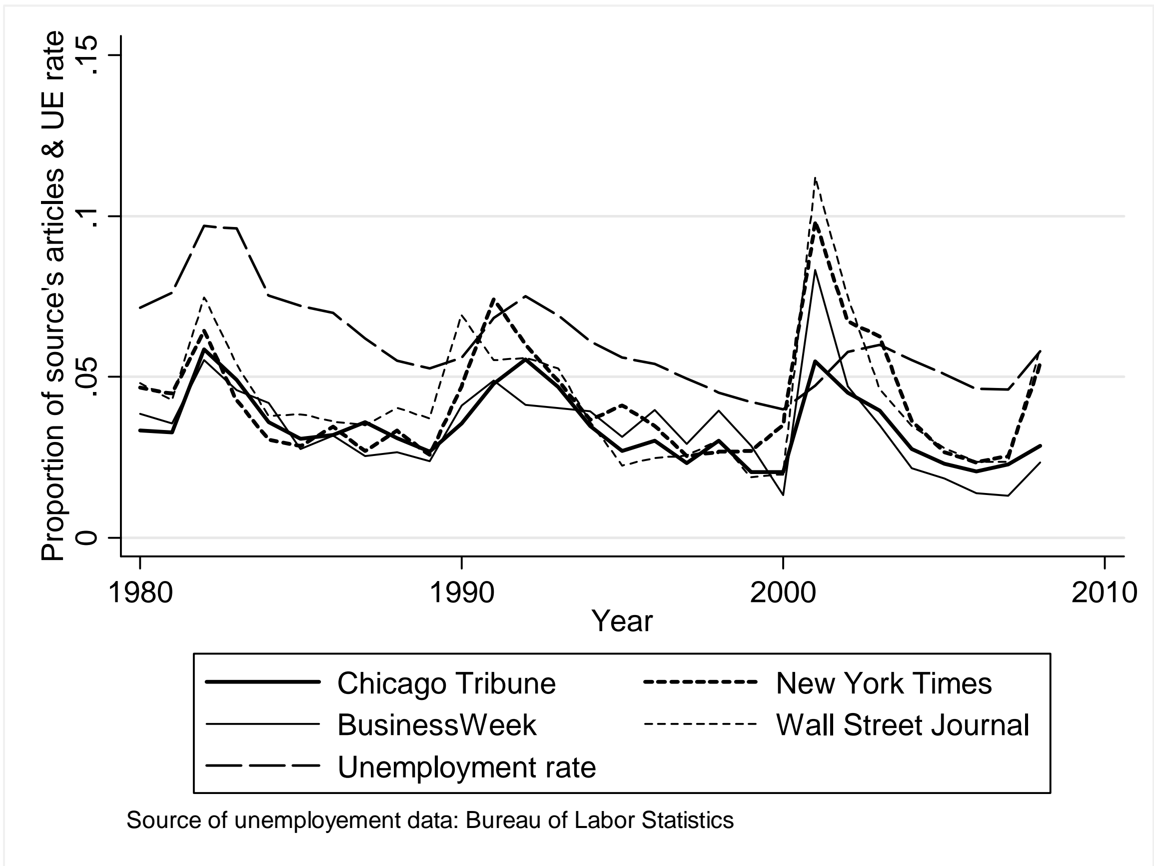

Figure 2. The U.S. annual unemployment rate compared to the distribution of articles on layoffs.

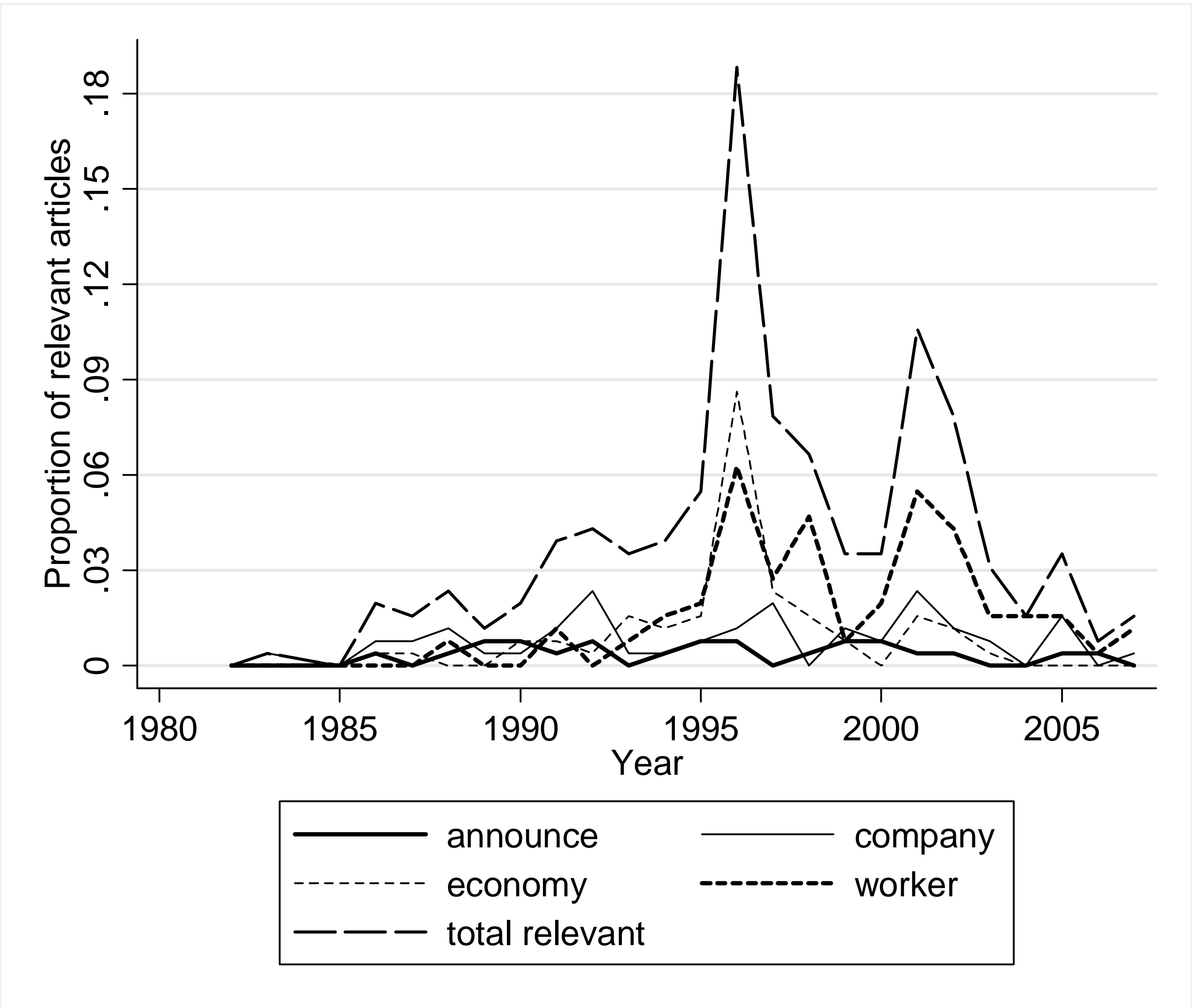

Figure 3. The distribution of downsizing article types in the *New York Times*.

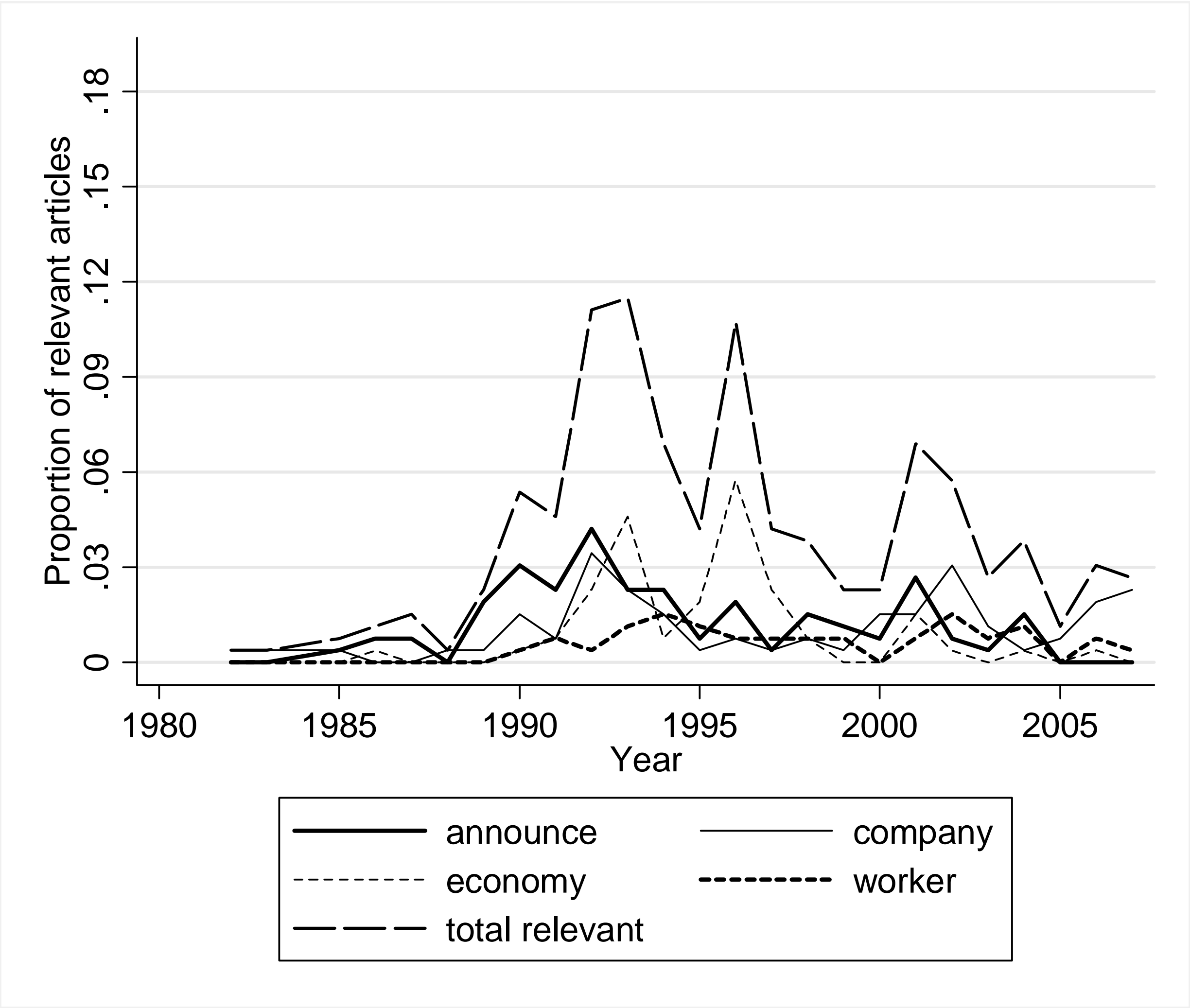

Figure 4. The distribution of downsizing article types in the *Wall Street Journal*.

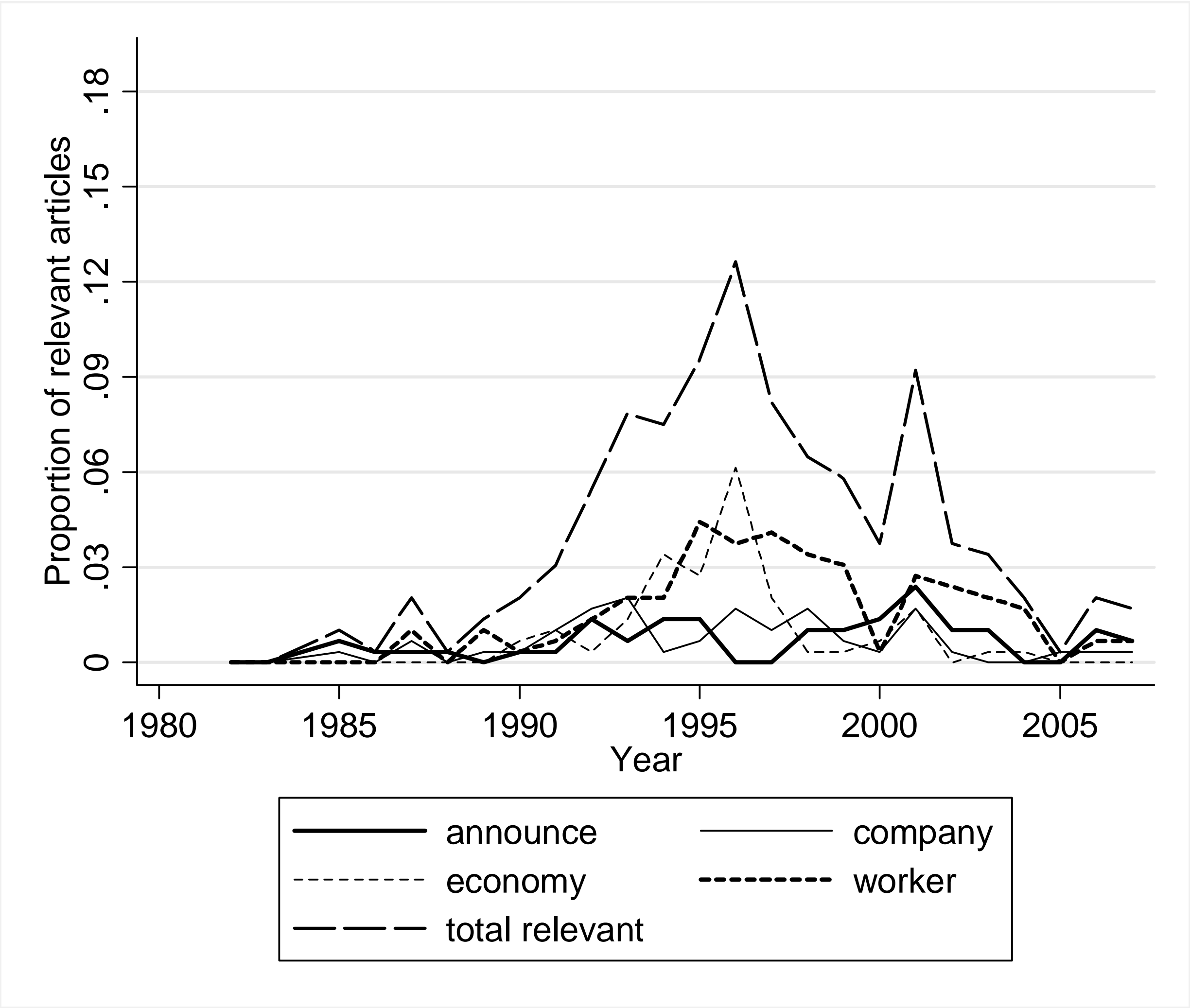

Figure 5. The distribution of downsizing article types in the *Chicago Tribune*

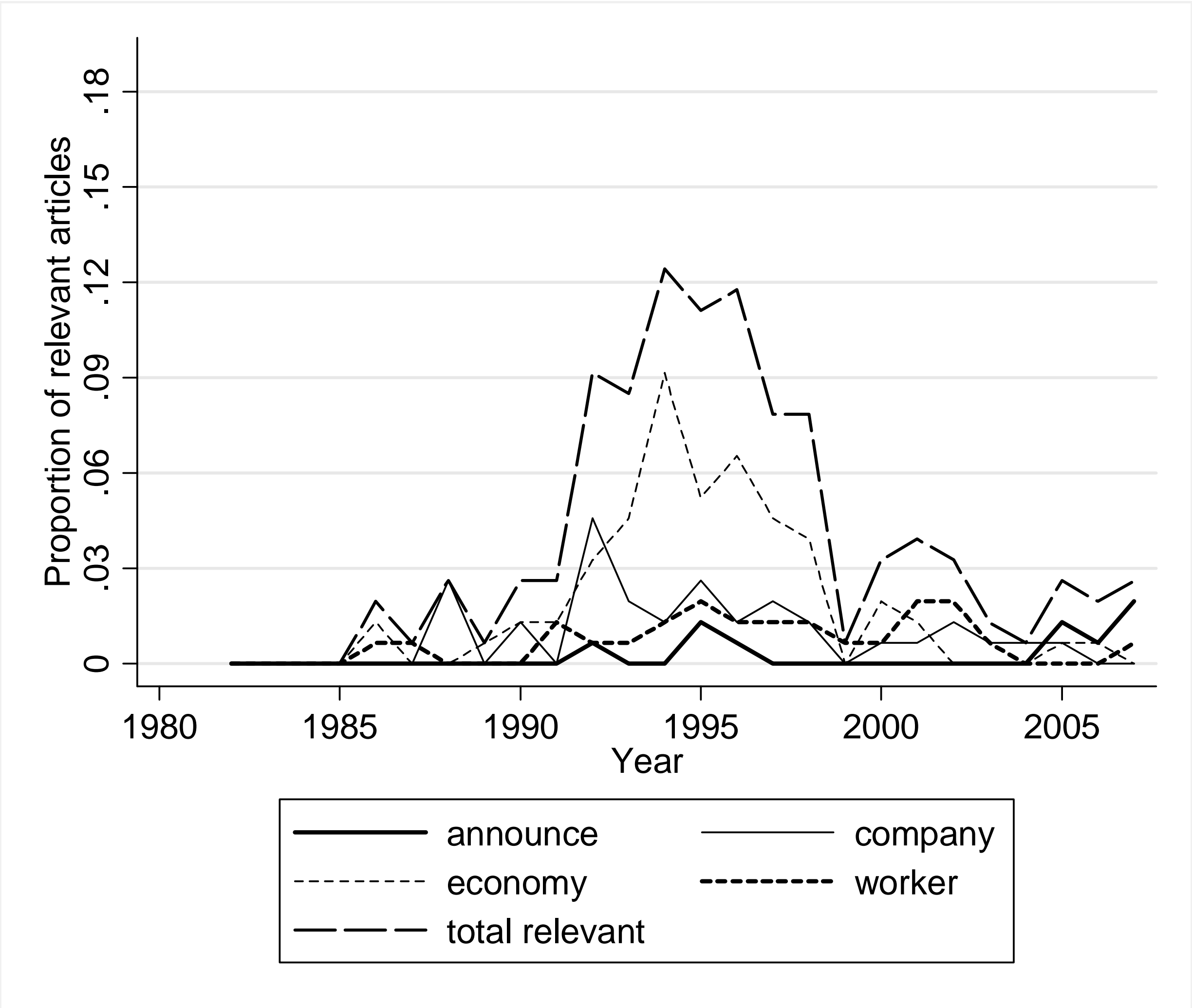

Figure 6. The distribution of downsizing article types in *BusinessWeek*.

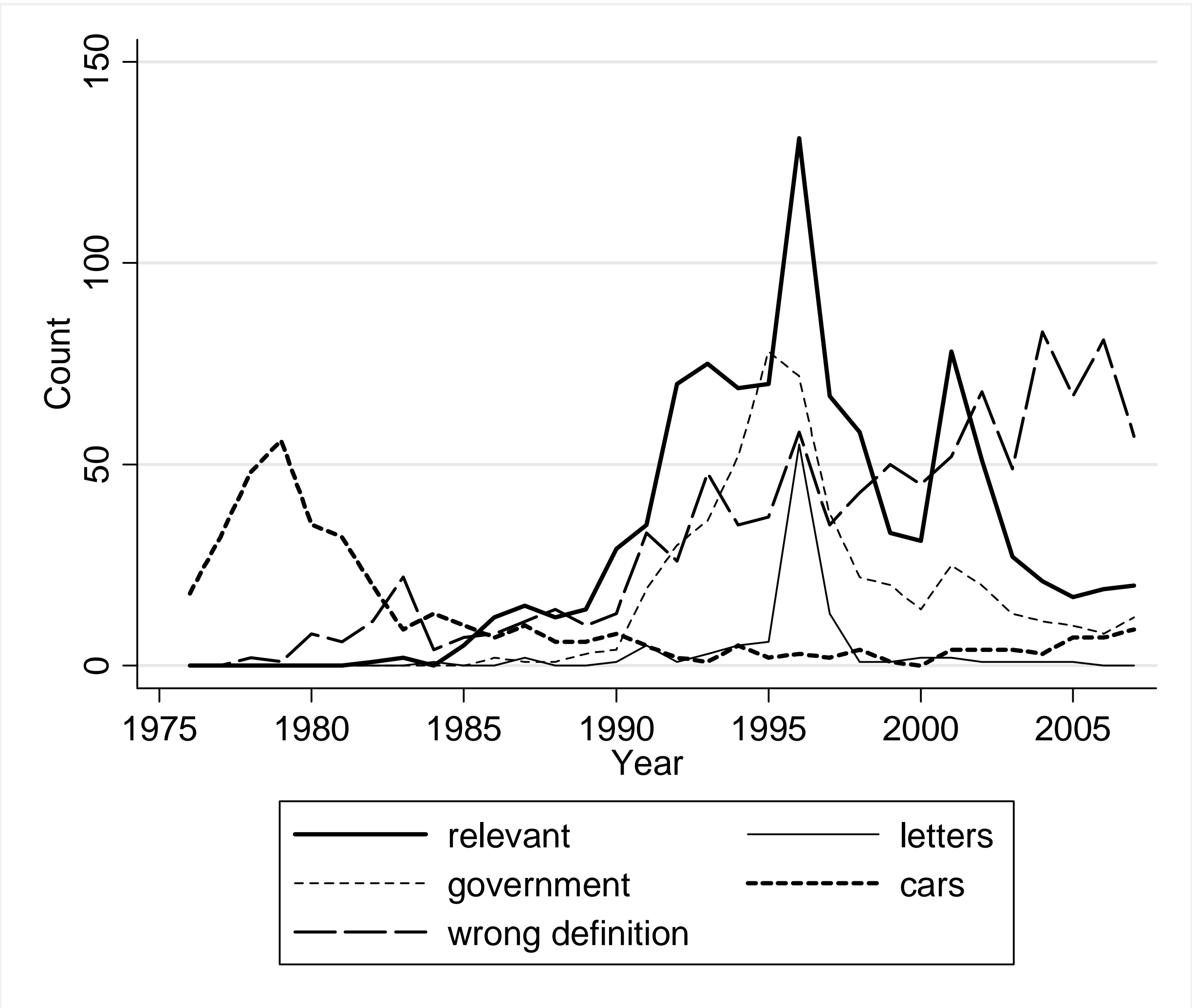

Figure 7. The distribution of key non-relevant article types over time (four news sources combined).