

August 17th, 2016

Source: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au>

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One of Warren Buffett's long-time followers, US writer Robert Miles, wonders why so many Australian investors are followers of the US billionaire.

"What intrigues me about Australia is how well Australia is represented in the Olympics per head of population," Miles told The Australian yesterday at a lunch briefing in Sydney organised for clients of accounting firm Grant Thornton.

"Australia has a small economy, yet it is in the top five or six in terms of the medals," says Miles, who has been following Buffett for the past 17 years and written several books on his investment philosophy.

"Likewise, using that Olympic comparison, the percentage of Aussies who get Buffett, who get Berkshire Hathaway and value investing, is disproportionate to the rest of the world. I see an increasing number of Australian investors at the Berkshire Hathaway annual meeting in Omaha every May and at the investment seminars I hold before the meeting."

Miles estimates there were 30 Australians in the dinner for 300 people held for attendees of his value investing seminars ahead of the Berkshire Hathaway meeting this year. "Ten per cent is a big number for a small country. For some reason Australians get Buffett more than people from any other country apart from Americans," he says.

Miles rejects the idea the growth of the Australian funds management industry and self-managed superannuation funds in Australia has been behind the growth of local interest in Buffett.

He argues this doesn't necessarily mean they are the type of people who like value investing and are keen to learn more about Buffett. "Maybe it is just that they like learning from the best," he says. "Maybe it is that they like his way of thinking."

Mark O'Hare, a senior partner with Grant Thornton's Brisbane office, a Buffett follower himself, told the seminar that it was the similarity between Buffett's down to earth, mid-Western views, his long-term approach to investing and his support for ethical business practices that appealed to Australian investors — alongside his outstanding investment success.

Miles, whose first book on Buffett was entitled [101 Reasons to Own The World's Greatest Investment: Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway](#), estimates an investor who put \$US6500 (\$8460) into Berkshire Hathaway shares in its early days in 1965 would now be worth more than \$US100 million.

Miles points out Buffett's investment philosophy is to look for companies that are well managed, with sound, predictable long-term earnings prospects, and are well priced. He says Buffett does not look at macro-economic trends or interest rate movements but takes a micro-economic view of individual companies. He says Buffett, a long-time Democrat, has become increasingly involved in the present US elections, calling out Republican candidate Donald Trump for being a bully and offering to release his own tax return if Trump will release his.