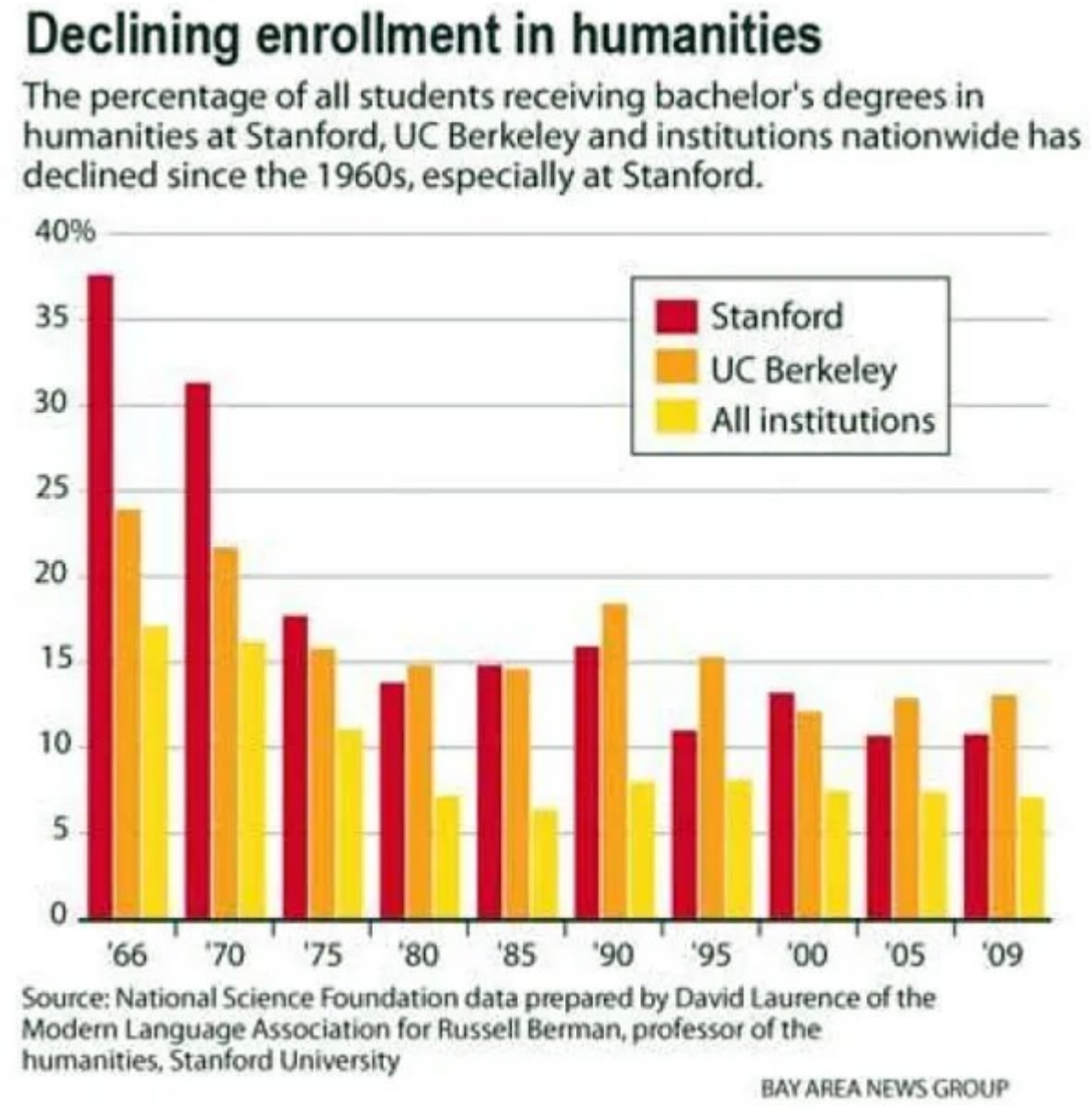
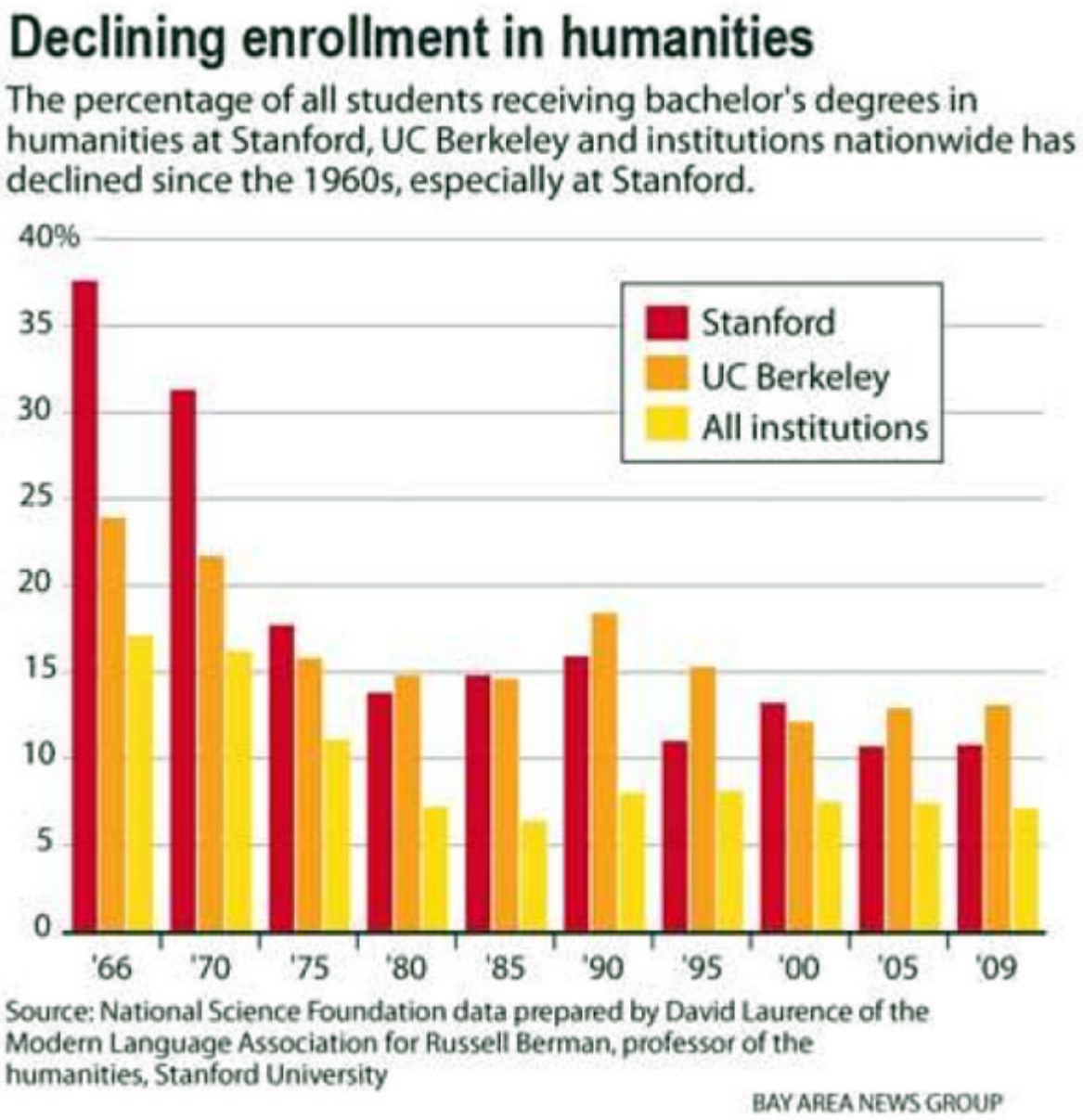
HUMANITIES – THEIR VALUE



Universities now urging freshmen to consider studying the forgotten humanities – San Jose Mercury News.

The quarter opens next week and Stanford is stressing the value of the Humanities – when fewer and fewer are opting for classes in the liberal arts.



Why study philosophy or literature? Because they are good for you? How? Why?

In the d.school at Stanford I emphasize the importance of the Humanities to any human perspective on making, creating, experiencing in the contemporary world, with history and archaeology offering crucial time depth, connecting past and present, when we are so often focused on the immediate future.

Human-centered design.

As I just unpacked in a recent post [Link] – real issues are messy and don't fit into disciplines. And every issue that matters today is about people. This isn't a call for "relevance" – it's a call to articulate specialist expertise (yes in the

likes of seventeenth century French theatre) with mindfulness of the current state of affairs, and through thoughtful practice. Because attention to the qualities of human living is at the heart of any viable future.

[Link] – Artereality – on the arts in the University – from Steven Madoff's collection.

This year we are launching classes in our Revs Program [Link] – bridging the arts, humanities, social sciences and engineering, using automobility – car design – as a lens on human experience over the last century. Just this kind of articulation.

My own offering begins next week – Ten Things – an archaeology of design – a roller-coaster ride through 500 thousand years of the human experience of things. Archaeology meets human-centered design [Link]