

The Objective in Corporate Finance

“If you don’t know where you are going, it does not matter how you get there”

First Principles

- Invest in projects that yield a return greater than the minimum acceptable hurdle rate.
 - The hurdle rate should be higher for riskier projects and reflect the financing mix used - owners' funds (equity) or borrowed money (debt)
 - Returns on projects should be measured based on cash flows generated and the timing of these cash flows; they should also consider both positive and negative side effects of these projects.
- Choose a financing mix that minimizes the hurdle rate and matches the assets being financed.
- If there are not enough investments that earn the hurdle rate, return the cash to the owners of the firm (if public, these would be stockholders).
 - The form of returns - dividends and stock buybacks - will depend upon the stockholders' characteristics.

Objective: Maximize the Value of the Firm

The Classical Viewpoint

- **Van Horne:** "In this book, we assume that the objective of the firm is to maximize its value to its stockholders"
- **Brealey & Myers:** "Success is usually judged by value: Shareholders are made better off by any decision which increases the value of their stake in the firm... The secret of success in financial management is to increase value."
- **Copeland & Weston:** The most important theme is that the objective of the firm is to maximize the wealth of its stockholders."
- **Brigham and Gapenski:** Throughout this book we operate on the assumption that the management's primary goal is stockholder wealth maximization which translates into maximizing the price of the common stock.

The Objective in Decision Making

- In traditional corporate finance, the objective in decision making is to maximize the value of the firm.
- A narrower objective is to maximize stockholder wealth. When the stock is traded and markets are viewed to be efficient, the objective is to maximize the stock price.
- All other goals of the firm are intermediate ones leading to firm value maximization, or operate as constraints on firm value maximization.

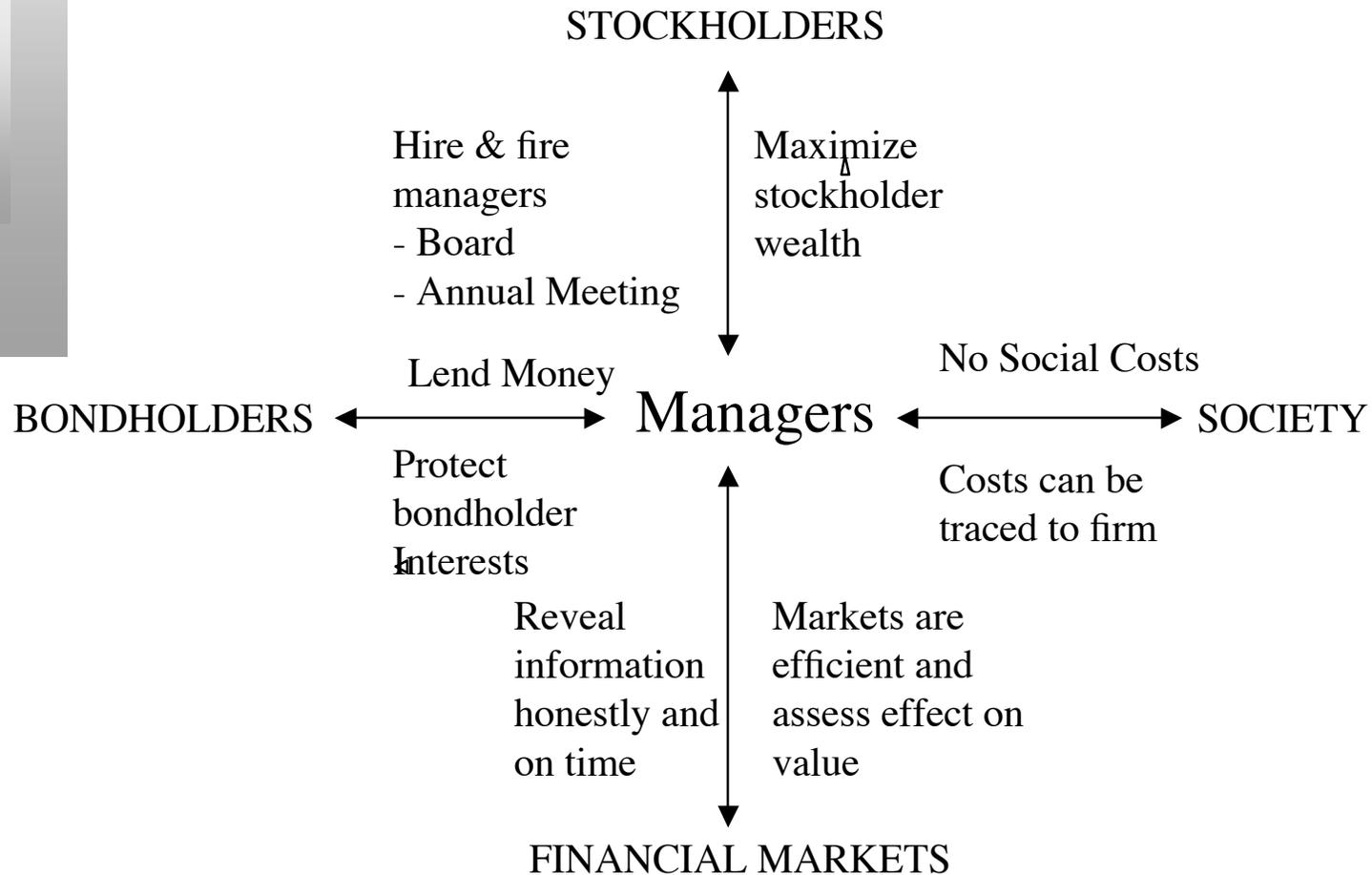
The Criticism of Firm Value Maximization

- Maximizing stock price is not incompatible with meeting employee needs/objectives. In particular:
 - - Employees are often stockholders in many firms
 - - Firms that maximize stock price generally are firms that have treated employees well.
- Maximizing stock price does not mean that customers are not critical to success. In most businesses, keeping customers happy is the route to stock price maximization.
- Maximizing stock price does not imply that a company has to be a social outlaw.

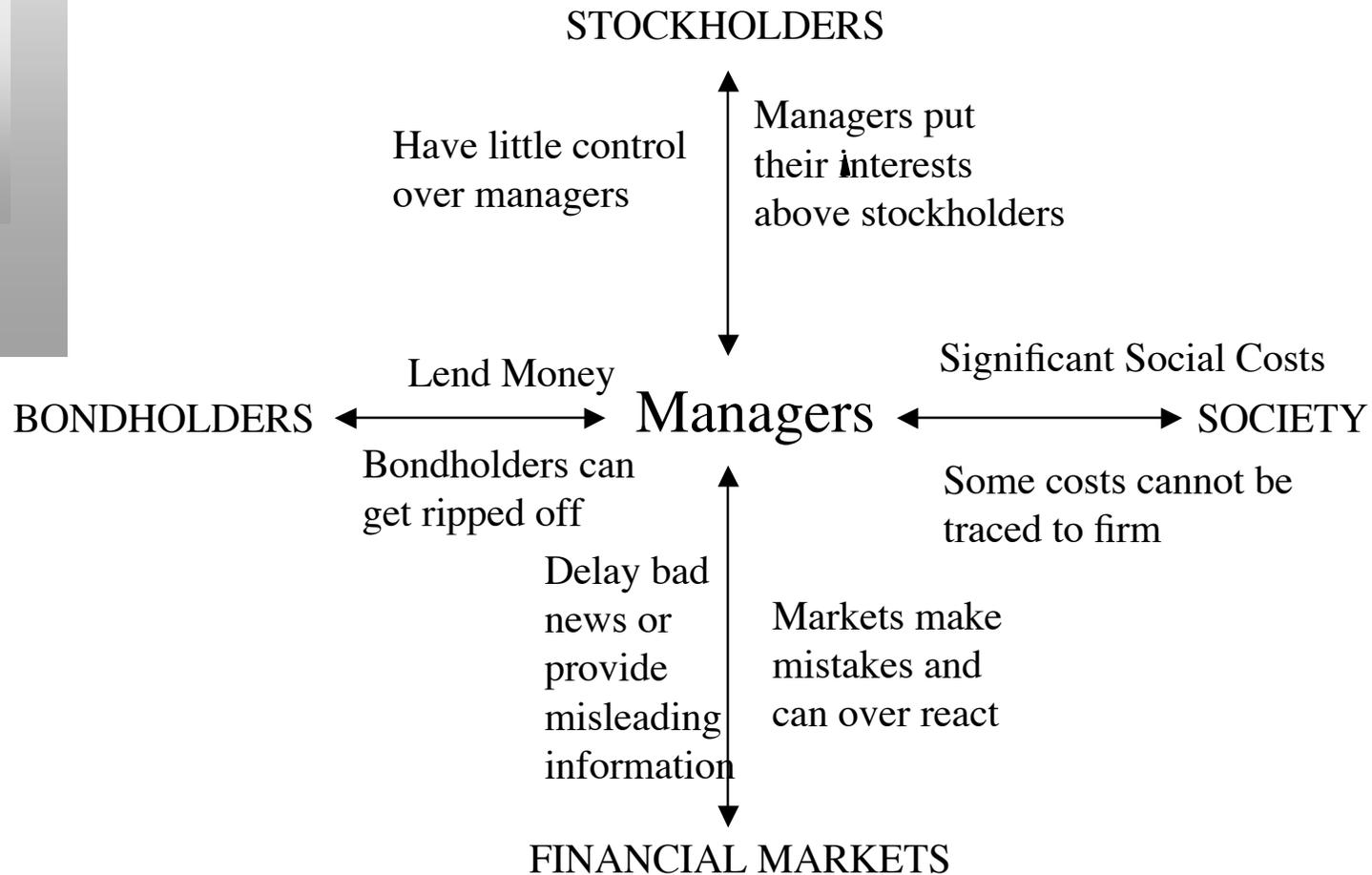
Why traditional corporate financial theory focuses on maximizing stockholder wealth.

- Stock price is easily observable and constantly updated (unlike other measures of performance, which may not be as easily observable, and certainly not updated as frequently).
- If investors are rational (are they?), stock prices reflect the wisdom of decisions, short term and long term, instantaneously.
- The objective of stock price performance provides some very elegant theory on:
 - how to pick projects
 - how to finance them
 - how much to pay in dividends

The Classical Objective Function



What can go wrong?



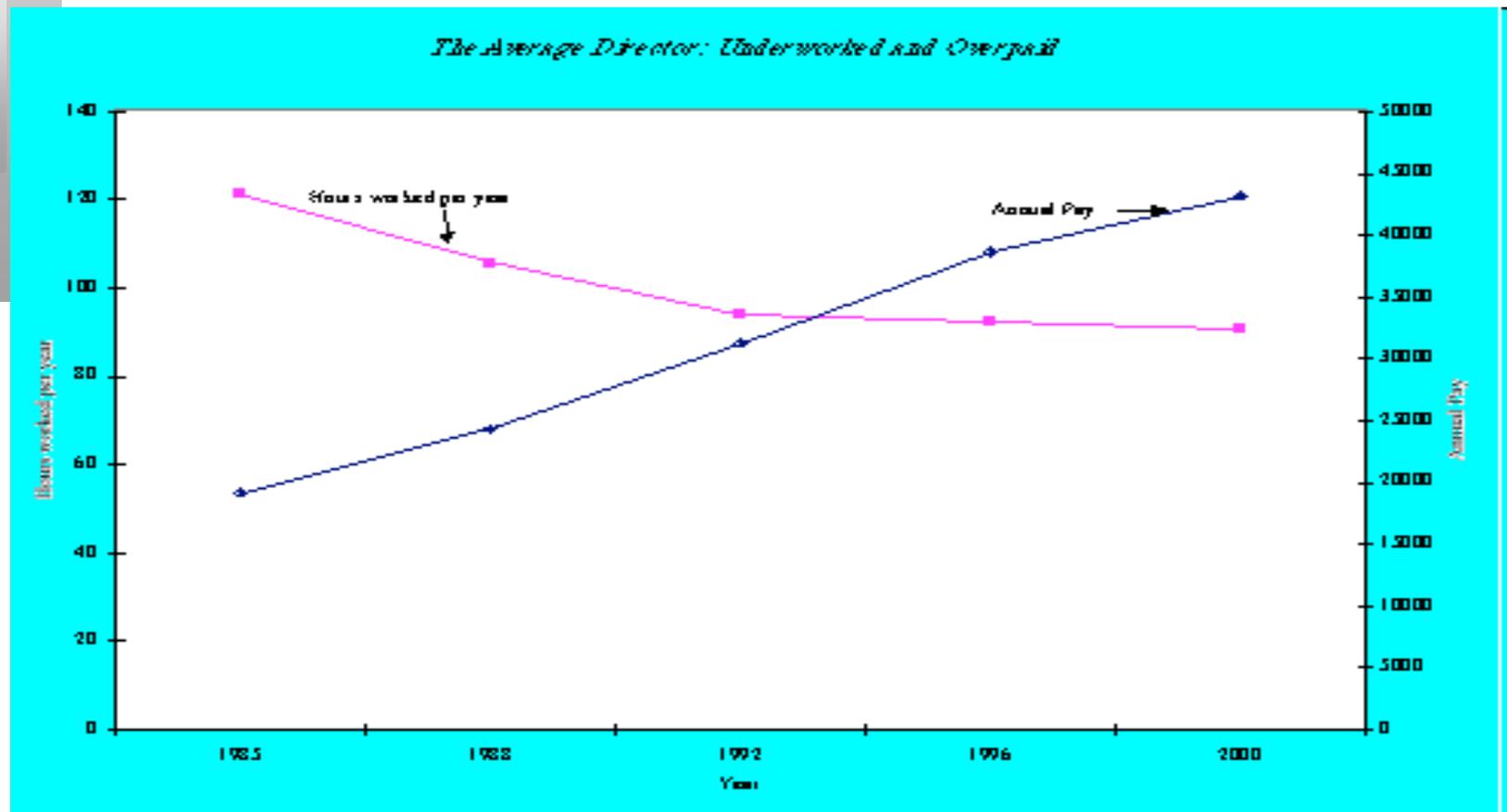
I. Stockholder Interests vs. Management Interests

- **In theory:** The stockholders have significant control over management. The mechanisms for disciplining management are the annual meeting and the board of directors.
- **In Practice:** Neither mechanism is as effective in disciplining management as theory posits.

The Annual Meeting as a disciplinary venue

- The power of stockholders to act at annual meetings is diluted by three factors
 - Most small stockholders do not go to meetings because the cost of going to the meeting exceeds the value of their holdings.
 - Incumbent management starts off with a clear advantage when it comes to the exercise of proxies. Proxies that are not voted becomes votes for incumbent management.
 - For large stockholders, the path of least resistance, when confronted by managers that they do not like, is to vote with their feet.

Board of Directors as a disciplinary mechanism



The CEO often hand-picks directors..

- The 1992 survey by Korn/Ferry revealed that 74% of companies relied on recommendations from the CEO to come up with new directors; Only 16% used an outside search firm. While that number has changed in recent years, CEOs still determine who sits on their boards.
- Directors often hold only token stakes in their companies. The Korn/Ferry survey found that 5% of all directors in 1992 owned less than five shares in their firms. Most directors in companies today still receive more compensation as directors than they gain from their stockholdings.
- Many directors are themselves CEOs of other firms.

Directors lack the expertise (and the willingness) to ask the necessary tough questions..

- In most boards, the CEO continues to be the chair. Not surprisingly, the CEO sets the agenda, chairs the meeting and controls the information provided to directors.
- The search for consensus overwhelms any attempts at confrontation.

Who's on Board? The Disney Experience - 1997

Reveta F. Bowers 1,5
Head of School
Center for Early Education

Roy E. Disney 3
Vice Chairman
The Walt Disney Company

Michael D. Eisner 3
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
The Walt Disney Company

Stanley P. Gold 4,5
President and Chief Executive Officer
Shamrock Holdings, Inc.

Sanford M. Litvack
Senior Executive Vice President
and Chief of Corporate Operations
The Walt Disney Company

Ignacio E. Lozano, Jr. 1,2,4
Editor-in-Chief, LA OPINION

George J. Mitchell 5
Special Counsel
Verner, Liipfert, Bernard, McPherson
and Hand

Thomas S. Murphy
Former Chairman
Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.

Richard A. Nunis
Chairman
Walt Disney Attractions

Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J.
President
Georgetown University

Michael S. Ovitz 3
President
The Walt Disney Company

Sidney Poitier 2,4
Chief Executive Officer
Verdon-Cedric Productions

Irwin E. Russell 2,4
Attorney at Law

Robert A.M. Stern
Senior Partner Productions

E. Cardon Walker 1
Former Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
The Walt Disney Company

Raymond L. Watson 1,2,3
Vice Chairman
The Irvine Company

Gary L. Wilson 5
Co-Chairman
Northwest Airlines Corporation

1 Member of Audit Review Committee
2 Member of Compensation Committee
3 Member of Executive Committee
4 Member of Executive Performance Plan Committee
5 Member of Nominating Committee

The Calpers Tests for Independent Boards

- Calpers, the California Employees Pension fund, suggested three tests in 1997 of an independent board
 - Are a majority of the directors outside directors?
 - Is the chairman of the board independent of the company (and not the CEO of the company)?
 - Are the compensation and audit committees composed entirely of outsiders?
- Disney was the only S&P 500 company to fail all three tests.

Business Week piles on... The Worst Boards in 1997..

THE WORST BOARDS OF DIRECTORS												
BW RANK	OVERALL SCORE	SURVEY SCORE	ANALYSIS SCORE	DETAILS	BOARD PERFORMANCE POLL				GOVERNANCE GUIDELINE ANALYSIS			
					SHAREHOLDER ACCOUNTABILITY	BOARD QUALITY	BOARD INDEPENDENCE	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE	SHAREHOLDER ACCOUNTABILITY	BOARD QUALITY	BOARD INDEPENDENCE	
1.	DISNEY	10.3	1.8	8.5	Investors decry board for conflicts; many directors own little if any stock	3.3	4.3	2.0	5.8	-0.4	2.8	2.2
2.	AT&T	10.9	-16.6	27.5	Investors scorn board for failing to control succession, not ousting CEO	3.0	4.2	3.5	2.8	2.0	5.2	7.4
3.	H.J. HEINZ	15.4	-1.1	16.5	Longtime CEO dominates insider-filled board; resists investor calls for change	2.8	3.7	2.0	4.7	4.4	6.0	1.4
4.	ARCHER DANIELS MIDLAND	16.8	-12.2	29.0	Board changes fail to satisfy investors, who say directors still lack independence	2.3	2.1	1.3	3.5	5.6	7.6	5.0
5.	DOW JONES	21.1	1.6	19.5	Investors disenchanted with performance; weakest attendance record of any board	2.6	4.6	2.8	2.6	6.0	0.0	5.8
6.	DILLARD'S	22.0	5.0	17.0	Board loaded with insiders; lacks an outsider with retail expertise or CEO	2.0	3.0	2.0	3.5	6.4	3.2	2.0
7.	ROLLINS INTERNATIONAL	22.7	1.7	21.0	Board dominated by family members and insiders; lacks nominating panel	1.0	1.0	0.0	2.0	4.0	7.6	4.4
8.	OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM	24.0	-1.5	25.5	Investors outraged over \$95 million payout to CEO by cozy, aging board	1.3	2.0	1.1	2.0	2.8	6.0	5.8
9.	OGDEN	27.2	4.2	23.0	Board has three consultants and a lawyer who do business with company	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	2.0	8.4	4.0
10.	MAXXAM	28.3	4.3	24.5	Tiny board with little business experience dominated by CEO	1.5	2.0	1.0	3.5	3.6	2.0	6.0

⌚ Application Test: Who's on board?

- Look at the board of directors for your firm. Analyze
 - How many of the directors are inside directors (Employees of the firm, ex-managers)?
 - Is there any information on how independent the directors in the firm are from the managers?

So, what next? When the cat is idle, the mice will play

■ No stockholder approval needed..... Stockholder Approval needed

When managers do not fear stockholders, they will often put their interests over stockholder interests

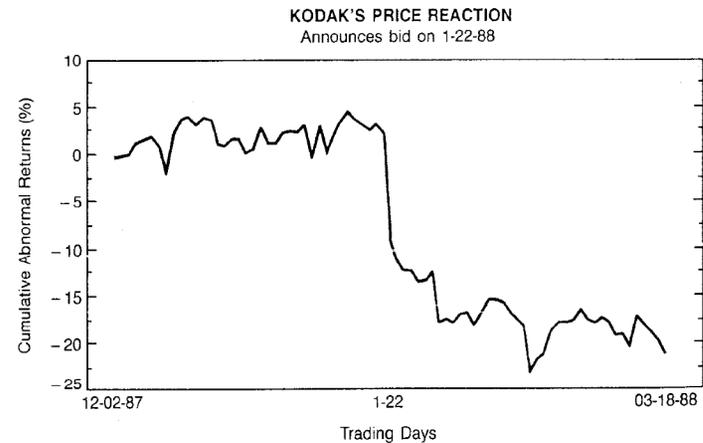
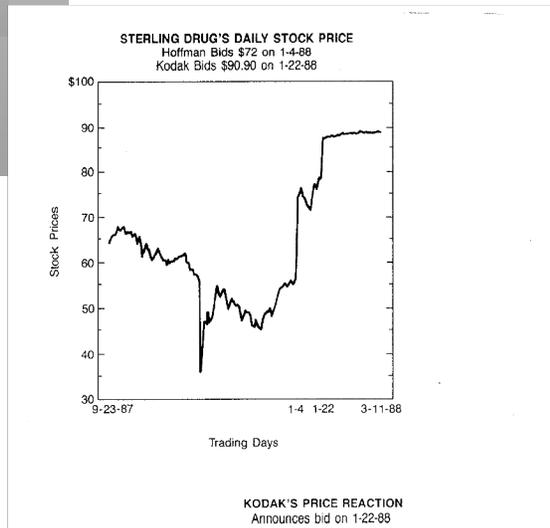
- **Greenmail:** The (managers of) target of a hostile takeover buy out the potential acquirer's existing stake, at a price much greater than the price paid by the raider, in return for the signing of a 'standstill' agreement.
- **Golden Parachutes:** Provisions in employment contracts, that allows for the payment of a lump-sum or cash flows over a period, if managers covered by these contracts lose their jobs in a takeover.
- **Poison Pills:** A security, the rights or cashflows on which are triggered by an outside event, generally a hostile takeover, is called a poison pill.
- **Shark Repellents:** Anti-takeover amendments are also aimed at dissuading hostile takeovers, but differ on one very important count. They require the assent of stockholders to be instituted.
- **Overpaying on takeovers**

Overpaying on takeovers

- The quickest and perhaps the most decisive way to impoverish stockholders is to overpay on a takeover.
- The stockholders in acquiring firms do not seem to share the enthusiasm of the managers in these firms. Stock prices of bidding firms decline on the takeover announcements a significant proportion of the time.
- Many mergers do not work, as evidenced by a number of measures.
 - The profitability of merged firms relative to their peer groups, does not increase significantly after mergers.
 - An even more damning indictment is that a large number of mergers are reversed within a few years, which is a clear admission that the acquisitions did not work.

A Case Study: Kodak - Sterling Drugs

■ Eastman Kodak's Great Victory



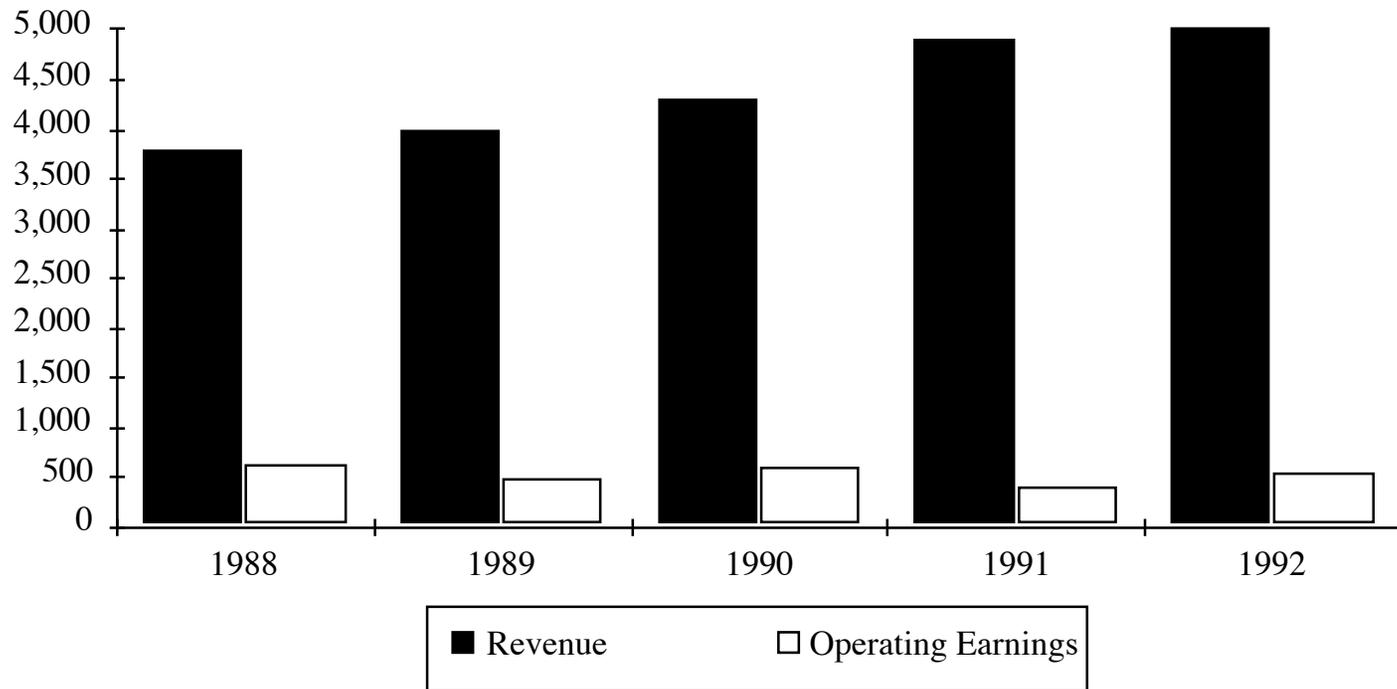
Kodak's market reaction indicates that investors expected no synergies:

Kodak's bid =	\$5.1 billion
Sterling's market value 30 days prior to announcement =	<u>3.0 billion</u>
Premium bid	\$2.1 billion
Decrease in Kodak's market value =	\$2.2 billion

SOURCE: The Alcar Group, Inc.

Earnings and Revenues at Sterling Drugs

Sterling Drug under Eastman Kodak: Where is the synergy?



Kodak Says Drug Unit Is Not for Sale (NY Times, 8/93)

- An article in the NY Times in August of 1993 suggested that Kodak was eager to shed its drug unit.
 - In response, Eastman Kodak officials say they have no plans to sell Kodak's Sterling Winthrop drug unit.
 - Louis Mattis, Chairman of Sterling Winthrop, dismissed the rumors as “massive speculation, which flies in the face of the stated intent of Kodak that it is committed to be in the health business.”
- A few months later...Taking a stride out of the drug business, Eastman Kodak said that the Sanofi Group, a French pharmaceutical company, agreed to buy the prescription drug business of Sterling Winthrop for **\$1.68 billion**.
 - Shares of Eastman Kodak rose 75 cents yesterday, closing at \$47.50 on the New York Stock Exchange.
 - Samuel D. Isaly an analyst , said the announcement was “very good for Sanofi and very good for Kodak.”
 - “When the divestitures are complete, Kodak will be entirely focused on imaging,” said George M. C. Fisher, the company's chief executive.
 - The rest of the Sterling Winthrop was sold to Smithkline for \$2.9 billion.

⌚ Application Test: Who owns/runs your firm?

Look at: Bloomberg printout **HDS** for your firm

- Looking at the top 15 stockholders in your firm, are top managers in your firm also large stockholders in the firm?
- Is there any evidence that the top stockholders in the firm play an active role in managing the firm?

Disney's top stockholders in 2003

<HELP> for explanation. dgp Equity HDS
 Enter #<GO> to select aggregate portfolio and see detailed information

001189650224-000		HOLDINGS SEARCH		CUSIP 25468710	
DIS	US	DISNEY (WALT) CO		Page 1 / 100	
Holder name	Portfolio Name	Source	Held	Outstd	Percent Latest Filing Change Date
1BARCLAYS GLOBAL	BARCLAYS BANK PLC	13F	83,630M	4.095	1,750M 09/02
2CITIGROUP INC	CITIGROUP INCORPORAT	13F	62,857M	3.078	4,811M 09/02
3FIDELITY MANAGEM	FIDELITY MANAGEMENT	13F	56,125M	2.748	5,992M 09/02
4STATE STREET	STATE STREET CORPORA	13F	54,635M	2.675	2,239M 09/02
5SOUTHEASTRN ASST	SOUTHEASTERN ASSET M	13F	47,333M	2.318	14,604M 09/02
6ST FARM MU AUTO	STATE FARM MUTUAL AU	13F	41,938M	2.054	120,599 09/02
7VANGUARD GROUP	VANGUARD GROUP INC	13F	34,721M	1.700	-83,839 09/02
8MELLON BANK N A	MELLON BANK CORP	13F	32,693M	1.601	957,489 09/02
9PUTNAM INVEST	PUTNAM INVESTMENT MA	13F	28,153M	1.379	-11,468M 09/02
10LORD ABBETT & CO	LORD ABBETT & CO	13F	24,541M	1.202	5,385M 09/02
11MONTAG CALDWELL	MONTAG & CALDWELL IN	13F	24,466M	1.198	-11,373M 09/02
12DEUTSCHE BANK AK	DEUTSCHE BANK AG	13F	23,239M	1.138	-5,002M 09/02
13MORGAN STANLEY	MORGAN STANLEY	13F	19,655M	0.962	3,482M 09/02
14PRICE T ROWE	T ROWE PRICE ASSOCIA	13F	19,133M	0.937	2,925M 09/02
15ROY EDWARD DISNE	n/a	PROXY	17,547M	0.859	-126,710 12/01
16AXA FINANCIAL	ALLIANCE CAPITAL MAN	13F	14,283M	0.699	69,353 09/02
17JP MORGAN CHASE	JP MORGAN CHASE & CO	13F	14,209M	0.695	-462,791 09/02
Sub-totals for current page:			599,159M	29.340	

* Money market directory info available. Select portfolio, then hit IP<GO>.
 Australia 61 2 8277 8600 Brazil 5511 2048 4300 Europe 44 20 7200 7700 Germany 49 69 92810
 Hong Kong 852 2377 6000 Japan 81 3 3281 9200 Singapore 65 212 1800 U.S. 1 212 318 2000 Copyright 2002 Bloomberg L.P.
 H002-275-0 20-Dec-02 12:41:58

Bloomberg
 PROFESSIONAL

A confounding factor: Voting versus Non-voting Shares - Aracruz

- Aracruz Cellulose, like most Brazilian companies, had multiple classes of shares at the end of 2002.
 - The common shares had all of the voting rights and were held by incumbent management, lenders to the company and the Brazilian government.
 - Outside investors held the non-voting shares, which were called preferred shares, and had no say in the election of the board of directors. At the end of 2002,
- Aracruz was managed by a board of seven directors, composed primarily of representatives of those who own the common (voting) shares, and an executive board, composed of three managers of the company.

Another confounding factor... Cross Holdings

- In a cross holding structure, the largest stockholder in a company can be another company. In some cases, companies can hold stock in each other.
- Cross holding structures make it more difficult for stockholders in any of the companies involved to
 - decipher what is going on in each of the individual companies
 - decide which management to blame or reward
 - change managers even if they can figure out who to blame.

II. Stockholders' objectives vs. Bondholders' objectives

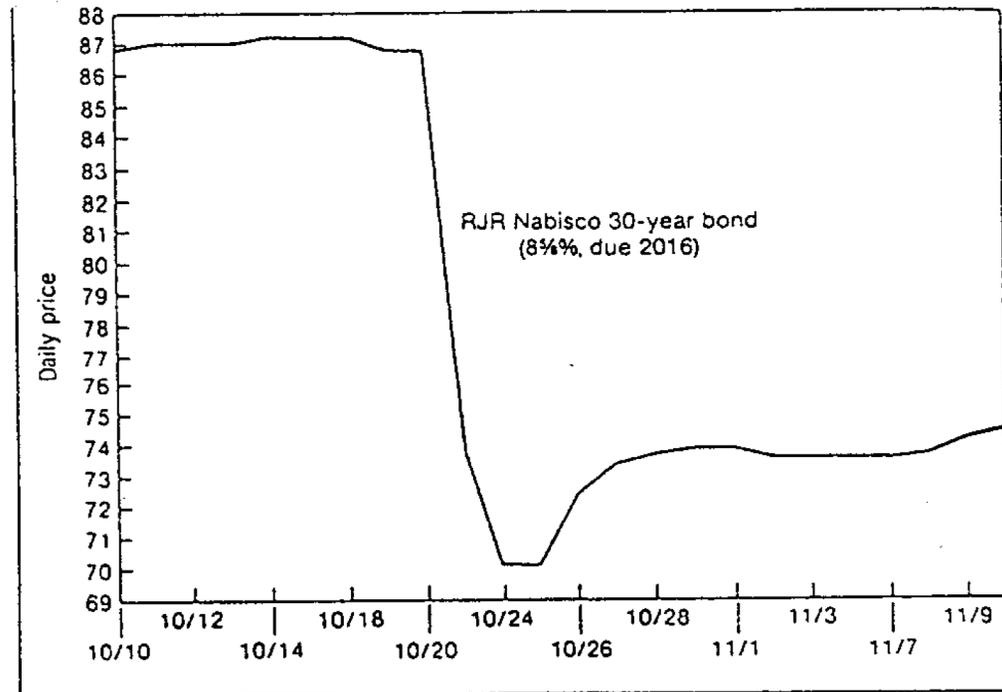
- In theory: there is no conflict of interests between stockholders and bondholders.
- In practice: Stockholder and bondholders have different objectives. Bondholders are concerned most about safety and ensuring that they get paid their claims. Stockholders are more likely to think about upside potential

Examples of the conflict..

- Increasing dividends significantly: When firms pay cash out as dividends, lenders to the firm are hurt and stockholders may be helped. This is because the firm becomes riskier without the cash.
- Taking riskier projects than those agreed to at the outset: Lenders base interest rates on their perceptions of how risky a firm's investments are. If stockholders then take on riskier investments, lenders will be hurt.
- Borrowing more on the same assets: If lenders do not protect themselves, a firm can borrow more money and make all existing lenders worse off.

An Extreme Example: Unprotected Lenders?

RJR Nabisco's
Bonds Sink Follow-
ing Announcement
of the Leveraged
Buyout



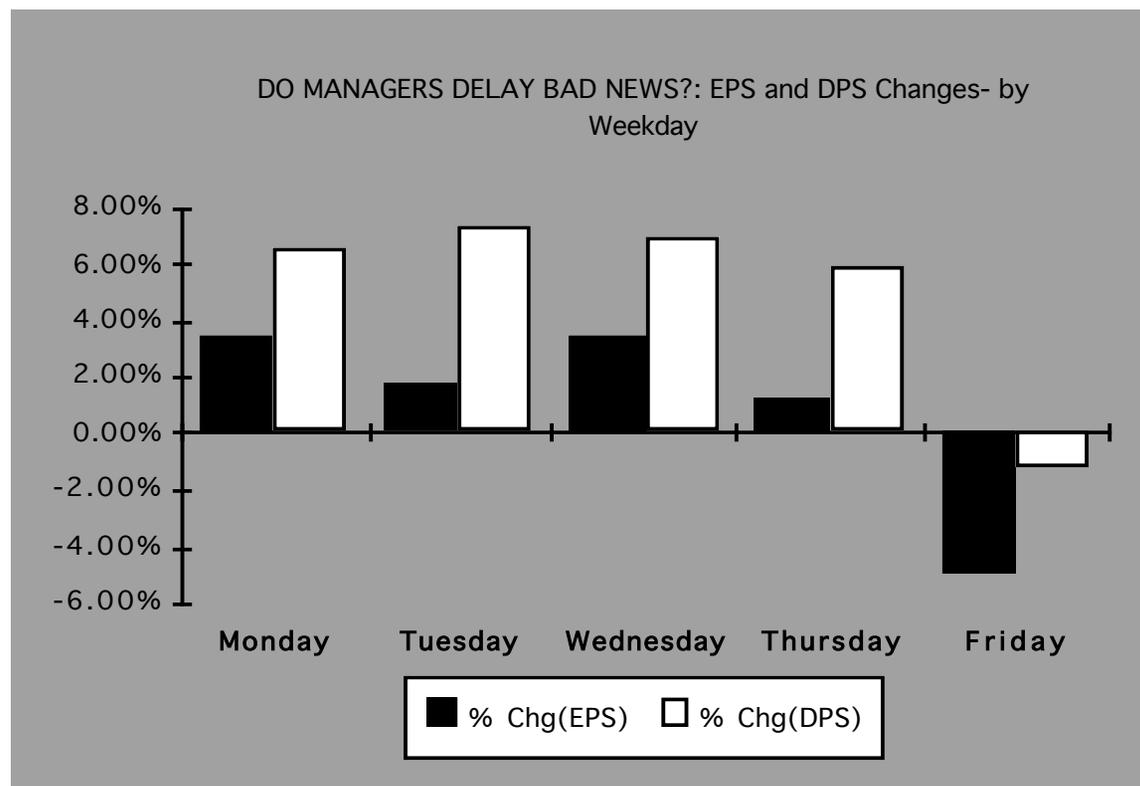
III. Firms and Financial Markets

- **In theory:** Financial markets are efficient. Managers convey information honestly and in a timely manner to financial markets, and financial markets make reasoned judgments of the effects of this information on 'true value'. As a consequence-
 - A company that invests in good long term projects will be rewarded.
 - Short term accounting gimmicks will not lead to increases in market value.
 - Stock price performance is a good measure of company performance.
- **In practice:** There are some holes in the 'Efficient Markets' assumption.

Managers control the release of information to the general public

- Information (especially negative) is sometimes suppressed or delayed by managers seeking a better time to release it.
- In some cases, firms release intentionally misleading information about their current conditions and future prospects to financial markets.

Evidence that managers delay bad news..



Some critiques of market efficiency..

- Prices are much more volatile than justified by the underlying fundamentals. Earnings and dividends are much less volatile than stock prices.
- Financial markets overreact to news, both good and bad.
- Financial markets are manipulated by insiders; Prices do not have any relationship to value.
- Financial markets are short-sighted, and do not consider the long-term implications of actions taken by the firm.

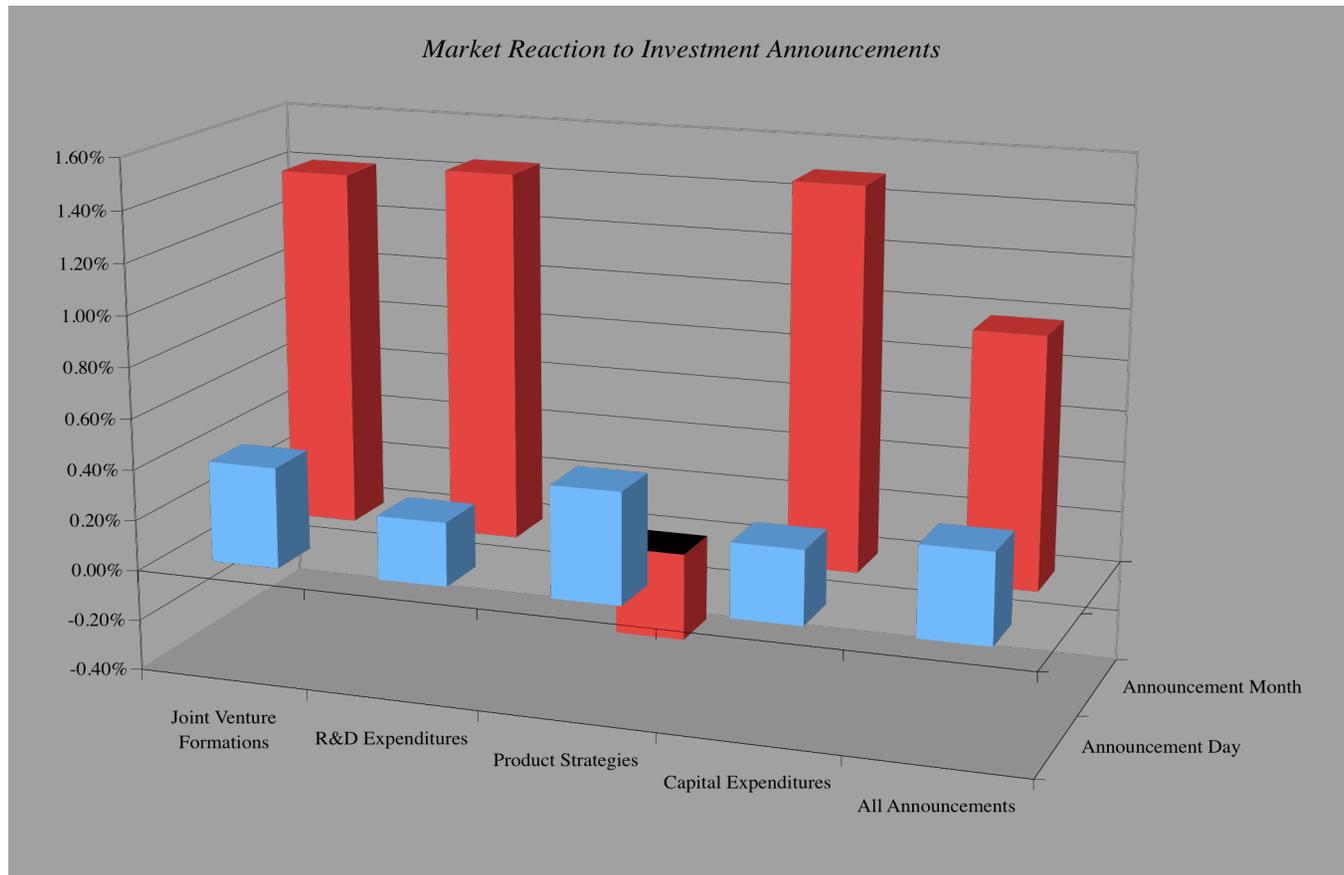
Are Markets Short term?

- Focusing on market prices will lead companies towards short term decisions at the expense of long term value.
 - a. I agree with the statement
 - b. I do not agree with this statement
- Allowing managers to make decisions without having to worry about the effect on market prices will lead to better long term decisions.
 - a. I agree with this statement
 - b. I do not agree with this statement

Are Markets short term? Some evidence that they are not..

- There are hundreds of start-up and small firms, with no earnings expected in the near future, that raise money on financial markets. Why would a myopic market that cares only about short term earnings attach high prices to these firms?
- If the evidence suggests anything, it is that markets do not value current earnings and cashflows enough and value future earnings and cashflows too much. After all, studies suggest that low PE stocks are under priced relative to high PE stocks
- The market response to research and development and investment expenditure is generally positive.

Market Reaction to Investment Announcements



IV. Firms and Society

- **In theory:** There are no costs associated with the firm that cannot be traced to the firm and charged to it.
- **In practice:** Financial decisions can create social costs and benefits.
 - A social cost or benefit is a cost or benefit that accrues to society as a whole and not to the firm making the decision.
 - Environmental costs (pollution, health costs, etc..)
 - Quality of Life' costs (traffic, housing, safety, etc.)
 - Examples of social benefits include:
 - creating employment in areas with high unemployment
 - supporting development in inner cities
 - creating access to goods in areas where such access does not exist

Social Costs and Benefits are difficult to quantify because ..

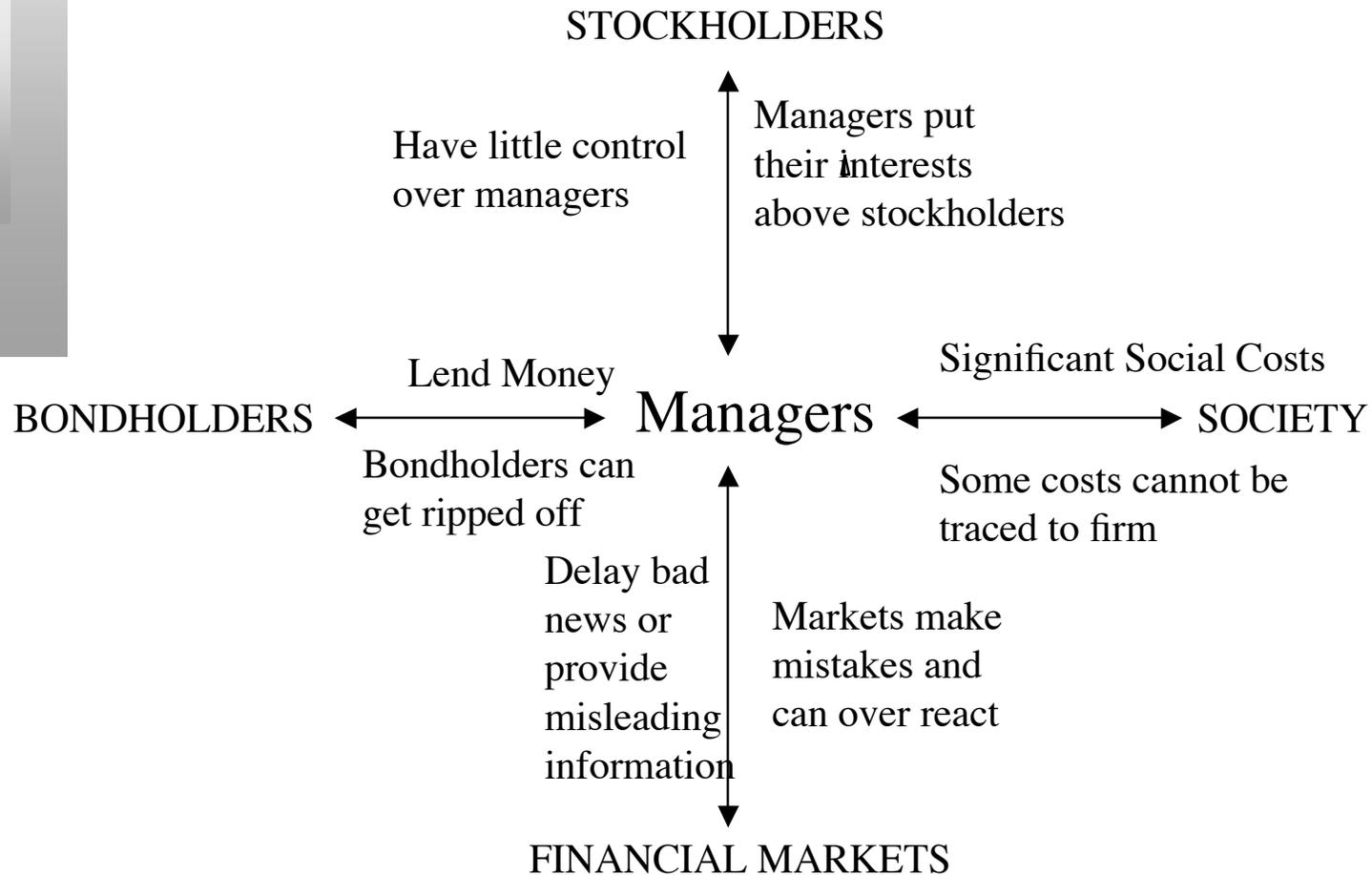
- They might not be known at the time of the decision (Example: Manville and asbestos)
- They are 'person-specific' (different decision makers weight them differently)
- They can be paralyzing if carried to extremes

A Hypothetical Example

Assume that you work for Disney and that you have an opportunity to open a store in an inner-city neighborhood. The store is expected to lose about \$100,000 a year, but it will create much-needed employment in the area, and may help revitalize it.

- Would you open the store?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- If yes, would you tell your stockholders and let them vote on the issue?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- If no, how would you respond to a stockholder query on why you were not living up to your social responsibilities?

So this is what can go wrong...



Traditional corporate financial theory breaks down when ...

- The interests/objectives of the decision makers in the firm conflict with the interests of stockholders.
- Bondholders (Lenders) are not protected against expropriation by stockholders.
- Financial markets do not operate efficiently, and stock prices do not reflect the underlying value of the firm.
- Significant social costs can be created as a by-product of stock price maximization.

When traditional corporate financial theory breaks down, the solution is:

- To choose a different mechanism for corporate governance
- To choose a different objective for the firm.
- To maximize stock price, but reduce the potential for conflict and breakdown:
 - Making managers (decision makers) and employees into stockholders
 - By providing information honestly and promptly to financial markets

An Alternative Corporate Governance System

- Germany and Japan developed a different mechanism for corporate governance, based upon corporate cross holdings.
 - In Germany, the banks form the core of this system.
 - In Japan, it is the keiretsus
 - Other Asian countries have modeled their system after Japan, with family companies forming the core of the new corporate families
- At their best, the most efficient firms in the group work at bringing the less efficient firms up to par. They provide a corporate welfare system that makes for a more stable corporate structure
- At their worst, the least efficient and poorly run firms in the group pull down the most efficient and best run firms down. The nature of the cross holdings makes its very difficult for outsiders (including investors in these firms) to figure out how well or badly the group is doing.

Choose a Different Objective Function

- Firms can always focus on a different objective function. Examples would include
 - maximizing earnings
 - maximizing revenues
 - maximizing firm size
 - maximizing market share
 - maximizing EVA
- The key thing to remember is that these are intermediate objective functions.
 - To the degree that they are correlated with the long term health and value of the company, they work well.
 - To the degree that they do not, the firm can end up with a disaster

Maximize Stock Price, subject to ..

- The strength of the stock price maximization objective function is its internal self correction mechanism. Excesses on any of the linkages lead, if unregulated, to counter actions which reduce or eliminate these excesses
- In the context of our discussion,
 - managers taking advantage of stockholders has lead to a much more active market for corporate control.
 - stockholders taking advantage of bondholders has lead to bondholders protecting themselves at the time of the issue.
 - firms revealing incorrect or delayed information to markets has lead to markets becoming more “skeptical” and “punitive”
 - firms creating social costs has lead to more regulations, as well as investor and customer backlashes.

The Stockholder Backlash

- Institutional investors such as Calpers and the Lens Funds have become much more active in monitoring companies that they invest in and demanding changes in the way in which business is done
- Individuals like Michael Price specialize in taking large positions in companies which they feel need to change their ways (Chase, Dow Jones, Readers' Digest) and push for change
- At annual meetings, stockholders have taken to expressing their displeasure with incumbent management by voting against their compensation contracts or their board of directors

In response, boards are becoming more independent...

- Boards have become smaller over time. The median size of a board of directors has decreased from 16 to 20 in the 1970s to between 9 and 11 in 1998. The smaller boards are less unwieldy and more effective than the larger boards.
- There are fewer insiders on the board. In contrast to the 6 or more insiders that many boards had in the 1970s, only two directors in most boards in 1998 were insiders.
- Directors are increasingly compensated with stock and options in the company, instead of cash. In 1973, only 4% of directors received compensation in the form of stock or options, whereas 78% did so in 1998.
- More directors are identified and selected by a nominating committee rather than being chosen by the CEO of the firm. In 1998, 75% of boards had nominating committees; the comparable statistic in 1973 was 2%.

Disney's Board in 2003

<i>Board Members</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Reveta Bowers	Head of school for the Center for Early Education,
John Bryson	CEO and Chairman of Con Edison
Roy Disney	Head of Disney Animation
Michael Eisner	CEO of Disney
Judith Estrin	CEO of Packet Design (an internet company)
Stanley Gold	CEO of Shamrock Holdings
Robert Iger	Chief Operating Officer, Disney
Monica Lozano	Chief Operation Officer, La Opinion (Spanish newspaper)
George Mitchell	Chairman of law firm (Verner, Liipfert, et al.)
Thomas S. Murphy	Ex-CEO, Capital Cities ABC
Leo O'Donovan	Professor of Theology, Georgetown University
Sidney Poitier	Actor, Writer and Director
Robert A.M. Stern	Senior Partner of Robert A.M. Stern Architects of New York
Andrea L. Van de Kamp	Chairman of Sotheby's West Coast
Raymond L. Watson	Chairman of Irvine Company (a real estate corporation)
Gary L. Wilson	Chairman of the board, Northwest Airlines.

Changes in corporate governance at Disney

- Required at least two executive sessions of the board, without the CEO or other members of management present, each year.
- Created the position of non-management presiding director, and appointed Senator George Mitchell to lead those executive sessions and assist in setting the work agenda of the board.
- Adopted a new and more rigorous definition of director independence.
- Required that a substantial majority of the board be comprised of directors meeting the new independence standards.
- Provided for a reduction in committee size and the rotation of committee and chairmanship assignments among independent directors.
- Added new provisions for management succession planning and evaluations of both management and board performance
- Provided for enhanced continuing education and training for board members.

The Hostile Acquisition Threat

- The typical target firm in a hostile takeover has
 - a return on equity almost 5% lower than its peer group
 - had a stock that has significantly under performed the peer group over the previous 2 years
 - has managers who hold little or no stock in the firm
- In other words, the best defense against a hostile takeover is to run your firm well and earn good returns for your stockholders
- Conversely, when you do not allow hostile takeovers, this is the firm that you are most likely protecting (and not a well run or well managed firm)

Is there a payoff to better corporate governance?

- In the most comprehensive study of the effect of corporate governance on value, a governance index was created for each of 1500 firms based upon 24 distinct corporate governance provisions.
 - Buying stocks that had the strongest investor protections while simultaneously selling shares with the weakest protections generated an annual excess return of 8.5%.
 - Every one point increase in the index towards fewer investor protections decreased market value by 8.9% in 1999
 - Firms that scored high in investor protections also had higher profits, higher sales growth and made fewer acquisitions.
- The link between the composition of the board of directors and firm value is weak. Smaller boards do tend to be more effective.
- On a purely anecdotal basis, a common theme at problem companies is an ineffective board that fails to ask tough questions of an imperial CEO,

The Bondholders' Defense Against Stockholder Excesses

- More restrictive covenants on investment, financing and dividend policy have been incorporated into both private lending agreements and into bond issues, to prevent future “Nabiscos”.
- New types of bonds have been created to explicitly protect bondholders against sudden increases in leverage or other actions that increase lender risk substantially. Two examples of such bonds
 - Puttable Bonds, where the bondholder can put the bond back to the firm and get face value, if the firm takes actions that hurt bondholders
 - Ratings Sensitive Notes, where the interest rate on the notes adjusts to that appropriate for the rating of the firm
- More hybrid bonds (with an equity component, usually in the form of a conversion option or warrant) have been used. This allows bondholders to become equity investors, if they feel it is in their best interests to do so.

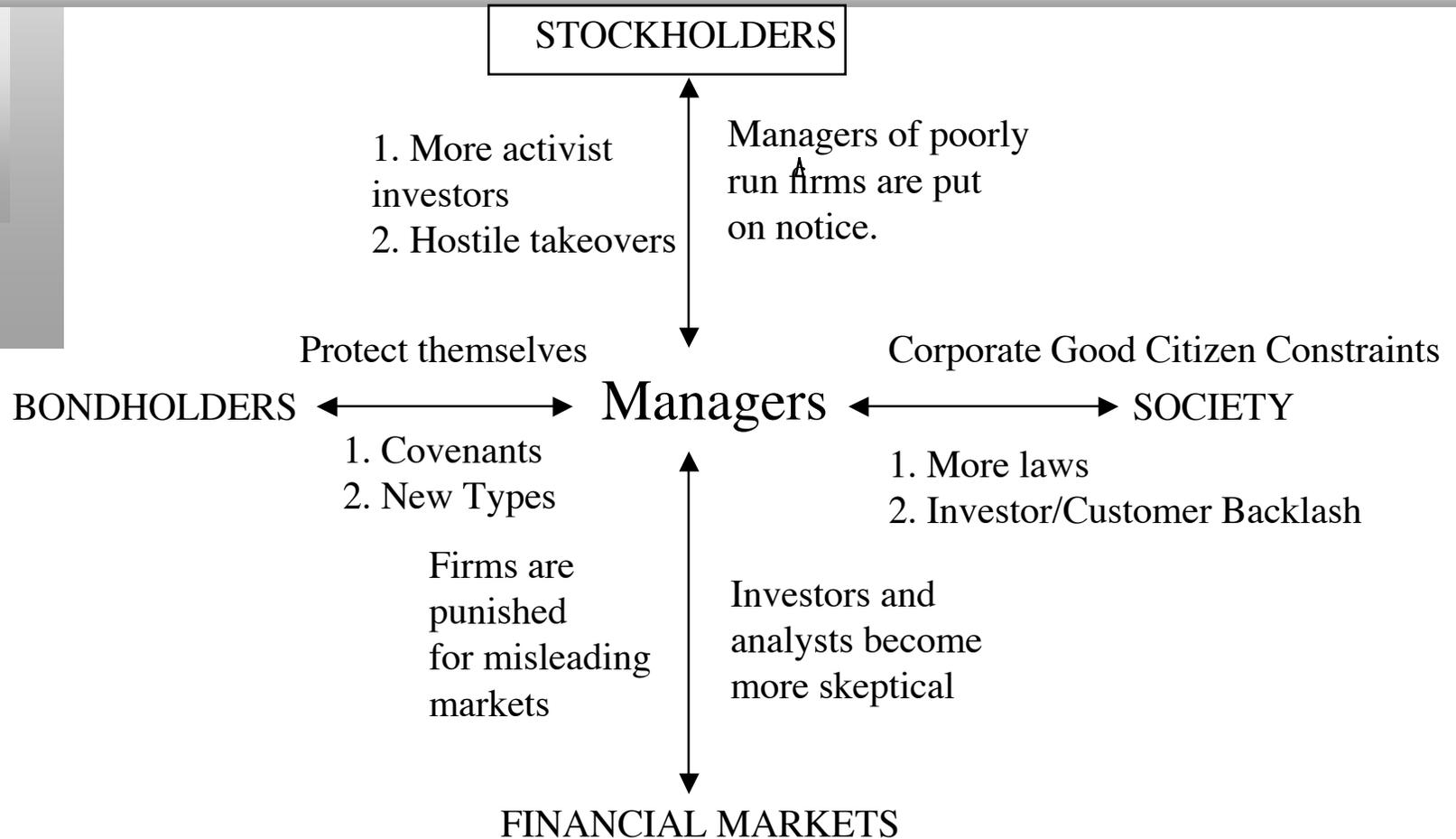
The Financial Market Response

- While analysts are more likely still to issue buy rather than sell recommendations, the payoff to uncovering negative news about a firm is large enough that such news is eagerly sought and quickly revealed (at least to a limited group of investors).
- As investor access to information improves, it is becoming much more difficult for firms to control when and how information gets out to markets.
- As option trading has become more common, it has become much easier to trade on bad news. In the process, it is revealed to the rest of the market.
- When firms mislead markets, the punishment is not only quick but it is savage.

The Societal Response

- If firms consistently flout societal norms and create large social costs, the governmental response (especially in a democracy) is for laws and regulations to be passed against such behavior.
- For firms catering to a more socially conscious clientele, the failure to meet societal norms (even if it is legal) can lead to loss of business and value
- Finally, investors may choose not to invest in stocks of firms that they view as social outcasts.

The Counter Reaction



So what do you think?

- At this point in time, the following statement best describes where I stand in terms of the right objective function for decision making in a business
 - a) Maximize stock price or stockholder wealth, with no constraints
 - b) Maximize stock price or stockholder wealth, with constraints on being a good social citizen.
 - c) Maximize profits or profitability
 - d) Maximize market share
 - e) Maximize Revenues
 - f) Maximize social good
 - g) None of the above

The Modified Objective Function

- For publicly traded firms in reasonably efficient markets, where bondholders (lenders) are protected:
 - Maximize Stock Price: This will also maximize firm value
- For publicly traded firms in inefficient markets, where bondholders are protected:
 - Maximize stockholder wealth: This will also maximize firm value, but might not maximize the stock price
- For publicly traded firms in inefficient markets, where bondholders are not fully protected
 - Maximize firm value, though stockholder wealth and stock prices may not be maximized at the same point.
- For private firms, maximize stockholder wealth (if lenders are protected) or firm value (if they are not)