

Media Narratives of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Response

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ABSTRACT

This study identifies narratives of the response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill of April 20, 2010. I reviewed articles from The New Orleans Times–Picayune, New York Times, and Wall Street Journal, and documented and identified common narratives inductively in these texts, and recorded the frequency of each common narrative across media sources and time periods following the spill. By conducting informal interviews with a few experts in oil spill recovery, I found insight on the point of view of the people working in the field, which provided a better understanding of the events through the perspectives of officials that were present. The narratives and trends in the media coverage convey the social, political, and economic pressures on the response efforts, and show where these pressures are being applied. By understanding the media coverage of these efforts, we can see where improvements can be made to the process.

KEYWORDS

emergency response, discourse, news media, Gulf of Mexico, oil spill policy

INTRODUCTION

On April 20, 2010, an explosion erupted from the Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The exploratory rig, owned by Transocean and contracted by British Petroleum (BP), was drilling into the Macondo Well, owned by BP (65%), Anadarko Petroleum (25%), and Mitsui (10%). The explosion left eleven workers dead, one hundred fifteen survivors, most of who were Transocean employees, and an oil sheen in the Gulf. On April 24th, 2010, four days after the explosion, a leak was found at the wellhead, leading to the event being federally labeled as “a spill of significance” (NOLA6). A federal investigation found the leak and explosion were caused by a failed blowout preventer, contracted from Halliburton (BP Oil Spill 2010). After an estimated 4.9 million barrels of oil escaped from the well and a successful cap was placed on top, the leak was declared dead on September 19, 2010. The Department of Justice found BP to have acted with gross negligence, which could result in an \$18 billion fine (Wood 2014). This spill was unique in that it was a leak from a well with an indefinite amount of oil. In other spills, like the Exxon Valdez, the total amount of oil that could spill was the amount on board but in this case, the oil came from the well and would not stop unless managed. The leak was pronounced effectively dead by the Coast Guard after a pressure test on September 19, 152 days after the initial explosion (WSJ83). However, the damage both economically and environmentally had been done, and the oil reached a very large area, including sensitive marshes (Figure 1). The effected states were Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, and some tar balls washed onto the Texas coastline. However, Louisiana was hit the hardest.



Figure 1. Map of the extent of the oil after 109 days (Aigner et al. 2010).

Although this was a unique and extreme event, minor oil spills have become more common and are largely unnoticed by the general public and media because of the evolution of quick and effective response (Birkland et al. 2002). Even the time gap between major oil spills is decreasing, creating a need for effective oil spill recovery. With this comes a need for greater preparedness from the industry, regulators, and media.

There are three general ways to recover oil that has spilled into the ocean: *in situ* burning, chemical dispersion, and mechanical recovery (EPA 1999). *In situ* burning is a time sensitive, but time efficient method of removing oil in the case of an oil spill. Although if used within a certain time frame, this can remove oil at rates of upwards of 2000 m³/hr, the oil must be combusted, releasing pollution, such as greenhouse gases, into the atmosphere (Buist 1990). Chemical dispersion is a newer method in oil spill recovery and has recently gained popularity. The discreteness and effectiveness of chemical dispersion has made it extremely attractive to those charged with removing oil spilled. However, “dispersion” is just that. The oil is technically not removed and adding more chemicals to a chemical spill may cause more problems than solutions. Mechanical recovery is the least damaging to the environment, allowing the oil to be reused and for no additional emissions and residue to be released into the environment (Barron 2012). All of these methods have a visual impact on the public and the media. In the DWH spill, *in situ* burning

was a popular method in the beginning, but due to the negative image it portrays on the efforts. Mechanical recovery, although is very visible, shows action without showing too much further negative effects on the environment. Finally, chemical dispersants only need to be applied a couple times. This allows the “recovery” process to go undetected from the media. However, because of the chemical nature of the dispersants, there is much controversy on the environmental health and safety of the product.

Oil spill recovery is regulated by many different policies; however, there are three key pieces of legislation that I discuss here - the Clean Water Act, the Oil Pollution Act (OPA), and the National Oil and Hazardous Substance Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) (FCOSRC 2012). The CWA states in Section 311(b) that it is illegal to dump hazardous substances into navigable waters of the United States, adjoining shorelines, and contiguous zones. However, in the event of an oil spill or discharge of hazardous substances, it is the government’s duty to mitigate, delegate work, and decide liability (CWA Section 311(b)(3)). The Oil Pollution Act gives different actors different tasks, including the President and federal government agencies (Griggs 2011). The NCP creates the different teams charged with the oil spill recovery. The Department of Justice determines whether or not the spill was caused by gross negligence, which is defined as willful misconduct of the responsible party (CWA section 309(c)(1)). Currently, the fine for each barrel of oil is \$1,100 without negligence and \$4,300 in the case of gross negligence. The EPA administers recovery efforts, but the work is delegated out to many different groups.

The narratives through which media represents recovery processes play a key role in forming public opinion and may influence decision making process in the midst of a disaster. This was especially true in the DWH, now known as the worst spill in America. In disasters, the media is a main driver of “social attenuation of risk,” defined as “the phenomenon whereby people are *less* concerned about some aspects of a risky technology than they perhaps should be,” and with “social amplification of risk,” which is the opposite (Leschine 2002). Thus, the media can contribute to the views on the potential danger or risk of an event. Oil spills can be very powerful images when picked up by the media and the general public. They have the ability to hit a chord and inspire changes in policy, even if the portrayal in the media is not completely accurate (Birkland 1998). Just as the Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska of 1989 pushed policy makers to create

the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the DWH spill and the media's portrayal of the spill and response could push new regulatory processes and requirements (Millard 1993).

I examined the portrayal of response to the DWH spill in the media, drawing on three key news sources. I reviewed articles from a generally conservative source (Wall Street Journal), a generally liberal source (New York Times), and a local source (NOLA, previously known as The Times–Picayune). The purpose of my research was to understand how recovery efforts were portrayed in the media. This required a couple of sub-questions. (1) What narratives were presented in these articles? (2) How did each news source differ in the intensity of the coverage?

METHODS

Data Collection

To document media coverage of the Deep Water Horizon spill and recovery efforts, I subscribed to two news outlets to collect national level media articles from the New York Times (NYT), the editorial board of which is often associated with a center-left orientation, and the Wall Street Journal (WSJ), the editorial board of which is often associated with a center-right orientation. I also collected articles from the archives of the New Orleans Times – Picayune, now known as NOLA, to represent the largest print and online media presence in southern Louisiana. I sampled articles from the first two weeks because of the high volume of important events and to document the narratives present in the initial coverage. I also sampled from three additional dates by taking articles from the day before, of, and after the event. The events selected represent a failed attempt to close the leak, a successful attempt to close the leak, and when the leak was officially dead (Table 1).

Event	Date
Explosion	April 20, 2010
Rig sank and oil slick observed; BP under investigation	April 22, 2010
Oil leak found	April 24, 2010
Obama publically comments Louisiana declares state of emergency	April 29, 2010
Transocean's <i>Development Driller III</i> starts drilling first relief well	May 2, 2010
BP removes damaged drill riser and covers with containment cap	June 3, 2010
"Top Hat Number 10" installed	July 10, 2010
Thad Allen declared well "effectively dead"	September 19, 2010

Table 1. Dates of significance.

In order to get a better understanding of what actually occurred, I also conducted 5 informal interviews via email and in person meetings with people who were in the gulf during the sometime in the first 154 days of the DWH spill efforts. I first asked about their involvement in the spill and where on the gulf they were located. I then asked them a series of questions specifically related to their role in the recovery process. I always integrated questions about oil recovery methods and the relationship with the public. By comparing what narratives the media portrays to experts who were present, I was able to get a glimpse at the consequences of the presence or absence social amplification of risk that is largely driven by the media (Leschine 2002).

Data Analysis

Using the inductive method, I identify common narratives regarding actors and actions in the oil spill recovery. I did this by reading through random articles and documenting narratives that were present. After recording the most prevalent narratives, I read all the sampled articles and identified the presence of the narratives in each article on a spread sheet. I also documented direct and indirect quotes and the speakers who were referenced, allowing me to see what information

and which perspectives each source cited. I then recorded the occurrence of the narratives I had identified and took note of the differences that I noticed. I also analyzed the different newspaper sections in which each articles was published. With the information I received from the informal interviews, I noted specific events and concerns that the experts had mentioned.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequency of Articles

NOLA first reported the incident on April 21, 2010, the day after it happened, referring to the explosion and eleven missing workers. The focus on human life was due to the focus of the recovery on rescue in the beginning of any disaster recovery efforts. WSJ and NYT published their first article on April 22, 2010 (Figure 2).

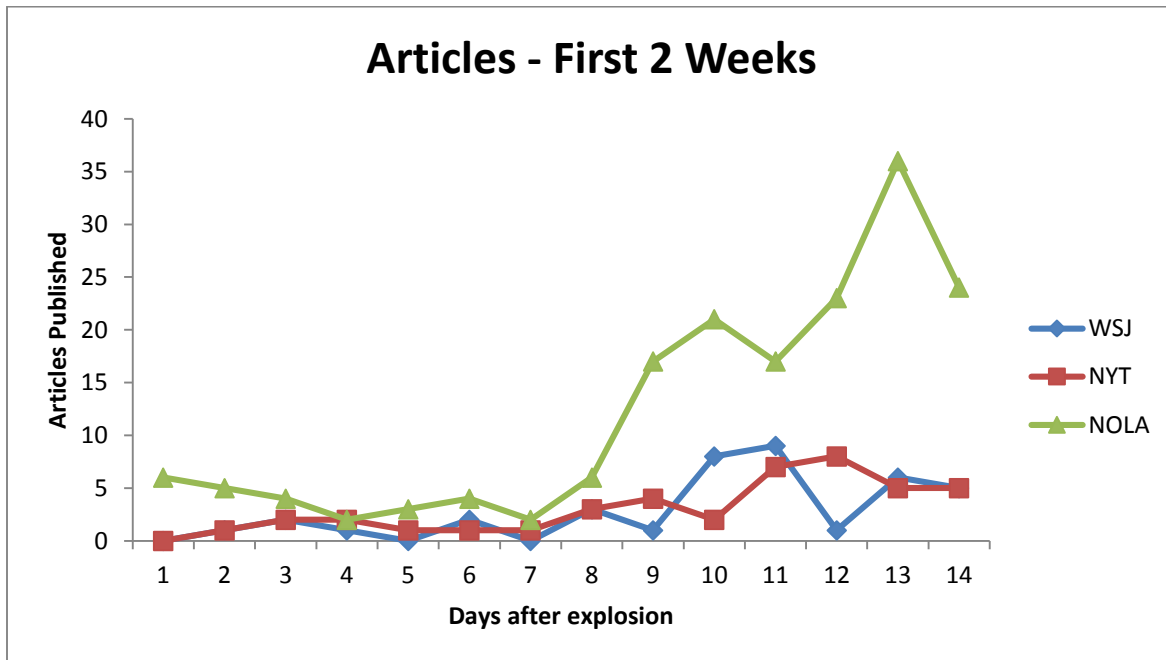


Figure 2. This is the frequency of articles published in the first 2 weeks of coverage. There is a significant increase after 13 days of coverage in NOLA, but both WSJ and NYT have a very steady rate of publishing.

The slow increase in the number of articles published after May 4, 2010, the seventh day, is likely due to the Coast Guard releasing an estimate of the daily oil leakage rate that was five times greater than the initial estimate. NOLA showed an upward trend in number of articles published during this period. However, NOLA tended to post shorter articles with less information and many articles that reported practically the same information, reflecting an apparent emphasis on reporting speed

and drawing on national sources such as the Associated Press over publishing lengthy and complete articles, which is typical of local news sources. After initial interest, the frequency of articles quickly decreased (Figure 3).

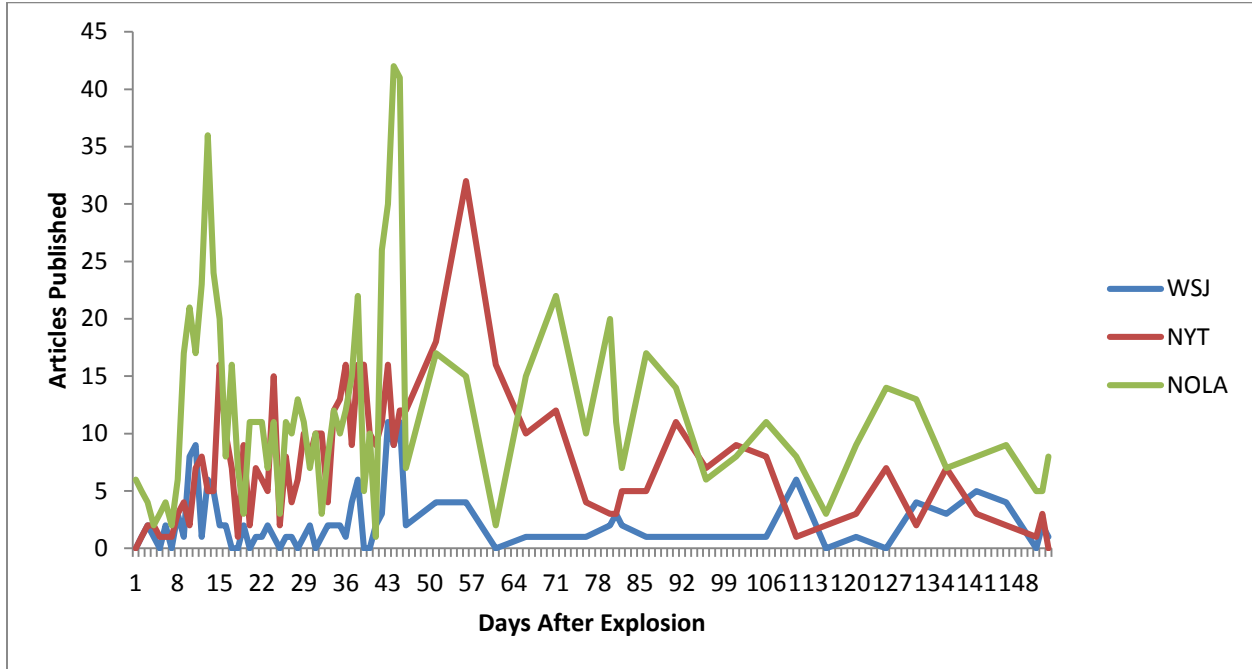


Figure 3. Frequency of articles published in 154 days of coverage. Data for dates that were not included in the table for dates of significance were collected every five days.

As expected, there is a higher volume of articles published in the initial reports. There was a steep decrease in WSJ reporting after day 46, marking Obama’s third visit to the gulf, as well as the days after the success of robots severing the damaged riser pipe to allow oil to be siphoned out of the well, directly onto carrier ships (NOLA87). They tried to place a containment cap over the leak as well, but it failed to capture enough oil. Even with the oil continuing to flow into the ocean, the number of WSJ articles decreased and stayed low for the remainder of the time studied. However, the NYT increased publication after this; this is likely due to the shift of focus of Obama’s presidency to stopping the spill (Office of the Press Secretary 2010). The final cap was placed on July 10, 2010 (82 days after the explosion) and BP claimed the leak had stopped on day 87. The national outlets decreased their coverage at that point, and may have contributed to risk attenuation by the absence of reporting on the technology used to respond to the leak, fostering public confidence in the final cap and the ability for the recovery of the spill (Leschine 2002).

However, NOLA continued to report on smaller events that would only attract the attention of locals.

Amplified Media Attention in Local News

NOLA's coverage closely paralleled the amount of national coverage most of the time, but NOLA published twice as many articles as the national news outlets at times coinciding with events of concern to the local population; however, due to the proximity to the spill, the effects were amplified. Due to the data being collected for every fifth day, each peak should not be seen as a peak for that day, but rather as an increase in publication in a period of 5 days. The first major peak (10 days after the explosion) coincided with the headline "Oil Spill Estimates Raising Fivefold (WSJ20)". The second peak (13 days after the explosion) coincided with Obama's first addressing of the spill (NYT20). The third major peak (44 days after the explosion) coincides with the first attempt at capping the leak. There is another sharp increase in publications by NOLA between day 60 and 70, coinciding with a temporary moratorium placed on offshore drilling. Local residents and NOLA strongly opposed this moratorium, fearing damage to the Louisiana economy. On day 80, there was another increase in NOLA articles, following reports that oil had been found in all five gulf states, including Texas (CBS 2010).

Narratives

Spill response narratives displayed a range of foci. The people that journalists chose to interview, the estimates of the damage and leaking rate of the pipe they chose to use, the vocabulary used, and the subject matter all shape the narrative the article presents. The tone of the narratives were determined through discursive vocabulary. Overall, there were more narratives talking about the actors of the spill rather than science.

Below is the graph representing the presence of each narrative distinguished by what news outlet it was published in.

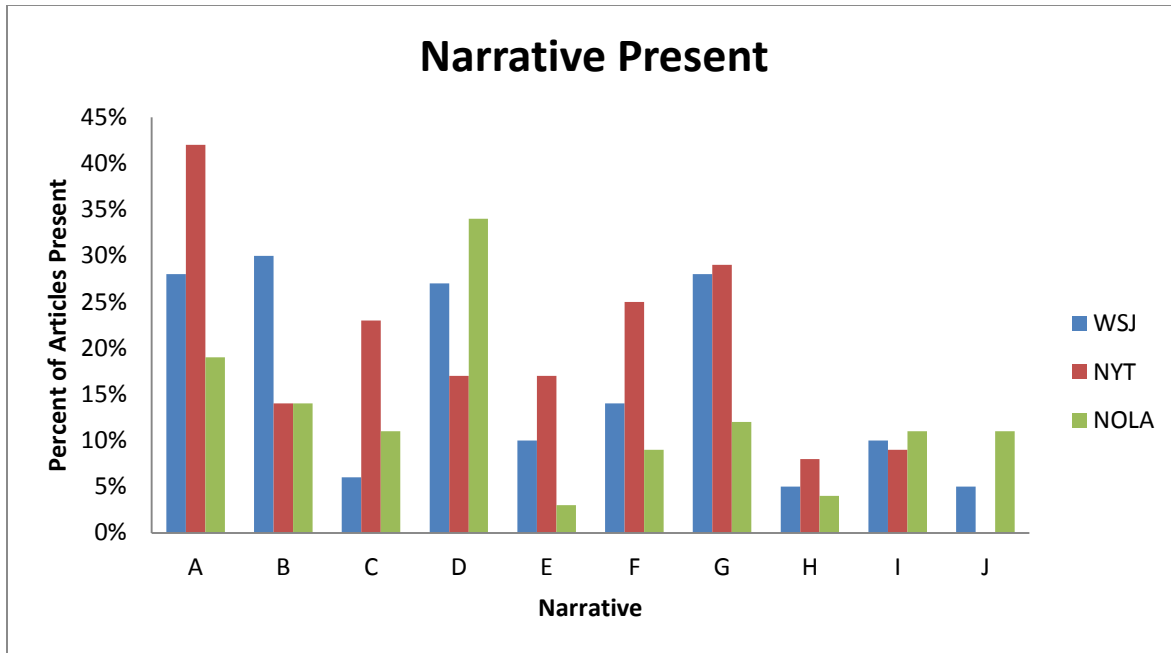


Figure 4. Presence of narratives in news sources.

Narrative A: Environmental Disaster

Narrative A presents the incident as an environmental catastrophe that is likely to take years to recover from, if there is any full recovery at all. There is confidence in the resilience and toughness of the gulf, but the incident is painted as an event that could be push the environment past its breaking point.

“The gulf is tremendously resilient,” said Dr. Dokknen, the marine biologist. ‘But we’ve always got to ask ourselves how long can we keep heaping these insults on the gulf and having it bounce back. As a scientist, I have to say I just don’t know’” (NYT25).

The people most quoted are professors, scientists, and environmental group leaders, and the tone of the discourse is generally very negative. Negative terms such as ‘worst,’ ‘disaster,’ ‘uncontrollable,’ and ‘irreversible’ were used, rather than downplaying the impact. This package was less prevalent than I had anticipated. Both news outlets and main actors (politicians, executives, and officials) downplayed the possible environmental impacts initially. For the first week they remained hopeful that the environmental impact would not be horrific. However, once the leak was found and officials noted that the flow was not slowing, all news sources built and presented the event as “one of the worst ecological disasters on record,” although they spoke of it

as “potential” damages (NYT21). As time went on, the environmental impacts were assumed and mentioned less frequently. The most prevalent information in these articles was previous damages to the area and *visible* impacts, such as oiled birds, oil sheen, and tar balls on beaches, to reinforce the fact that “the environmental damage will almost certainly be the worst ever from drilling in the gulf... (NYT16)”. These are the images that strike the hardest on the emotional chord, even if they may be exaggerated (Birkland 1998).

Narrative B: Industry Disaster

Narrative B emphasizes the downfall of key industries, including energy, fishing, tourism, etc., focusing on consumer and producer financial losses. Those most quoted were energy analysts, local workers, and government officials. The NYT focused on the effect that the spill would have on the oil industry. This was usually paired with Narrative E, which held that oil and energy are needed and that oil spills are just a side effect of these necessary evils. NOLA generally focused on the potential impact. Oyster, fish, and shrimp supply decreased and people began to question the safety of the food that they were served. Consumers seemed to feed this narrative by panicking and buying seafood in bulk before there were any signs of the effects of oil. However, there is still conflict as to whether or not a moratorium on offshore drilling is welcome, because “the economy of this hard-working coastline is famous for two natural resources – petroleum and seafood – and they are colliding (WSJ20)”.

Narrative C: Technological success

Mechanical failure of a state of the art technology was identified as the primary cause of the DWH spill. Deepwater drilling was still seen as an innovation with an uncertainty about safety and the likelihood of success. Fixing failed technology means preventing incidents like the spill, and new technology needs to be developed quickly. The most prevalent actors in these articles were engineering specialists who either testified for or against the proposed plans to cap the spill, and BP representatives. With a beginning full of hopeful skepticism, this narrative was most prevalent in the beginning stages of the response effort. This is not to say that these articles downplayed the damage. It was portrayed that “the current disaster [the spill] will be controlled, but with a human, environmental, resource and financial cost still undetermined (NYT10)”. As

time went on and attempts to stop the leak failed, the projected total costs increased and the confidence that the leak could be stopped at all decreased.

Narrative D: Government Response – Positive and Negative

Narrative D described the government as either responsible for the response efforts, or as an active stakeholder in the incident. This narrative presented in positive and negative tones; however, the prevalence of these tones differed with each news source.

When referring to the response, the tone toward the federal government was pretty positive in NOLA (Figure 5). The federal government was made to seem like a savior that provided much needed resources.

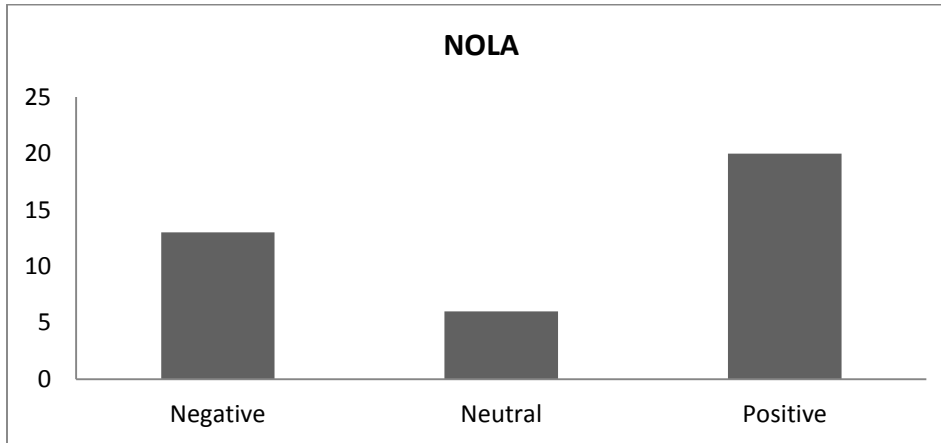


Figure 5. Tone of narrative D in NOLA.

However, it is likely that the equipment and man power they provided may not have actually been utilized in the actual clean up (NYT11). Surprisingly, the overall coverage that had narratives focusing on government responsibility and response were positive in all outlets, likely because of how quick the reaction to the spill was, but so was the blame. The White House presented one of their primary goals as “insuring BP will be held responsible and will pay for everything.” Although the crews and response teams were from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), they were rarely referred to as FEMA. This contributed to the overall positive tone in these narratives and articles, and likely the perception of the readers, creating more animosity toward BP. This strongly contrasts the negativity toward the federal government during Katrina, which was a natural disaster with no group to blame for the incident.

However, the narrative was presented in a negative tone in higher frequency when the government placed a moratorium on offshore drilling, which local interests claimed threatened the economy (Figure 6).

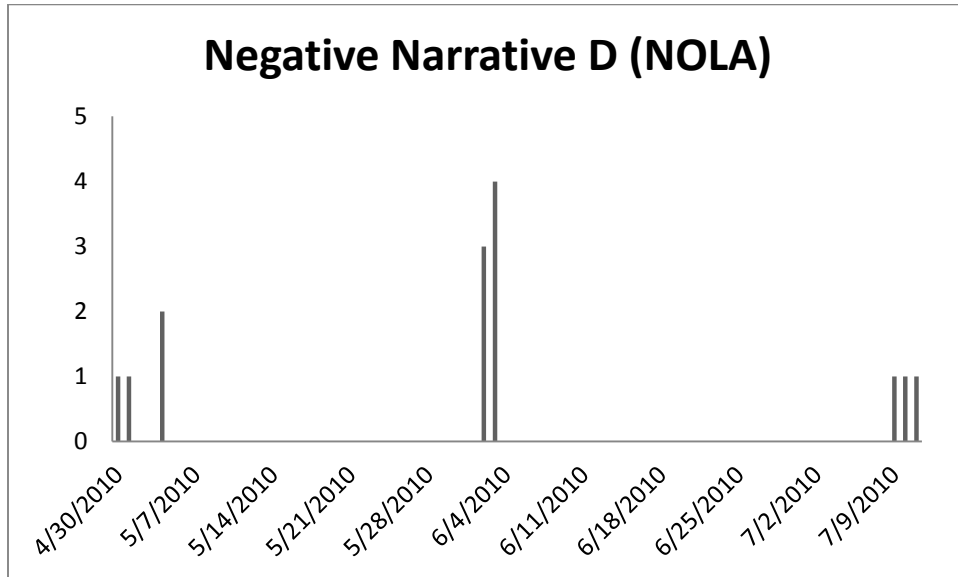


Figure 6. Presence of negative toned Narrative D in NOLA.

There was also confusion concerning the Minerals Management Services, which managed these regulations on drilling, because there were reports that certain shallow water drilling permits were being issued, despite a ban on all offshore drilling. This caused a spike in articles that presented a negative narrative D.

The national news outlets also varied in tone (Figure 7). NYT remained neutral about the government's involvement and had an even balance of positive and negative tones toward the government responsibility regarding the spill. However, WSJ presented significantly more negative articles. This is likely due to the relationship the corporate world and the government have with each other regarding resources. The harder regulations push, the less businesses can profit.

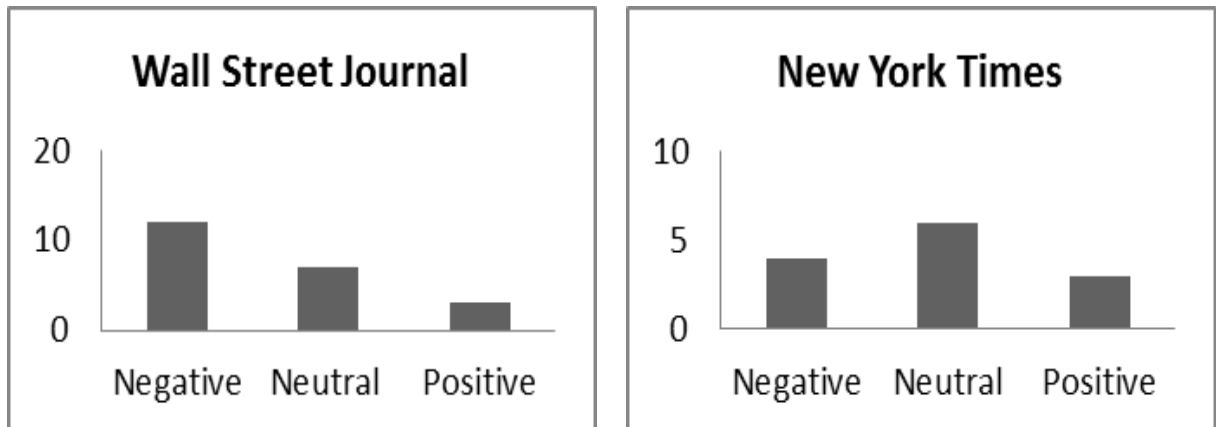


Figure 7. Presence of negative toned Narrative D in WSJ and NYT.

Narrative E: Oil as a necessary evil

Many people's initial reaction to events like the DWH oil spill is to call for an end to the action that they perceive to have caused it to happen. The action in this case is off-shore oil extraction. Narrative E is a defensive one that portrays "our society and the rest of civilization [...as depending...] upon plentiful power to supply us with shelter, food, security and comfort (NYT10)." This narrative presents energy as a necessity to the human race, and contends that accidents like oil spills are just a means to an end, because "We need oil... but we don't need oil spills (WSJ20)". These narratives are mostly carried by the words of professors in energy research and industry executives. This narrative was very popular in op-eds and other opinion pieces, and appeared more in both of the national news outlets. "My sympathies go out to the families of the

lost platform/ship workers. Whether it is oil, natural gas, coal or nuclear energy there is a risk. We need energy and instead of arguing about it, let's work together to use less and conserve more (WSJ2).” The prevalence of this narrative steeply decreased in proportion to realization of the severity of the spill. However, the narrative showed some prevalence in NOLA after 140 days after the first reports because of the local opposition to the federal appeal to extend the moratorium on offshore drilling, which was hurting the local economy.

Narrative F: Political Game

With any large event, politicians are generally quick to jump to utilize it to push their own agenda. Package F describes the narrative portraying the event as fuel for politicians and lobbyists. This was extremely prevalent because President Obama had just presented a Climate Change bill a month earlier that included a clause to allow more exploration for off-shore drilling which was seen as an incentive for conservatives to back the bill. Although this was added to get conservative congress members to jump on board, Obama and the White House were berated by politicians and civilians alike about the bill. The DWH spill became an opportunity for those who opposed the bill to make a point “The catastrophic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico could hardly have come at a worse time for President Obama — a month after he angered many supporters by announcing he would open up vast areas of American waters to new offshore oil exploration and drilling. Now, many of the groups that opposed the move are using the spill to restate their objections (NYT27).” It is natural for an event like this to become politicized, because “of the important role disaster events can play in raising awareness of the problem” (Prater et al. 2000). With the knowledge that disasters like these are almost crucial for quick legislative and regulatory change, actors from all sides took advantage of not only the role of the disaster, but also the role of the media, which has shown to push these issues to light to the previously disinterested (Kurtz 2004).

Narrative G: Corporate Misconduct

This narrative emphasizes the wrongdoing of corporate actors and how it ultimately led to this disaster. The narrative not only focusses on the specific companies involved in this spill, but also on the corporate energy sector in general, going as far as grouping them with other “anti-environmentalists” (NYT21 2010). As is widely noted, BP was named the responsible party in this incident, while partial blame was assigned to Transocean, who owned the rig, and Halliburton, who made the failed blowout preventer. BP was hesitant to accept such a burden in the beginning,

when the impact of the spill was still in question. However, as the magnitude of the accident seemed to be undeniable, they cooperated and were shown as remorseful and responsive. All outlets consistently reminded the readers that BP is the responsible party. The national outlets used a narrative that described the incident as a product of pure cooperate misconduct. The motives of the companies are seen as just for profit without any regard for the environment or the people they may effect. "What we see, going back two decades, is an oil industry that has had way too much sway with federal regulations. We are seeing our worst nightmare coming true (WSJ7)". As BP took full responsibility for the blame, there was less journalistic bias toward them. However, the government continued to ensure the public knew that BP was the main responsible party and they were liable for all damages and costs. Narrative G is likely to be paired with narrative A, likely to emphasize the severity of the damages the corporate misconduct has done.

Narrative H: Natural Attenuation

Natural attenuation is the ability of nature to cure itself (McAllister et al. 1994). Although this narrative was the least used out of the ten I identified, the lack of its presence shows that there is an assumption that this process, which is necessary for chemical dispersants to work properly, is present. This narrative was usually paired with Narrative I. If the dispersants work the way they are promised, the claim that "the plume had been pretty much devoured by oil-eating microbes and largely disappeared" must be true (NYT76). These articles tended to quote biologists, which increased the credibility of the information presented. It tended to downplay the environmental effects that narrative A suggested, often saying that natural events like the weather and temperature "will help the oil [in the Gulf] degrade faster (NOLA52)". This narrative was most present in the NYT, even though NYT also had the highest prevalence of narrative A, the narrative that is often undermined by narrative H. This is likely due to the focus on scientific opinion in the NYT.

Narrative I: Recovery/ Removal Efforts and Technology

Narrative I consists of justification or explanation of the methods used to remove the oil from the water. It was not enough to just mention what methods were used to qualify as using this narrative. There must be either rationalization of the benefits of a method or an explanation of the process or its effects on the environment or the industry, usually with a bias that portrays the method as successful. . It was very interesting that there was very little mention of this narrative

in comparison to the others. There was more focus on the cleanup closer to shore and the actual capping of the leak in all of the articles. This is likely due to the availability of information for the news media, since there was a limit on what air crafts could go over the actual spill where these methods would be used. The focus on the capping of the leak shows an emphasis on stopping the leak rather than cleaning up the oil that has already gotten into the waters. The recovery method that is usually associated with this narrative is chemical dispersants, because there was a lot of public uncertainty regarding the method, although in-situ burning was mentioned quite a bit as well. In the WSJ articles, it was assumed that these were “highly effective”, and there was a focus on the effect of the use of dispersants on the dispersant market and stock, considering the fact that the response efforts ordered so much dispersants that “the companies that make the dispersant [have to] ramp up production (WSJ31)”. However, the lack of coverage of this narrative leads me to believe that the concern was not very strong in comparison to that of other factors. This leaves little incentive for technological advancements in mechanical recovery methods, which are better for the environment. Booming was an oil recovery and containment method mentioned in the NOLA with high frequency. Other than one article dedicated to describing the realities of ineffective booming of shorelines, NOLA regarded the use of boom as a positive and trustworthy method of recovery and response.

Narrative J: Citizen Involvement

In the interviews, experts working for the government and the recovery contractor felt that the public need for action over inaction drove a large influx of volunteers. However, volunteers were untrained, which was a great inconvenience to rescue teams. NOLA had the highest presence of articles encouraging local involvement in the cleanup; however, it was also the only news outlet that discouraged volunteers because of training and liability (NOLA91). There is likely little to no mention of this narrative in NYT because there isn't a focus on the economic impact on the area, which is present in both WSJ and NOLA. Many of the differences can be explained by what sections each of the articles were published in, or even what sections are present at all in each of the media sources.

Narrative frequency in newspaper sections

Many of the differences can be explained by what sections each of the articles were published in, or even what sections are present at all in each of the media sources. For WSJ, there was a high prevalence of narrative B. With over half of the articles being published in the business section, and an additional 6% in either economy or commodities, it is no surprise that WSJ focused on this narrative (Figure 8).

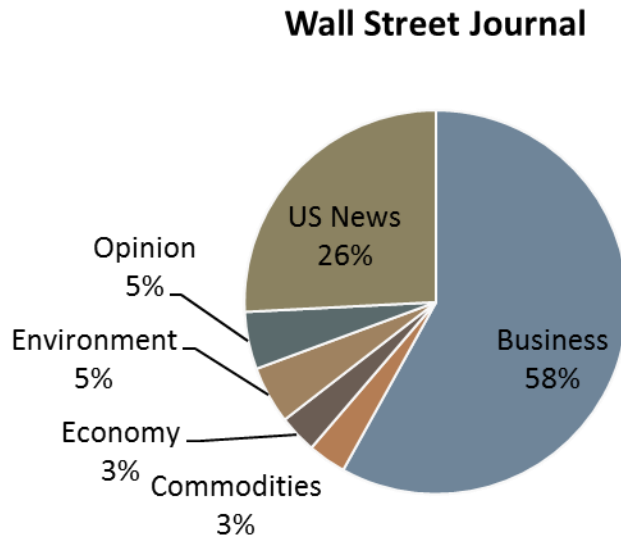


Figure 8. A breakdown of what section articles of WSJ were published in.

NYT mentioned narrative A the most out of all outlets and it was the most frequently used narrative overall. By looking at the breakdown of the sections, we can see that NYT has a significantly larger amount of articles published in an environment section in comparison to both NOLA and WSJ (Figure 9). In addition, almost one third of the articles are published in an opinion section, which tend to exaggerate aspects of the spill that is most important to the author, who are often in the environmental sector or locals.

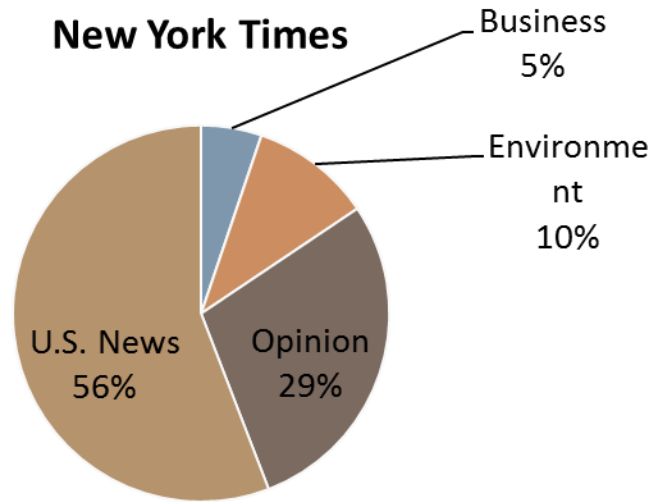


Figure 9 A breakdown of what section articles of NYT were published in.

NOLA did not have a large variation of used sections. Most of the articles were published under the news section (Figure 10). This could be caused by the high quantity of articles that often report the same thing.

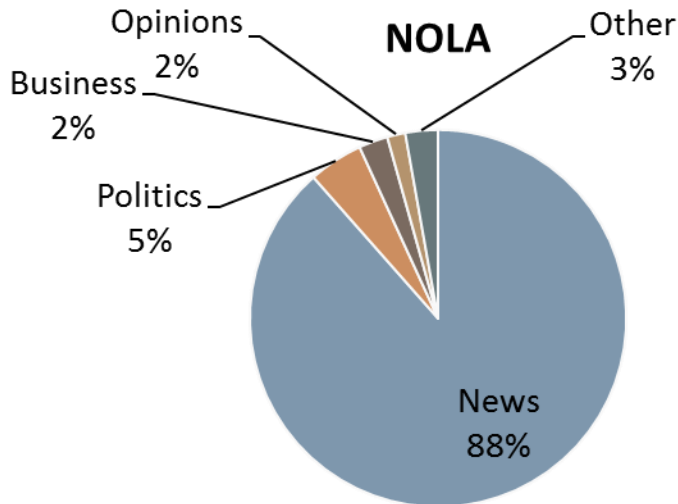


Figure 10. A breakdown of what section articles of NOLA were published in.

Findings

The Blame Game

For every event the media covered, there were articles that pointed fingers at specific parties. Whether that party is BP or the government, actors being interviewed also tended to point the finger at someone else. There was a focus across the board on where the liability should go. Although there was a split in the official responsibility, the Responsible Party that was mentioned and blamed the most was BP. This may have led them to spend money on not only the physical recovery, but also the recovery of their public image. Although, as the interviews showed, the capping of the leak was not affected by the media coverage, the additional funds and man power that was spent on appeasing the media's demand for visible action.

Action Over Inaction

Most air craft were banned from flying over the spill, so the media relied on officials who knew what was happening at the spill site and on what they could see and hear themselves. As the oil spread throughout the Gulf, there was a rush for every party to stop the oil from getting onto the land and in sensitive environments. However, the severity of the spill was also reported based largely on visual points, such as oiled birds, tar balls on beaches, and oil on rocks. There was a call for response teams to not only stop further damage, but also to mitigate the damage that was already done to the shore. An op-ed in the NYT described it best when the author admitted the locals may not be acting in their own interest but were rather acting under the mentality that doing something was better than doing nothing, even if it may actually make recovery harder (NYT64). Although the actions of the engineers and contractors working on capping the leak were nearly completely unaffected by media and public pressures, the need to prove that action was being taken took away manpower and funds that could have gone to removing the oil. For example, booms are meant to be used to corral oil and cannot stay in place for long periods of time, especially in the harsh conditions of the Gulf waters. Due to public and media outcry, hundreds of thousands of feet of boom were deployed around the coast, many of which ended up being washed onto shore and disturbing the very ecosystems they were supposed to protect (NOLA116).

Limitations

Although I was able to conduct some interviews, I was unable to use this information as much as I would like. I got a better understanding of decision making processes and their relationship with the way the media reports incidents like the Deepwater Horizon spill. I used the

DWH spill as my case study because it is the most recent and biggest spill in history and it could be applied to other spills. It is likely to also be the most well covered story. However, there are a lot of decisions made due to the unique qualities of the spill. There are no other spills at this magnitude that had an uncontrollable source. This made a lot of the methods and the interactions with the incident very unique and difficult to compare to.

Future Directions

There were some gaps of time in my studies, so in the future, I would like to sample articles for more dates, including articles that span to 2015. With the understanding that the DWH spill is a unique one, I would like to be able to compare the results of this spill to another major spill, like the Exxon Valdez. However, because of how long ago this occurred, it may be better to look at a smaller spill and analyze the effects of local media, like the Cosco Busan spill in 2007.

Broader Implications

This event took the lives of eleven workers and damaged the environment irreversibly. But these facts are sometimes overshadowed by political, social, and economic pressures, or are even used to push these actors. The media narratives played a role in driving change in the oil spill recovery and response world. Area contingency plans were created for more fluid interaction between the many agencies that are involved. Significance of spills at these area contingency meetings is measured by visual impacts, such as size of sheen and number of oiled birds spotted. Technology used in the response was forced to quickly evolve, causing a shift in the methods used. Many oil spill response contractors who have all the response equipment are now required to have a stock of chemical dispersants in the event of a spill of significance. This has taken away incentive to improve other technologies like those in mechanical recovery, which may be better for the environment. Incentives can be made by integrating them into policy and regulations. Technologies and organization for oil spills have improved after major events before, but it is now time to focus on other impacts besides economic efficacy (Birkland et al. 2002).

This leaves a lot of room for improvement in all fronts: policy, media relations, technology, or education. As we pass the fifth year anniversary of Deepwater Horizon, the Gulf still has remnants of the disaster, and as I have listed all the changes and potential changes in this oil spill world, so do we.

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APPENDIX**NYT**

Article #	Date	Headline	Author(s)
NYT1	4/22/2010	Search Continues After Oil Rig Blast	Cambell Robertson
NYT3	4/22/2010	Accidents Don't Slow Gulf of Mexico Drilling	Clifford Krauss
NYT2	4/23/2010	Search Ends for Missing Oil Rig Workers	Leslie Kaufman
NYT4	4/23/2010	Oil Rig Sinks, Raising Fears of a Major Spill in the Gulf	Campbell Robertson, Clifford Krauss
NYT5	4/23/2010	Explosion in the Gulf	

NYT6	4/24/2010	Oil Leaking Underwater From Well in Rig Blast	Campbell Robertson, Clifford Krauss
NYT7	4/26/2010	Robots Work to Stop Leak of oil in Gulf	Campbell Robertson, Clifford Krauss
NYT8	4/27/2010	oil Rig Blast Complicates Push for Energy and Climate Bill	John M. Broder
NYT9	4/28/2010	Too Busy for Oil Awards	John M. Broder
NYT10	4/29/2010	What the Spill Means for Offshore Drilling	The Editors
NYT10A	4/29/2010	A political calculation	Samuel Thernstrom (resdient fellow and fo-director of the Geoengineering Project at the American Enterprise Institute)
NYT10B	4/29/2010	Needless Ecological Disasters	Frances Beinecke (President of Natural Resources Defense Council)
NYT10C	4/29/2010	Tax, Baby, Tax	Mathew Kotchen (professor in EEP at Yale University)

NYT10D	4/29/2010	We Can't Give Up	David B. Burnett (director of tech for the Global Petroleum Research Institute and research coordinator for the Petroleum Engineering Department at Texas A&M University)
NYT10E	4/29/2010	The Cost in Fish	James H. Cowan, JR (Professor in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences at LSU)
NYT10F	4/29/2010	Policy, Not Technology	Paul M. Bommer (sr lecturer I the Dept of Petroleum and Geosystems Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin)
NYT11	4/29/2010	White House Takes a Bigger Role in the Oil Spill Cleanup	Campbell Robertson
NYT12	4/29/2010	Oil Spill's Blow to BP's Image May Eclipse Costs	Clifford Krauss
NYT13	4/30/2010	Weighing Risks of Coastal Oil and Cleanups	Andrew C. Revkin

NYT14	4/30/2010	Some Lessons from the oil Spill in the Gulf	Paul McKenney (executive director of the Alaska Center for the Environment during Exxon Valdez spill)
NYT14A	4/30/2010		Kathy Castor (Member of the 11th District Congress in Fla)
NYT14B	4/30/2010		Sue Libenson (executive director of the Alaska Center for the Environment during the Exxon Valdez oil spill)
NYT16	4/30/2010	Overhead and on the Ground, Waiting for a Potential Environmental Disaster to Hit	Clifford Krauss
NYT15	5/1/2010	Tax on oil May Help Pay for Cleanup	Matthew L. Wald
NYT17	5/1/2010	Gulf Coast Towns Brace as Huge oil Slick Nears Marshes	Leslie Kaufman, Campbell Robertson

NYT18	5/1/2010	A Spill of Our Own	Lisa Margonelli
NYT19	5/1/2010	New Technique Holds Hope for Oil Spill Cleanup	Leslie Kaufman
NYT20	5/2/2010	BP Moves to Fix a Leak as Obama Warns of Damage	Campbell Robertson, Henry Fountain
NYT21	5/2/2010	Drilling, Disaster, Denial	Paul Krugman
NYT22	5/3/2010	California Veterinain Aids Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue Efforts	Katharine Mieszkowski
NYT23	5/3/2010	A Valdez Reporter on Gushing Gulf Oil	Andrew C. Revkin

NYT24	5/3/2010	The Buzz is all About BP at Oil Drillers' Conference	Clifford Krauss
NYT25	5/3/2010	Gulf Oil Spill Is Bad, but How Bad?	John M. Broder, Tom Zeller Jr.
NYT26	5/4/2010	Slogans and Facts	John Collins Rudolf
NYT27	5/4/2010	A Chorus of 'I Told you So'	Elisabeth Rosenthal
NYT28	5/4/2010	Amount of Spill Could Escalate, Company Admits	John M. Broder, Campbell Robertson, Clifford Krauss
NYT29	5/4/2010	Concerns Up and Down the Food Chain	Leslie Kaufman
NYT30	6/2/2010	Stuck Saw Delays Effort to Cap Well	Henry Fountain
NYT31	6/2/2010	On Alabama Coast, a Sense of Urgency	John Leland

NYT32A	6/2/2010	The Federal Response to the Oil Spill	Robert P Silverberg
NYT32B	6/2/2010		Seth Trueger
NYT32C	6/2/2010		Anne Golden
NYT32D	6/2/2010		Mitch Cohen
NYT32E	6/2/2010		Barbara Hood
NYT32F	6/2/2010		Dylan J. Taatjes
NYT33	6/2/2010	Nuclear Option on Gulf Oil Spill? No Way, US Says.	William J. Broad

NYT34	6/2/2010	As Oil Slips Away, So Do Chances for Obama	Peter Baker
NYT35	6/2/2010	Reckoning in the Gulf	
NYT36	6/2/2010	Oil Companies Weigh Strategies to Fend Off Tougher Regulations	Eric Lightblau, Jad Maouawad
NYT37	6/2/2010	Spill May Prompt Energy Mergers	Rob Cox, Rolfie Winkler
NYT38	6/2/2010	Protesters Gather at BP Gas Stations	Sarah Wheaton
NYT39	6/2/2010	Fishermen Wait on Docks as Oil Gushes	James C. McKinley Jr.
NYT40	6/2/2010	Day 43: The Latest on the Oil Spill	

NYT41	6/3/2010	Oil Leak Inspires Novel Ideas	Jack Duffy
NYT42	6/3/2010	Admiral Says oil Pipe Is Cut, a Key Step in Halting Leak	Campbell Robertson, Joseph Berger, Henry Fountain
NYT43	6/3/2010	Plan for Relief Wells Spurs Hope Amid Caution	Henry Fountain
NYT44	6/3/2010	Day 44: The Latest on the Oil Spill	
NYT45	6/3/2010	BP's Natural Gas Joint Venture in Russia Is in Bankruptcy	Andrew E. Kramer
NYT46	6/3/2010	Logs Show Coast Guard Saw Threat Early	John Solomon, Campbell Robertson
NYT47	6/3/2010	Prosecuting Crimes Against the Earth	David M. Uhlmann
NYT48	6/3/2010	Another Torrent BP Works to Stem: Its CEO	Jad Mouawad, Clifford Krauss
NYT49	6/3/2010	Florida Beaches Full as Playtime Runs Short	John Leland
NYT50	6/4/2010	Best Bet to Fix Oil Leak in Gulf? Drill and Drill	Henry Fountain

NYT51	6/4/2010	OPINIONATOR; Save Us, Millennials	Timothy Egan
NYT52	6/4/2010	Obama Warns BP on Paying Big Dividends Amid Oil Spill	Michael Cooper
NYT53	6/4/2010	With Drilling Stopped, Losses Could Multiply	Tom Zeller Jr.
NYT54	6/4/2010	Day 45: The Latest on the Oil Spill	
NYT55A	6/4/2010	Day After Day, the Agony in the Gulf	Anna Klimes - Biologist
NYT55B	6/4/2010		Tory Bond
NYT55C	6/4/2010		Charles Herz

NYT55D	6/4/2010		Kim Soskin
NYT56	6/4/2010	Disaster in the Amazon	Bob Herbert
NYT57	6/4/2010	Pelicans, Back from Brink of Extinction, Face Oil Threat	John Collins Rudolf, Leslie Kaufman
NYT58	6/4/2010	BP Funneling Some of Leak to the Surface	Clifford Krauss, Henry Fountain
NYT59	6/4/2010	A Disaster Reaches Beyond the Gulf Coast	Jess McKinley, William Yardley, Abby Goodnough, Mark Leibovich
NYT60	7/9/2010	Spill Commission Hires Science Adviser	John M. Broder
NYT61	7/9/2010	Day 80: The Latest on the Oil Spill	
NYT62	7/9/2010	Weighing the Possibility of Bankruptcy for BP	John Swartz
NYT63	7/10/2010	Ambitious Effort Begins to Contain All Spill Oil	Henry Fountain

NYT64	7/10/2010	Our Life, Between Sea and Oil	Martha Serpas
NYT65	7/10/2010	Day 81: The Latest on the Oil Spill	
NYT66	7/11/2010	Cap Connector is Installed on BP Well	Henry Fountain
NYT67	7/11/2010	BP is Said to Explore Asset Sale	Michael J. de la Merced
NYT68	7/11/2010	Big Oil's Good Deal	
NYT69	7/11/2010	With Help After Storm, A chance to Give Back	Mireya Navarro
NYT70	7/11/2010	Day 82: The Latest on the Oil Spill	
NYT71	9/17/2010	BP Begins Last Step in Sealing Stricken Well in the Gulf	Henry Fountain
NYT72	9/18/2010	Reservoir in Gulf May Still Be Used	Henry Fountain

NYT73	9/19/2010	Once Well is Fully Sealed, BP May Go Back for More	Henry Fountain
NYT74	9/19/2010	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle... Oil Rigs	Andrew C. Revkin
NYT75	9/19/2010	US Says BP Well is Finally 'Dead'	Henry Fountain
NYT76	9/19/2010	Science and the Gulf	
NYT77	9/21/2010	Louisiana: Money for Rig Workers Has Few Takers	The Associated Press

WSJ

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WSJ1	4/22/2010	Blast Jolts Oil World	Ben Casselman, Russell Gold, Angel Gonzalez
WSJ2	4/23/2010	Missing Workers Feared Dead as Gulf Rig Sinks	Ben Casselman, Russell Gold, Guy Chazan
WSJ3	4/23/2010	Cleaning Up Oil's Reputation	Robert Bryce
WSJ4	4/24/2010	Coast Guard Says Oil Leak Stopped	Angel Gonzalez, Stephen Power
WSJ5	4/26/2010	Oil Spills Into Gulf After Rig Disaster	Russell Gold, Guy Chazan, Ben Casselman
WSJ6	4/26/2010	Oil Spill likely to Reach Land in Days	Russell Gold, Guy Chazan
WSJ7	4/28/2010	Leaking Oil Well Lacked Safeguard Device	Russell Gold, Guy Chazan, Ben Casselman

WSJ8	4/28/2010	Documents Show BP Opposed New, Stricter Safety Rules	Guy Chazan, Ben Casselman
WSJ9	4/28/2010	Efforts to Contain Slick Falter	Ben Casselman, Angel Gonzalez, Guy Chazan
WSJ10	4/29/2010	Oil Spill Estimates Raising Fivefold	Robert Lee Hotz, Angel Gonzalez
WSJ11	4/30/2010	Oil-Spill Fight Bogs Down	Ben Casselman, Stephen Power, Ana Campoy
WSJ12	4/30/2010	Experts: Oil May Be Leaking at Rate of 25,000 Barrels a Day in Gulf	Ian Talley
WSJ13	4/30/2010	Oil Slick Nears Coast as US Escalates Response	Jared A. Favole, Yochi J. Dreazen, Elizabeth Williamson
WSJ14	4/30/2010	Wildlife in Peril as Slick Nears Gulf Coast	Robert Lee Hotz, Angel Gonzalez
WSJ15	4/30/2010	Drilling Process Attracts Scrutiny in Rig Explosion	Russel Gold, Ben Casselman
WSJ16	4/30/2010	Town That Lives Off the Sea Braces for Slick	Angel Gonzalez

WSJ17	4/30/2010	Navy Joins Oil-Spill Fight	Stephen Power, Guy Chazan
WSJ18	4/30/2010	The Perils of Pricing BP's Problems	Liam Denning
WSJ19	5/1/2010	BP Seeks Help From Oter Oil Companies	Guy Chazan
WSJ20	5/1/2010	The Toxic Economic Mix of Oil and Seafood	Jeffrey Ball
WSJ21	5/1/2010	Obama to Visit Scene of Spill	Jonathan Weisman
WSJ22	5/1/2010	Oil Climbs to 3-Week High	Brian Baskin
WSJ23	5/1/2010	Disaster Recharges Drilling Debate	Neil King Jr., Jonathan Weisman
WSJ24	5/1/2010	Threats to Wildlife Often Linger Long After Accidents	Robert Lee Hotz
WSJ25	5/1/2010	Ailing Region Faces New Strains	Romy Varghese, Kelly Nolan, Stan Rosenberg
WSJ26	5/1/2010	BP's Escalating Costs Put Investors on Edge	Guy Chazan
WSJ27	5/1/2010	Drilling Down: A Troubled Legacy in Oil	Tom Bower

WSJ28	5/2/2010	Obama Says BP should Foot Cleanup Bill	Ian Talley
WSJ29	5/3/2010	Nalco, Clean Harbors Share Rise on Spill Cleanup Roles	David Benoit
WSJ30	5/3/2010	Shrimpers Fear Ruin From Oil Slick	Angel Gonzalez, Mark Long
WSJ31	5/3/2010	Disaster Invokes the Specter of Valdez	Jeffrey Ball
WSJ32	5/3/2010	Some Fishing Halted, But Impact is Unclear	Corey Dade, Jeffrey Ball, Aoun Sahi
WSJ33	5/3/2010	How to Clean Up From BP's Mess	Liam Denning
WSJ34	5/3/2010	Safety Device Questioned in 04	Russell Gold
WSJ35	5/3/2010	Louisiana Prepares to Fight Oil Slick	Jeffrey Ball, Corey Dade, Stephanie Simon
WSJ36	5/4/2010	Oil Regulator Draws Criticism in Congress on Oversight	Jeffrey Ball, Stephen Power, Russell Gold
WSJ37	5/4/2010	BP, Under Pressure, Woos congress	Neil King Jr., Guy Chazan
WSJ38	5/4/2010	In Wake of Oil Spill, BP Stock Looks Cheap	Brett Arends
WSJ39	5/4/2010	Oil Agency Draws Fire	Jeffrey Ball, Stephen Power, Russell Gold
WSJ40	5/4/2010	Lawyers Arrive and Suits Follow	Ashby Jones
WSJ41	5/3/2010	Drilling in Deep Water	

WSJ42	5/4/2010	Options Traders Graviate to Some Spill-Cleanup Positions	Tennille Tracy
WSJ43	6/2/2010	Gulf of Mexico Oil Well Approved	Stephen Power
WSJ44	6/2/2010	Louisiana Governor Wins Approval for More Sand Barriers Off Coast	Lauren Etter
WSJ45	6/2/2010	BP Frees Jammed Saw as Oil Nears Florida Beaches	Susan Daker, Stephen Wisnefski, Mike Esterl
WSJ46	6/2/2010	Traders Wager on Firms Linked to Oil Spill	Tennille Tracy
WSJ47	6/2/2010	Disaster Echos in Political Races	Peter Wallsten
WSJ48	6/2/2010	As Slick Grows Bigger, So Do Economic Fears	Justin Lahart, Dana Mattioli
WSJ49	6/2/2010	In Criticizing Cleanup, Jindal Finds His Voice	Corey Dade
WSJ50	6/2/2010	Lawyers Marshal Their Suits	Dionne Searcey
WSJ51	6/2/2010	Spill Draws Criminal Probe	Thomas Catan, Guy Chazan
WSJ52	6/2/2010	Laissez-Faire Meets the Oil Spill	Thomas Frank
WSJ53	6/3/2010	Curbs on Oil Drilling Lurk as Long-Term Wild Card	Brian Baskin

WSJ54	6/3/2010	Florida Keeps Eye on Oil	Mike Esterl
WSJ55	6/3/2010	Rep. Rahall Seeks Damages for Revenue Lost to Oil Spill	Stephen Power
WSJ56	6/3/2010	Anadarko Affirms Oil-Output Plan	Tess Stynes
WSJ57	6/3/2010	Two Ratings Firms Downgrade BP	James Herron
WSJ58	6/2/2010	Spreads Spike for BP, Deepwater Partners	Katy Burne
WSJ59	6/3/2010	Slick Nears Florida Panhandle Beaches	Mike Esterl, Valerie Bauerlein
WSJ60	6/3/2010	Obama Points a Finger at GOP	Laura Mackeler
WSJ61	6/3/2010	As BP Faces the Fallout, Chief's Fate Hangs in Balance	Guy Chazan, Benoit Faucon
WSJ62	6/3/2010	Transocean Left Out of Energy Rally	Jennifer Cummings, Katy Burne
WSJ63	6/4/2010	Oil, Natural Gas Soar On Drill-Ban Rumor	Brian Baskin, Matt Day, Jason Womack
WSJ64	6/4/2010	Can James Cameron Plug the Leak?	Peter Jeffrey
WSJ65	6/4/2010	BP's Toxic Takeover Temptation	Liam Denning

WSJ66	6/4/2010	Tar Balls Wash Ashore in Florida	Mike Esterl
WSJ67	6/4/2010	OSHA Says Cleanup Workers Don't Need Respirators	Melanie Trottman
WSJ68	6/4/2010	BP CEO, Chairman Seek to Reassure Shareholders	Benoit Faucon
WSJ69	6/4/2010	Companies Building Up Legal Teams	Dionne Searcey, Ashby Jones
WSJ70	6/4/2010	Model Suggests Slick Could Zoom Up East Coast	Robert Lee Hotz
WSJ71	6/4/2010	Shallow-Water Drilling Permits Rescinded	Stephen Power, Ben Casselman
WSJ72	6/4/2010	Oil Pipe Cut as BP Faces Bill, Credit Hit	Susan Daker, Stephen Wisniewski
WSJ73	6/4/2010	Obama Cancels Asia Trip, Heads to Gulf	Elizabeth Williamson
WSJ74	7/9/2010	Anadarko, Mitsui Executives to Testify Before Senate	Isabel Ordonez

WSJ75	7/9/2010	Fresh Fears Ripple Out as Oil Seeps Into Lake Pontchartrain	Kris Hudson
WSJ76	7/10/2010	Concerned Calpers Set to Meet with BP Officials	Joann S. Lublin, Guy Chazan
WSJ77	7/10/2010	BP Readies New Plan to Contain Oil Leak	Susan Daker
WSJ78	7/10/2010	Dispute on Oil Spill Panel Flares Before First Meeting	Stephen Power
WSJ79	7/11/2010	BP Optimistic on New Oil cap	Mark Long, Susan Daker
WSJ80	7/11/2010	More Oil Funds Could Be Needed	Peter Wallsten
WSJ81	9/19/2010	BP Awaits Pressure-Test Results on Gulf-Well Seal	The Associated Press
WSJ82	9/19/2010	BP Prepares for Test of Final Seal	Angel Gonzalez
WSJ83	9/20/2010	Gulf well declared dead	Guy Chazan

NOLA

Article #	Date	Outside Source (if applicable)	Headline	Author(s)
NOLA1	4/30/2010		Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill has New Orleans diners, restaurateurs worrying about local seafood	Brett Anderson

NOLA2	4/30/2010		Houma chief at New Orleans Jazz Fest prepares for oil spill briefing with EPA director Lisa Jackson	Molly Reid
NOLA3	4/30/2010		St. Bernard Parish seeking commercial fishers interested in fighting Gulf of Mexico oil spill	
NOLA4	4/30/2010		New Orleans officials monitoring Gulf of Mexico oil spill, air quality in the city, Landrieu says	Michelle Krupa
NOLA5	4/30/2010		Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill washing over boom in some areas, Plaquemines Parish president says	Bob Warren
NOLA6	4/30/2010		Gulf of Mexico oil spill prompts federal hold on new offshore oil drilling	Bruce Alpert
NOLA7	4/30/2010		Jindal, federal officials losing patience with BP efforts to control Gulf of Mexico oil spill	Bruce Nolan
NOLA8	4/29/2010	The Lens	Gulf spill is really a river of oil, environmentalists say	Bob Marshall
NOLA9	4/29/2010		Health officials order air quality testing after fuel smell blankets metro area	Times-Picayune Staff

NOLA10	4/29/2010		Congress planning a hearing on Gulf of Mexico oil spill	The Associated Press
NOLA11	4/29/2010		Oil spill could have impact on offshore drilling debate, White House says	The Associated Press
NOLA12	4/29/2010		Oil spill cleanup in Gulf will be paid by BP, White House says	The Associated Press
NOLA13	4/21/2010		11 oil rig workers still missing after explosion, Coast Guard says	The Times-Picayune
NOLA14	4/21/2010	The Times-Picayune	Search for survivors of oil rig explosion aided by calm seas, winds	Paul Purpura, Paul Rioux, Chris Kirkham, Rebecca Mombroy
NOLA15	4/22/2010		About 100 Deepwater horizon oil rig explosion survivors arrive on shore	The Associated Press
NOLA16	4/22/2010		Coast Guard says missing workers were closest to explosion site	Dennis Persica
NOLA17	4/22/2010	The Times-Picayune	Search for 11 workers missing after oil rig explosion is expected to be called off Friday	Paul Purpura, Paul Rioux, Chris Kirkham
NOLA18	4/23/2010		Sunken rig not leaking crude oil, Coast Guard official says	The Times-Picayune
NOLA19	4/23/2010	The Times-Picayune	Oil rig explosion could become one of deadliest industry disasters in Gulf	Paul Rioux, Chris Kirkham
NOLA20	4/24/2010		Oil spill cleanup halted by bad weather	The Associated Press

NOLA21	4/25/2010		High seas stymie oil spill cleanup at Deepwater Horizon explosion site	The Associated Press
NOLA22	4/26/2010		Oil leak from Gulf rig explosion no damage to shoreline at this point, Coast Guard chief says	The Times-Picayune
NOLA23	4/26/2010		Oil still spewing in Gulf after oil rig explosion last week	Chris Kirkham
NOLA24	4/27/2010		Exploded oil rig in Gulf may need controlled burn-off to contain spill	Chris Kirkham and Bob Marshall
NOLA25	4/28/2010		Eyes on the Gulf of Mexico's oil spill: An editorial	The Editorial Board
NOLA26	4/29/2010		Test burn of oil from exploded rig in Gulf has begun	The Times-Picayune
NOLA27	5/1/2010		Gov. jindal: Slow spill response 'threaten our way of life'	Ed Anderson

NOLA28	5/1/2010		Two congressmen: Gulf of Mexico oil spill large but 'not Armageddon'	John Kelly
NOLA29	5/1/2010		Climate Bill could be harmed by Gulf of Mexico oil spill	The Associated Press
NOLA30	5/1/2010		St. Bernard Parish fishers begin trainint to assist in fight against Gulf of Mexico oil spill	Bob Warren
NOLA31	5/1/2010		President Obama to visit Gulf Coast Sunday morning for firsthand look a oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico	The Associated Press
NOLA32	5/1/2010		Booms readied near Chef Menteur, Ft. Pike, to protect Lake Pontchartrain from Gulf of Mexico oil spill	Bruce Nolan
NOLA33	5/2/2010		President Barak Obama has a mission to protect our coast and our economy: An editorial	The Editorial Board
NOLA34	5/2/2010		Oil rig explosion and spill in Gulf of Mexico due to failed equipment, according to BP chairman	The Associated Press

NOLA35	5/2/2010		BP's new strategy: Containment boxes will be placed over spilled oil in Gulf	The Associated Press
NOLA36	5/2/2010		Offshore fishing in Gulf of Mexico oil spill area is closed	Bob Marshall
NOLA37	5/2/2010		Legal strategy for Gulf oil spill discussed by attorney general in Louisiana, 4 other states	The Associated Press
NOLA38	5/2/2010		Gulf oil spill has our full attention, President Barack Obama assures Louisiana	Richard Rainey
NOLA39	5/2/2010		President Barack Obama talks to Louisiana fishers about Gulf oil spill disaster	Richard Rainey
NOLA40	5/3/2010		Landrieu: City Hall will open staging area at Fort Pike to protect Lake Pontchartrain from oil spill	Michelle Krupa
NOLA41	5/3/2010		UPDATE: Mayor Mitch Landrieu, President Barack Obama in conference call about Gulf oil spill	Michelle Krupa
NOLA42	5/3/2010	The Lens	Anxious observers of the Gulf of Mexico ask: Where's the oil?	Bob Marshall
NOLA43	5/3/2010		Mississippi congressman says Gulf of Mexico looks like 'chocolate milk'	The Times-Picayune

NOLA44	5/3/2010		Report that oil flow from Gulf well had been cut is inaccurate, BP says.	Bob Warren
NOLA45	5/3/2010		Even EPA's Lisa Jackson is tweeting about the Gulf oil spill	The Times-Picayune
NOLA46	5/3/2010		Jindal says state and parish plans move forward to contain Gulf of Mexico oil spill	
NOLA47	5/3/2010		St. Tammany officials plan to protect Lake Pontchartrain from Gulf of Mexico oil spill	Christine Harvey
NOLA48	5/3/2010		BP pioneering underwater engineering feats to halt spewing oil in Gulf	Rebecca Mowbray
NOLA49	5/3/2010		Oil spill aid heading to Gulf from Alaska, Pacific Northwest	The Associated Press
NOLA50	5/3/2010	The Lens	Department of Wildlife and Fisheries released a map of area closed for fishing	Bob Marshall
NOLA51	5/3/2010		Board probing Gulf of Mexico oil spill to hold hearing in 2 weeks	The Associated Press

NOLA52	5/4/2010		In Alaska, Gulf oil spill brings back painful memories	The Associated Press
NOLA53	5/4/2010		Volunteers lining up to help fight Gulf of Mexico oil spill	Molly Reid
NOLA54	5/4/2010		Are you eating more seafood right now in response to the BP oil spill in the Gulf?	Ann Maloney
NOLA55	5/4/2010		News comment of the day: 11 dead workers in Gulf oil spill are not forgotten	The Times-Picayune
NOLA56	5/4/2010		Rig workers sue in Gulf oil spill, saying they were in lifeboats for 10 hours after explosion	The Associated Press
NOLA57	5/4/2010		Pentagon approves up to 17,500 National Guard soldiers for Gulf oil spill	The Associated Press
NOLA58	5/4/2010		St. Bernard Parish postpones open house event, citing Gulf oil spill	The Times-Picayune
NOLA59	5/4/2010		White House chastises FOX News for Brown comments on Gulf oil spill	Jonathan Tilove

NOLA60	6/2/2010		Louisiana was Big Oil's best friend, but Big Oil wasn't always Louisiana's best friend: James Gill	James Gill
NOLA61	6/2/2010	Associated Press	Oil spill nears Florida beaches as BP tries risky cap move	The Associated Press
NOLA62	6/2/2010		Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal to view Plaquemines Parish oil spill efforts, hold news conference today	Susan Poag; The Times-Picayune
NOLA63	6/2/2010		Jefferson Parish wonders whether flood insurance covers oil spill damage	Sheila Grissett
NOLA64	6/2/2010		Federal government approves new gulf oil well off Louisiana	The Associated Press
NOLA65	6/2/2010		Alabama governor complains about oil spill spotlight in Louisiana	The Associated Press

NOLA66	6/2/2010		Would Rand Paul help save "our" coast? A Guest column by John A. Lovett	John A. Lovett
NOLA67	6/2/2010		Gulf Oil spill won't harm the average beach-goer, health experts say	John Pope
NOLA68	6/2/2010		Flood insurance will cover oil damage, but only to buildings	Richard Rainey
NOLA69	6/2/2010		Interior prepares to list oil drilling operations stymied by Gulf of Mexico shutdown.	Rebecca Mowbray
NOLA70	6/3/2010		BP says it was unprepared for Gulf oil spill; pipe awaits cut	The Associated Press
NOLA71	6/3/2010		14 oiled birds found Wednesday in Louisiana	The Associated Press
NOLA72	6/3/2010		President Barack Obama returning to Louisiana on Friday to view Gulf oil spill work.	Bruce Alpert
NOLA73	6/3/2010		Coast Guard says cap to contain Gulf oil spill will be lowered 'in next couple of hours'	The Associated Press
NOLA74	6/3/2010		Official estimates of oil spilled in Gulf blaged by 'unknown unknowns'	David Hammer

NOLA75	6/3/2010		Plaquemines Parish sues BP over damages to wildlife caused by oil spill	Allen Powell
NOLA76	6/3/2010		Congusion over Obama administration's restrictions for drilling in Gulf of Mexico	The Times-Picayune
NOLA77	6/3/2010		Mitch Landrieu predicts ugly fight for resources to contain oil	Michelle Krupa
NOLA78	6/3/2010		Oil prices climb on report of Gulf drilling moratorium	The Associated Press
NOLA79	6/3/2010		Obama says he's 'furious' about Gulf oil spill	The Associated Press
NOLA80	6/3/2010		White House commission on Gulf of Mexico oil spill to include varied perspectives	Bruce Alpert
NOLA81	6/3/2010		Gulf spill pushes 'thick, black cake-mix type oil' into Barataria Bay	Allen Powell
NOLA82	6/3/2010		Obama administration resists pressure to modify moratorium on new deepwater drilling in Gulf of Mexico	Jonathan Tilove
NOLA83	6/3/2010		BP places cap on Gulf of Mexico well but oil continues to spew	Jaquetta White

NOLA84	6/4/2010		Maritime industry workers question whether drilling moratorium is worth the economic pain	David Hammer
NOLA85	6/4/2010		NOAA Gulf of Mexico oil spill trajectory forecasts for Friday through Sunday	Times-Picayune Staff
NOLA86	6/4/2010		BP: cap gets some Gulf oil, crude still spews	The Associated Press
NOLA87	6/4/2010		Progress being made with containment cap, Allen says	Chris Kirkham
NOLA88	6/4/2010		BP investors told cleanup costs for Gulf oil will be 'severe'	The Associated Press
NOLA89	6/4/2010	Baton Rouge	House proposes \$24.9 million to coastal parishes to fight oil spill	Robert Travis Scott
NOLA90	6/4/2010		US House subcommittee to conduct oil spill hearing in Calmette Monday	The Times-Picayune
NOLA91	6/4/2010		Volunteers welcome, but rescuing oiled wildlife requires training, certification	The Times-Picayune
NOLA92	6/4/2010		Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nunbesser was ABC's 'person of the week'	The Times-Picayune
NOLA93	6/4/2010		BP's Tony Hayward hands responsibility for oil spill cleanup to American, British newspaper reports	The Times-Picayune
NOLA94	6/4/2010		Louisiana Legislature to hold oil spill hearing Wednesday	Robert Travis Scott
NOLA95	6/4/2010		Attempt to control flow of oil in Gulf of Mexico is being executed gradually	Chris Kirkham

NOLA96	6/4/2010		BP Announces new plan for financing parishes' response to Gulf of Mexico oil spill	Robert Travis Scott
NOLA97	6/4/2010		St. Bernard recieves 28 miles of hard boom to fight oil spill	
NOLA98	7/9/2010		Westwego seafood vendors feeling the Gulf oil spill pinch	Allison Good
NOLA99	7/9/2010		Local guides saddned as 'really good summer of fishing'comes to abrupt close	Bob Marshall
NOLA100	7/9/2010		News comment: Obama administration uses political muscle on courts	Times-Picayune Staff
NOLA101	7/9/2010		Most Texas tar balls not from Gulf oil spill, Coast Guard decides	The Associated Press
NOLA102	7/9/2010		Toughest Gulf oil spill cleanup jobs go to minorities, NAACP says	The Associated Press
NOLA103	7/9/2010		Crew to lay new type of boom around Rigolets marsh	Jeff Adelson
NOLA104	7/10/2010		Appeals court ruling on the deepwater drilling moratorium is a hollow victory: an editorial	The Editorial Board

NOLA105	7/10/2010		Katrina levee critic van Heerden downplays Gulf oil spill damage in BP video	Mark Schlegstein
NOLA106	7/10/2010		BP has removed Gulf of Mexico oil spill containment cap	Rebecca Mowbray
NOLA107	7/11/2010		Louisianians expect balanced assessment Presidential commission: An editorial	The Editorial Board
NOLA108	7/11/2010		NOAA Gulf of Mexico oil spill trajectory forecasts for Sunday through Tuesday	The Times-Picayune
NOLA109	7/11/2010		BP claims progress on new cap as oil spews in Gulf	The Associated Press
NOLA110	9/18/2010		Charity group flies New Orleans - area dogs to new homes around the country	Kari Dequine
NOLA111	9/18/2010		Engineers: 1 more pressure test to declare BP well officially dead	The Associated Press

NOLA112	9/19/2010		BP oil well is dead, officials say	Rebecca Mowbray
NOLA113	9/19/2010		Final oil well sealing is small comfort to suffering, anxious Gulf residents	The Associated Press
NOLA114	9/20/2010		Reader comment: Louisiana's economy must be diversified	The Times-Picayune
NOLA115	9/20/2010		BP to join oil companies' spill response program	The Associated Press
NOLA116	9/20/2010		Barrier berm advocates not deterred by environmental regulators' misgivings	Mark Schlegstein