

# Austin Moss

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## EDUCATION

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### University of Iowa, Henry B. Tippie College of Business

*Ph.D. Candidate in Accounting*

*Expected May 2022*

*B.B.A., Accounting & Finance (with honors and highest distinction)*

*May 2017*

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Financial Reporting Information and Individual Investors—I strive to use unique data and settings to study relevant, real-world financial market phenomena with an emphasis on the creation and use of financial information by everyday people.

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## RESEARCH

### Current Working Papers:

1. “How Do Brokerages’ Digital Engagement Practices Affect Retail Investor Information Processing and Trading.”
  - Job Market Paper (draft forthcoming)
2. “The Role of Accounting Information in an Era of Fake News.” [\[PDF\]](#)
  - Coauthor: Betty Liu
  - Under 2<sup>nd</sup> round review at the *Journal of Accounting & Economics*
  - Presentations: Midwest Accounting Research Conference (2021)
  - Abstract: We investigate the role of accounting information in deterring the production of financial fake news and attenuating its market impact. Specifically, for firms that have issued more management forecasts, provided a 10-K with higher readability, or released major accounting information more recently, we find an 8-14% reduction in the probability of being targeted by a fake article on Seeking Alpha and an 8-18% reduction in the number of fake articles. We also find a reduction in abnormal trade volume and idiosyncratic return volatility following the publication of a fake article for these firms. Furthermore, analyses using a bunching identification strategy find that fake news production peaks prior to earnings announcements and drops upon announcement, providing evidence that impending accounting information releases induce fake news authors to avoid publishing post-disclosure when the accounting information environment is relatively stronger. Overall, our results are consistent with accounting information reducing the production of and the market reaction to fake news, providing evidence of an ex ante and ex post role of accounting information in safeguarding firms from financial misinformation.

3. "The Irrelevance of ESG Disclosure to Retail Investors: Evidence from Robinhood." [\[PDF\]](#)
  - Coauthors: Jim Naughton and Clare Wang
  - Revision requested by *Management Science*
  - Media: [altsforall.com](http://altsforall.com), Investor Relations Magazine
  - Abstract: Using an hourly dataset on retail investor individual security positions from Robinhood Markets, we find that ESG disclosures are irrelevant to retail investors' buy and sell decisions. The response to ESG press releases by retail investors is no different than the routine portfolio adjustments that occur on non-event days. In contrast, these same investors make economically meaningful changes to their portfolios in response to press releases that do not pertain to ESG, especially those that pertain to earnings announcements. Our findings are not due to a lack of statistical power or other data shortcomings. Retail investor indifference persists for ESG announcements that prior research has found to generate long-run shareholder returns. Our conclusions contrast with evidence from experimental studies that retail investors respond favorably to ESG disclosures.
4. "The Impact of Earnings Season on Election Day." [\[PDF\]](#)
  - Coauthor: Clare Wang
  - Presentations: University of Iowa
  - Abstract: Due to the statutory timeline for general elections, U.S. elections always fall in the middle of the third-quarter earnings season. Our analyses exploit voter-level stock market ownership to provide evidence on the impact corporate earnings news has on voter perceptions and behavior. For the five most recent U.S. presidential elections, we show that earnings news released by S&P 500 firms prior to Election Day has a statistically and economically significant impact on the likelihood that stock-owning voters will cast an incumbent vote. We conclude that corporate earnings announcements serve as a timely and relevant signal influencing voter perceptions of economic performance at a critical time in the election cycle. In addition, our findings suggest that firms with a September 30th fiscal quarter-end may have a disproportionate impact on voters' behavior on Election Day.
5. "A Corrupt NBA Referee and the Sports Betting Market: Quasi-Random Tests of Informed Trading and the Price Formation Process." [Draft Available Upon Request]
  - Coauthor: Dennis Hamilton
  - Abstract: We study price formation in the presence of market participants who hold a significant private information advantage using betting contracts on National Basketball Association (NBA) games. During the 2006-07 season, an NBA referee (Tim Donaghy) sold information about his games to a big-time bet broker who subsequently traded on the private information. Our identification strategy exploits that a referees' game assignments are effectively random, resulting in the random assignment of an information-advantaged trader to the games Donaghy refereed. Using measures of betting market quality with analogous stock market counterparts, we find strong evidence that informed trading causes significant increases in long- and short-term price movements as well as decreases in measures of market liquidity. Our price informativeness evidence is less conclusive, suggesting either a slight increase in

informativeness or no effect. Lastly, we find evidence consistent with the informed trader engaging in strategic price bluffing. The unique details of our setting allow us to: (1) directly observe informed trading and assets' true, exogenous terminal values, (2) identify random variation in private information trading, and (3) overcome the joint hypothesis problem that plagues asset pricing research in other markets.

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## **HONORS & AWARDS**

Keith Lantz Colleague Improvement Fellowship, 2019-2020 & 2021-2022

University of Iowa Recruitment Fellow, 2017-2022

University of Iowa Accounting Faculty Scholar, 2017

AICPA Legacy Scholar, 2016

Tippie 21 Under 21 Award, 2016

University of Iowa President's List, 2015-2016

University of Iowa Dean's List, 2015-2017

Muscatine High School Valedictorian, 2014

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## **CONFERENCES & DISCUSSIONS (\*by invitation/nomination)**

University of North Carolina Tax Doctoral Seminar (2020)\*

University of Iowa Sidney Winter Lecture Series (2019)

FARS Mid-Year Meeting & Doctoral Consortium (2019)\*

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## **VIRTUAL CONFERENCES**

Midwest Accounting Research Conference (2021)

Future of Financial Information Conference (2021)

FARS Mid-Year Meeting (2021)

NYU Topics in Empirical Household Finance (Open PhD Course, Fall 2020)

Stanford University COVID-19 and AI: A Virtual Conference (2020)

Georgetown Financial Markets Quality Conference (2020)

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## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

University of Iowa, Henry B. Tippie College of Business

- Student Member. Dean Interview Committee (Spring 2020)

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## **TEACHING**

University of Iowa, Henry B. Tippie College of Business

- Instructor. Introduction to Financial Accounting, Online (Fall 2018-Spring 2020)
- Teaching Assistant. Financial Statement Analysis (Spring 2018)
- Instructor. Introduction to Financial Accounting (Fall 2017)

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## **NON-ACADEMIC INTERESTS**

Hawkeye Sports – Artisanal Coffee – Mindfulness – Biotech Investing – Craft Breweries

## REFERENCES

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Paul Hribar

Dissertation co-chair

Henry B. Tippie Excellence Chair in Accounting

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Clare Wang

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Cristi Gleason

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