Project 10: Protecting American Investors?
Hello!

We are Project Team 10

Ben Chen
Econ ‘22

Selina Chu
Sociology ‘23

Kevin Feng
Math + CS ‘23

Ben Clayman
Econ + CS ‘22

Alyssa Russell
History PhD Student

Ed Balleisen
Professor of History
1. Introduction

The Problem of Asymmetric Information in Investment Markets
Corruption, embezzlement, fraud, these are all characteristics which exist everywhere. It is regrettably the way human nature functions, whether we like it or not. What successful economies do is keep it to a minimum.

- Alan Greenspan
Historical Background

- Fraud: Prevalent in 19th century US
- The idea of investor protection
  - Financial press and literature
  - Third-party monitors
  - Government regulatory policy
Our Purposes

- Investigate evolving structure and content of financial advice to US investors

- Time period: early 20th century to the birth of the Internet
Initial Research Questions

✦ What was the effect of the business cycle on the nature of financial advice?

✦ How quickly were financial innovations integrated into financial advice?

✦ How, if at all, did advice aimed at specific social groups based on race, gender, and class differ?
2. Research Methods

Data Scraping and Sources
Data Scraping methodology

- Main Database: ProQuest Historical Newspapers
- Download PDFs from ProQuest
- Convert PDFs to texts via OCR (optical character recognition)
Data Scraping
## Types of Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mainstream Newspapers/Magazines</th>
<th>Black Newspapers</th>
<th>Women Magazines</th>
<th>Individual Columnists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Daily Tribune</td>
<td>The Baltimore Afro-American Tribune</td>
<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
<td>Sylvia Porter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>Philadelphia Tribune</td>
<td>Better Homes and Gardens</td>
<td>William Doyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Chats with Women” in Los Angeles Times</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wall Street Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York Times</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barron’s</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Timeline of Data Sources

Town & Country
Chicago Tribune Investors' Guide
Wall Street Journal: "The Inquiring Investor"
LA Times: "Chats With Women"
Sylvia Porter
Chicago Tribune: "The Women's Corner"
William Doyle (pt 1)
Philadelphia Tribune: "Your Money and You"
Baltimore Afro-American: "Today's Investor"
Wall Street Journal: "Your Money Matters"
William Doyle (pt 2)
Column selection Criteria

- Represent different demographics
- Consistently published
- Meet our rubric for relevance
Data cleaning

- Abbyy FineReader and OCR
- Potential complications
it will be mailed closed. Address

provided stamp is in

letters to Investors' Guide.

ital. The undertaking has reputable

backing. Of course, it is highly specula-
tive at its present stage.
3. Potential Findings

Data Analysis and Next Steps
Google Ngram visualizations
Google Ngram visualizations

Term Frequency (% all Google Books)
Popular introduction of investment instruments at lower points in the stock market
Hypotheses

✦ More conservative advice for black newspapers and women’s columns

✦ Investment innovations generate enthusiasm

✦ Types of advice change with business cycle
Data Analysis Methods

- Topic Modeling
- Sentiment Analysis
- Token Analysis

Python textblob package for analysis
Potential challenges

- OCR mistakes and document legibility
- Prevalence of certain column entries to investment
- Obtaining representative data for all time periods
Questions?