

# Liquidity and Investment in General Equilibrium

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November 2, 2023

CFAR Finance Brown Bag

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Liquidity is important for **asset pricing**

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**This paper:**

- ▶ How do **trading frictions** affect firms' **investment** and the aggregate economy?
  - ▶ Why would they matter? Affect **owners'** discount factor

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- ▶ Aiyagari production economy with liquid and illiquid assets in general equilibrium
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1. **Theory:** the problem of the firm is **time inconsistent**
  - ▶ the discount factor of firms is as if firms have **quasi-hyperbolic discounting**
  - ▶ result from frictions in financial markets
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3. **Data:** rationalize facts on the **cross-section of liquidity and investment**



Model

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Aiyagari production economy with liquid and illiquid assets

## Households

- ▶ idiosyncratic labor risk  $h$
- ▶ incomplete markets:
  - ▶ liquid bond  $b$ , borrowing limit  $b \geq \underline{b}$
  - ▶ illiquid stock  $\theta$ , transaction costs  $\mathcal{T}$


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## Stationary equilibrium

- ▶ interest rate  $r$ , stock price  $q$ , and wage  $w$  such that markets clear:

$$\mathbb{E}[b] = 0 \quad \mathbb{E}[\theta] = 1 \quad \mathbb{E}[h] = H$$

## Household problem

$$\max_{\{c_t, b_{t+1}, \Delta_t^+, \Delta_t^-\}_{t \geq 0}} \mathbb{E}_0 \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \beta^t u(c_t)$$

subject to

$$c_t + q\Delta_t^+ + \frac{b_{t+1}}{1+r} \leq wh_t + d\theta_t + (\Delta_t^- - \mathcal{T}(\Delta_t^-))q + b_t$$

$$\theta_{t+1} = \theta_t + \Delta_t^+ - \Delta_t^-$$

$$\Delta_t^- \leq \theta_t \leftarrow \text{short-selling constraint}$$

$$b_{t+1} \geq \underline{b} \leftarrow \text{borrowing constraint}$$

$$\mathcal{T}(\Delta_t^-) = \frac{\phi}{2} (\Delta_t^-)^2 \leftarrow \text{quadratic costs for sellers (e.g., Heaton Lucas 96)}$$

$$\Delta_t^+, \Delta_t^- \geq 0$$

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$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{P}_{t,t+z}^i &= \frac{1}{u'(c_t^i)} \frac{\partial V_t^i(\{k_{t+s}\}_{s \geq 1})}{\partial k_{t+z}} \\ &= \mathbb{E}_t \left[ \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \left[ \beta^j \frac{u'(c_{t+j}^i)}{u'(c_t^i)} \left( \theta_{t+j}^i \underbrace{\frac{\partial d_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}}}_{\text{dividends}} + \left( \Delta_{t+j}^{i,-} - \frac{\phi}{2} (\Delta_{t+j}^{i,-})^2 - \Delta_{t+j}^{i,+} \right) \underbrace{\left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i}_{\text{valuation}} \right) \right] \right]\end{aligned}$$



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**Effect of a change in capital in:**

1. **dividends**,  $\frac{\partial d_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}}$ , determined by technological factors
2. **stock price**,  $\left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i$ , agents might disagree
  - ▶ follow Grossman and Hart 79:  $\left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i$  represents household  $i$ 's **perception**

# Marginal propensity to pay: current and future impacts

**Lemma:**  $\mathcal{P}$  can be decomposed in two terms:

1. impact in *current* wealth

$$\theta_t^i \left( \frac{\partial d_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} + \left( 1 - \frac{\phi}{2} \Delta_{i,t}^- \right) \left( \frac{\partial q_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i \right)$$

2. disagreements about *future* valuations

$$\mathbb{E}_t \left[ \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} M_{t,t+j}^i \theta_{t+j+1}^i \left[ \underbrace{\frac{\frac{\partial d_{t+j+1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} + \left( 1 - \Phi_{t+j}^i \right) \left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j+1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i}{1 + r_{t+j,t+j+1}^i}}_{\text{benefits of holding the stock at } j} - \underbrace{\left( 1 - \frac{\phi}{2} \Delta_{i,t+j}^- \right) \left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i}_{\text{perception of value at } j} \right] \right]$$

$$r_{t+j,t+j+1}^i \equiv \frac{1}{\beta} \frac{u'(c_{t+j}^i)}{\mathbb{E}_{t+j}[u'(c_{t+j+1}^i)]} - 1, \quad M_{t,t+j}^i = \left( \prod_{u=0}^{j-1} \frac{1}{1 + r_{t+u,t+u+1}^i} \right), \quad \Phi_{t+j}^i \equiv \frac{\phi}{2} \frac{\mathbb{E}_{t+j}[u'(c_{t+j+1}^i) \Delta_{i,t+j+1}^-]}{\mathbb{E}_{t+j}[u'(c_{t+j+1}^i)]}$$

## Competitive perceptions

**Assumption [competitive perceptions]:** *households' believe they **would not benefit from disagreements** about future valuations (as in Grossman and Hart 79).  
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**Firm's problem:** the manager can transfer income from those shareholders who favor the change in investment ( $\mathcal{P}_{t,t+s}^i > 0$ ) to those who do not favor it ( $\mathcal{P}_{t,t+s}^i < 0$ ). Choose an investment plan such that

$$\int_{\theta, b, h} \mathcal{P}_{t,t+z}(\theta, b, h) d\Gamma_t(\theta, b, h) = 0$$

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What is the **firm's perception** about  $\frac{\partial q_t}{\partial k_{t+z}}$ ?

- ▶ frictionless case,  $\phi = 0$ :  $\frac{\partial q_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{1}{1+r}\right)^j \frac{\partial d_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}}$
- ▶ competitive perceptions  $\rightarrow$  three-periods model (paper)
- ▶ **market perceptions**

▷ frictionless case

## Market perceptions: liquidity premium

- ▶ focus on unconstrained buyers:  $\Delta_t^- = 0$ ,  $\Delta_t^+ > 0$ ,  $b_{t+1} > \underline{b}$
- ▶ bonds' Euler equation:  $E_t \left[ \beta \frac{u'(c_{t+1})}{u'(c_t)} \right] = \frac{1}{1+r_t}$

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- ▶ bonds' Euler equation:  $E_t \left[ \beta \frac{u'(c_{t+1})}{u'(c_t)} \right] = \frac{1}{1+r_t}$
- ▶ asset price:

$$q_t = \frac{d_{t+1} + (1 - \mathcal{LP}_t) q_{t+1}}{1 + r} \quad \mathcal{LP}_t \equiv E_t [\phi \Delta_{t+1}^-] + \phi \frac{\text{cov}_t (u'(c_{t+1}), \Delta_{t+1}^-)}{E_t [u'(c_{t+1})]}$$

$\mathcal{LP}$  captures liquidity frictions:

- ▶ expected marginal transaction costs,  $\phi \Delta_{t+1}^- \rightarrow$  lower asset prices
- ▶ if sell in bad times, positive covariance  $\rightarrow$  further depress asset prices
- ▶ define the yield of the stock as  $1 + r^\theta \equiv \frac{d_{t+1} + q_{t+1}}{q_t}$ , then  $\mathcal{LP} = r^\theta - r$

## Market perceptions

Assumption [market perceptions]: the firm has the same perceptions as the buyers

$$\left( \frac{\partial q_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^{market} = \frac{\frac{\partial d_{t+1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} + (1 - \Phi^b) \left( \frac{\partial q_{t+1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^{market}}{1 + r} \quad \text{where } \Phi^b = \frac{\mathcal{LP}}{2}.$$

Iterate forward:

$$\left( \frac{\partial q_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^{market} = \frac{1}{1 - \Phi^b} \sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \left( \frac{1 - \Phi^b}{1 + r} \right)^j \frac{\partial d_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}}$$



## Firm's problem & time inconsistency

Replace market perceptions in firm's problem:

$$\frac{\partial d_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} + \frac{1 - \bar{\phi}}{1 - \phi^b} \sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \left( \frac{1 - \phi^b}{1 + r} \right)^j \frac{\partial d_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}} = 0$$

- ▶ average transaction cost:  $\bar{\phi} = \frac{\phi}{2} \int_{\theta, b, h} \theta \Delta^- d\Gamma(\theta, b, h)$
- ▶ liquidity premium:  $\phi^b = \frac{\mathcal{LP}}{2}$

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- ▶ liquidity premium:  $\Phi^b = \frac{\mathcal{LP}}{2}$
- ▶ the problem of the firm is **time inconsistent** iff  $\bar{\Phi} \neq \Phi^b$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{case } z = 1 & \quad \frac{\partial d_t}{\partial k_{t+1}} + \frac{1 - \bar{\Phi}}{1 + r} \frac{\partial d_{t+1}}{\partial k_{t+1}} = 0 \\ \text{case } z \geq 2 & \quad \frac{\partial d_{t+z-1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} + \frac{1 - \Phi^b}{1 + r} \frac{\partial d_{t+z}}{\partial k_{t+z}} = 0 \end{aligned}$$

Quasi-hyperbolic discounting and time consistency

## Quasi-hyperbolic discounting

Proposition: we can cast the firm's problem *as if* it has *quasi-hyperbolic discounting*

$$V^F(k_t) = \max_{\{k_{t+s}\}_{s \geq 1}} F(k_t, k_{t+1}) + \tilde{\beta} \sum_{s=1}^{\infty} \tilde{\delta}^s F(k_{t+s}, k_{t+s+1})$$

where

$$\tilde{\delta} = \frac{1 - \phi^b}{1 + r} \qquad \tilde{\beta} = \frac{1 - \bar{\Phi}}{1 - \phi^b}$$

- ▶ quasi-hyperbolic discounting iff  $\phi^b \neq \bar{\Phi}$
- ▶ present bias ( $\tilde{\beta} < 1$ ) iff  $\bar{\Phi} > \phi^b$

▷ static labor choice

## Direction and magnitude of bias

**Proposition:** *the difference  $\Phi^b - \bar{\Phi}$  is equal to **persistence** and **risk premium** effects:*

$$\Phi^b - \bar{\Phi} = \underbrace{\frac{\phi}{2} \left( \tilde{\mathbb{E}} \left[ \mathbb{E}_t \left[ \Delta_{t+1}^- \right] \middle| \text{buyer} \right] - \tilde{\mathbb{E}} \left[ \mathbb{E}_t \left[ \Delta_{t+1}^- \right] \right] \right)}_{\text{persistence effect}} + \underbrace{\frac{\phi}{2} \tilde{\mathbb{E}} \left[ \frac{\text{cov}_t \left( u' \left( c_{t+1} \right), \Delta_{t+1}^- \right)}{\mathbb{E}_t \left[ u' \left( c_{t+1} \right) \right]} \middle| \text{buyer} \right]}_{\text{risk premium}}$$

$\tilde{\mathbb{E}}$  is the cross-sectional expectation, weighted by stock shares  $\theta'$

**no transaction costs:** If  $\phi = 0$  then  $\Phi^b = \bar{\Phi} = 0$ , so  $\tilde{\beta} = 1$ , time consistent problem.

## Intuition: persistence and risk premium

Persistence effect:

$$\frac{\phi}{2} \left( \tilde{\mathbb{E}} \left[ \mathbb{E}_t \left[ \Delta_{t+1}^- \right] \middle| \text{buyer} \right] - \tilde{\mathbb{E}} \left[ \mathbb{E}_t \left[ \Delta_{t+1}^- \right] \right] \right)$$

- ▶ difference on average transaction costs for buyers and owners
- ▶ smaller for buyers than owners  $\rightarrow$  negative term

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Risk premium:

$$\tilde{\mathbb{E}} \left[ \frac{\text{cov}_t \left( u' \left( c_{t+1} \right), \Delta_{t+1}^- \right)}{\mathbb{E}_t \left[ u' \left( c_{t+1} \right) \right]} \middle| \text{buyer} \right]$$

- ▶ if sell in bad times  $\rightarrow$  positive covariance
- ▶ quantitatively the persistence effect dominates, so  $\tilde{\beta} < 1$
- ▶ the problem is **time inconsistent** and the firm has **present bias**

Solution with and without commitment



# Solution with and without commitment

With commitment

$$\max_{\{k_{t+s}\}_{s \geq 1}} F(k_t, k_{t+1}) + \tilde{\beta} \sum_{s=1}^{\infty} \tilde{\delta}^s F(k_{t+s}, k_{t+s+1})$$

Steady state capital is

$$k^C = \left( \frac{(1-\gamma)\psi\tilde{\delta}}{1-\tilde{\delta}(1-\delta)} H^{\gamma\psi} \right)^{\frac{1}{1-(1-\gamma)\psi}}$$

# Solution with and without commitment

## With commitment

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## Without commitment

► markov perfect equilibrium

$$\max_{k'} F(k, k') + \tilde{\beta}\tilde{\delta}W(k')$$

$$W(k') = F(k', g(k')) + \tilde{\delta}W(g(k'))$$

$$k^N = \left( \frac{(1-\gamma)\psi\tilde{\beta}\tilde{\delta}}{1-\tilde{\beta}\tilde{\delta}(1-\delta)} H^{\gamma\psi} \right)^{\frac{1}{1-(1-\gamma)\psi}}$$

# Incomplete markets, transaction costs, and commitment

## 1. Complete markets

- ▶  $\beta(1+r) = 1$ , firms discount at rate  $\frac{1}{1+r} = \beta$

## 2. Aiyagari 94: incomplete markets without transactions costs

- ▶  $\tilde{\beta} = 1$ , no problems of commitment
- ▶ firms discount at rate  $\frac{1}{1+r}$
- ▶ precautionary savings:  $\beta(1+r) < 1$ , *more capital* than in complete markets

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## 3. Transactions costs, with commitment

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## 4. Transactions costs, without commitment

- ▶ firms discount at rate  $\tilde{\beta}\tilde{\delta}$ , **present bias**  $\tilde{\beta} < 1$
- ▶ **less capital than with commitment**:  $k^n < k^c$

Caveat: for 3. and 4., in GE,  $r$  and  $\Phi$  also change  $\rightarrow$  quantitative evaluation

Quantitative evaluation

# Calibration

Three sets of parameters:

1. standard or from the literature
2. income process: assume **conservative** values, do robustness exercises
3. transaction costs: look at the **data**, consider different values of  $\phi$

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Parameter	Value	Source
Discount factor $\beta$	0.95	Standard
Risk aversion $\sigma$	2.00	Standard
Depreciation $\delta$	0.05	Standard
Production weight on labor $\gamma$	0.80	Gavazza et al. (2018)
Returns to scale $\psi$	0.95	Gavazza et al. (2018)
Borrowing limit $\underline{b}$	1.00	Kaplan et al. (2018)
Labor persistence $\rho_h$	0.50	Conservative, robustness exercises
Labor st dev $\sigma_h$	0.03	Conservative, robustness exercises
Transaction cost $\phi$	4.00	Data



## Data: relative spreads

- ▶ Daily data on ordinary shares traded in NYSE (CRSP), relative spreads:

$$RS_{i,t} = \frac{A_{i,t} - B_{i,t}}{0.5(A_{i,t} + B_{i,t})}$$

- ▶ 2000Q1 to 2022Q1 (average of daily data), 3k firms, 124k firm-quarter obs

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	Relative Spreads, %				
	Mean	St. dev.	p10	p50	p90
2000Q1-2022Q1	3.37	2.35	1.54	2.79	5.72

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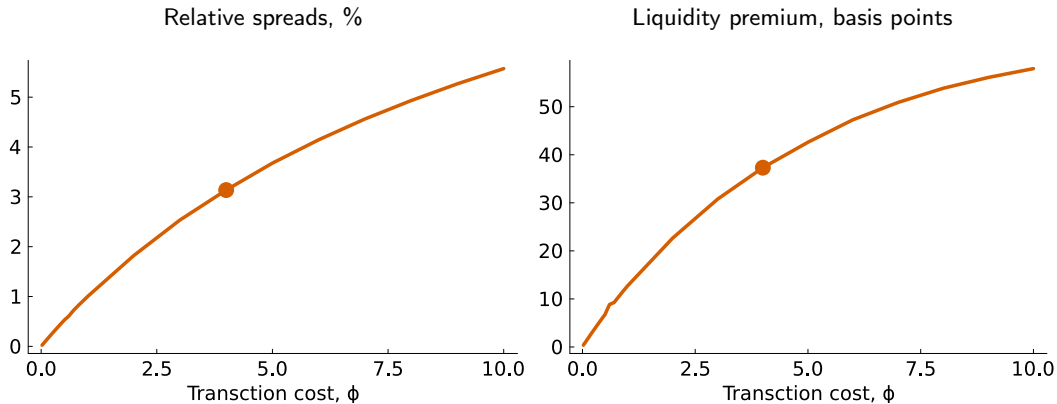
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	Relative Spreads, %				
	Mean	St. dev.	p10	p50	p90
2000Q1-2022Q1	3.37	2.35	1.54	2.79	5.72
2000Q1-2006Q1	3.23	2.28	1.57	2.77	5.23
2010Q1-2019Q4	2.93	1.71	1.47	2.52	4.8

consistent with Næs Skjeltorp Ødegaard (2011) and Corwin Schultz (2012)

▷ [histogram](#) ▷ [weighted by market cap](#)

## Calibration of transaction costs



- ▶ benchmark calibration:  $\phi = 4.0$
- ▶ relative spread of 3.1%, consistent with data
- ▶ liquidity premium of 37 basis points

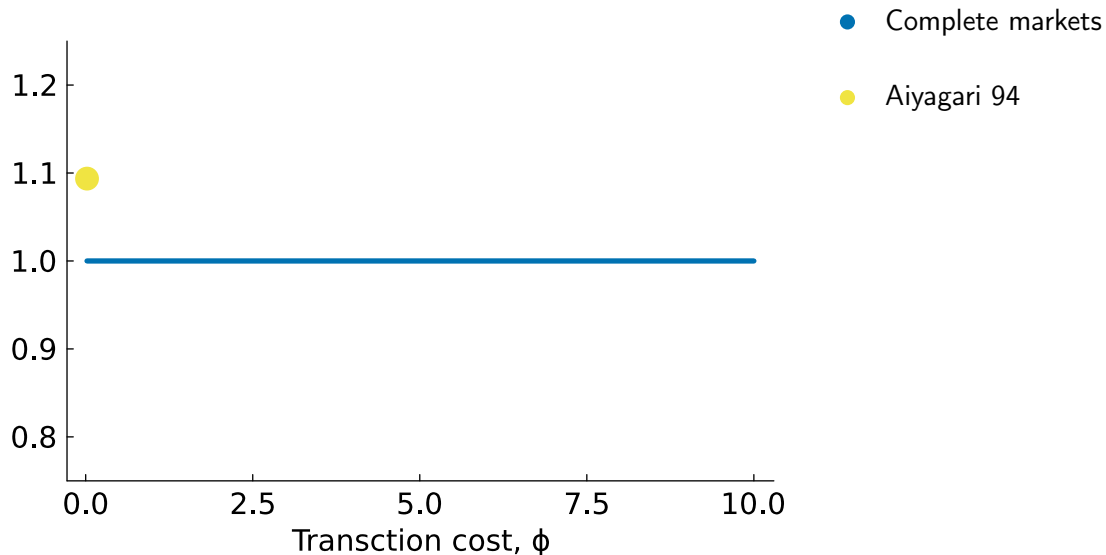
## Non targeted moments

	Model	Data
Var log consumption / var log income	0.2	0.3
Mean illiquid assets to GDP	3.4	2.9
Mean liquid assets ( $b > 0$ ) to GDP	0.5	0.23
Share with $b < 0$	0.5	0.2

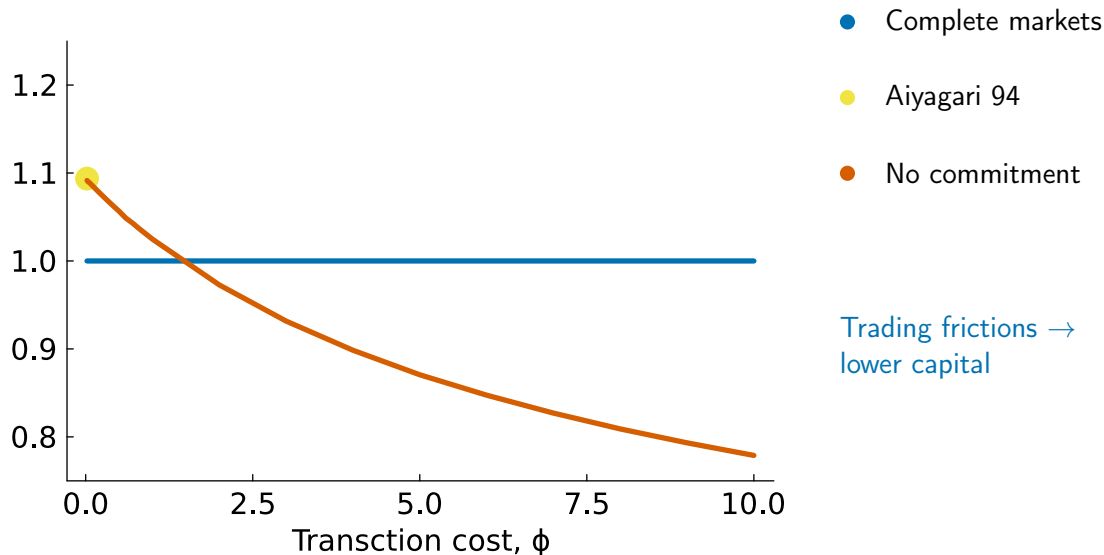
consumption and income data from Krueger and Perri (2006).  
Asset data from SCF 2004 (see Kaplan et al., 2018).

*consistent with non-targeted moments despite being an stylized model without many quantitative add-ons.*

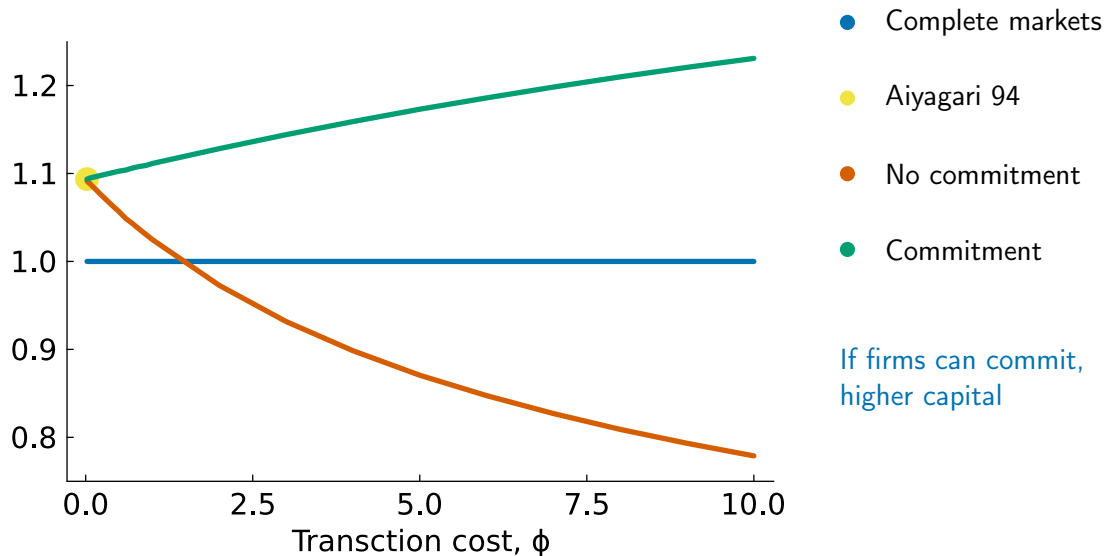
## Capital, relative to complete markets



## Capital, relative to complete markets



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# Transmission of trading frictions to investment depends on commitment

## With commitment

- ▶ trading frictions depress asset prices  $\rightarrow$  lower level of capital
- ▶ higher precautionary motive for saving  $\rightarrow$  larger level of capital
- ▶ quantitatively: moderate increase in capital

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## Without commitment

- ▶ present bias: strong force towards more discounting and lower capital

▷ How does the model work?

Extensions & applications

## Corporate bonds

Firms can borrow at interest rate  $1 + r^{cb} = \frac{1+r}{1-\tilde{\phi}}$  up to a limit

- ▶ If  $\tilde{\phi} < \Phi^b$  the firm always borrows to the limit independently of its commitment.
- ▶ If  $\Phi^b < \tilde{\phi} < \bar{\Phi}$  only the firm **without commitment** borrows up to the limit.

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## Implications:

- ▶ can alter financing but not investment and the time-inconsistency problem
- ▶ firms borrow even if bonds are more illiquid than stocks due to present bias
- ▶ rationalize corporate debt that does not rely on the tax advantage of debt

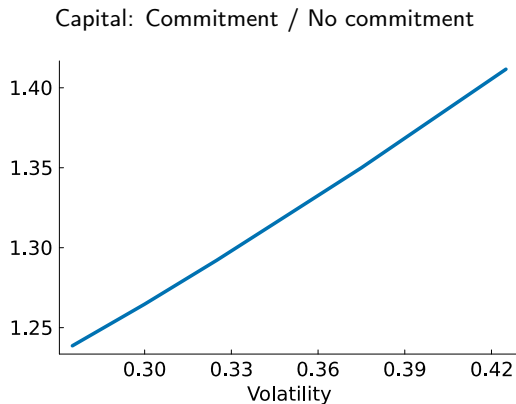
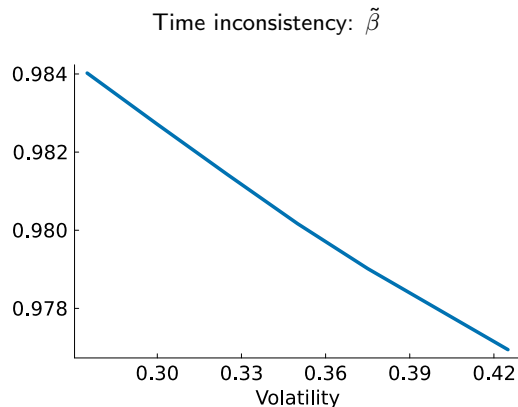
## Liquidity & investment in the cross-section

- ▶ **Data:** liquid firms invest more than illiquid ones in the cross-section of US public firms (Amihud and Levi, 22)
- ▶ **Model:** extension with two type of firms, liquid and illiquid ones

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- ▶ **Data:** liquid firms invest more than illiquid ones in the cross-section of US public firms (Amihud and Levi, 22)
- ▶ **Model:** extension with two type of firms, liquid and illiquid ones
- ▶ the liquid firm discounts at rate  $\frac{1}{1+r}$  with standard exponential discounting
- ▶ the discount factor of illiquid firms is  $\frac{1-\bar{\Phi}}{1+r}$
- ▶ liquid firms invest more than illiquid ones, consistent with the data

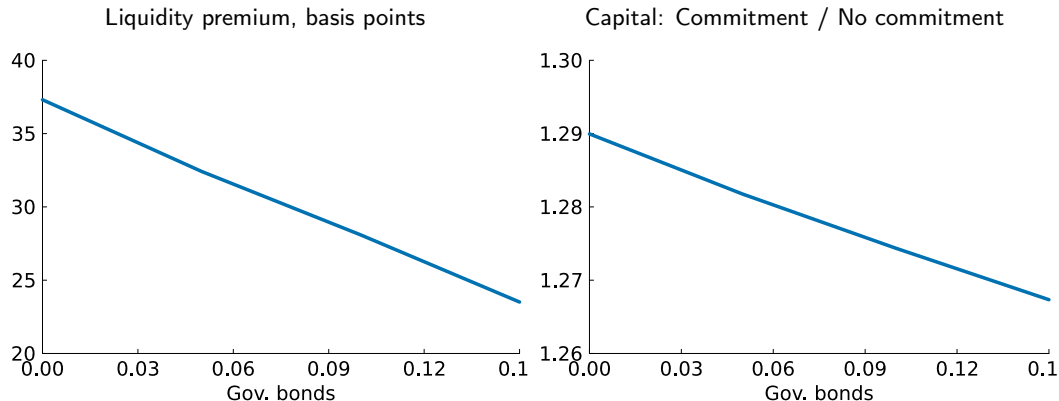
## Demand of liquidity: increase idiosyncratic volatility



- ▶ **With commitment:** more precautionary savings  $\rightarrow$  more capital
- ▶ **Without commitment:** more time inconsistency  $\rightarrow$  less capital



# Supply of liquidity & government bonds



- ▶ Capital closer to complete markets
- ▶ With commitment: less precautionary savings → less capital
- ▶ Without commitment: less time inconsistency → more capital

# Short-termism

## Evidence on short-termism:

- ▶ an excessive focus on short-term results at the expense of long-term interests (Graham et al. 05, Terry 22, Fink 15)
- ▶ public firms distort their investment to meet short-term targets (Graham et al., 05).

**Model:** short-termism as a result of (i) trading frictions, and (ii) lack of commitment.

# Conclusions

- ▶ Aiyagari production economy, with liquid and illiquid assets in general equilibrium
- ▶ The problem of the firm is **time inconsistent**
  - ▶ result from frictions in financial markets
  - ▶ the discount factor of firms is as if they have **quasi-hyperbolic discounting**
- ▶ Aggregate distortions due to trading frictions depend on commitment
- ▶ Rationalize **empirical regularities** on liquidity and investment

# Appendix

## Related Literature

- ▶ **Incomplete markets & firm insurance:** Diamond (1967), Dreze (1974), **Grossman Hart (1979)**, Aiyagari Gertler (1991), Heaton Lucas (1996), Magill Quinzii (1996), Espino Kozlowski Sanchez (2018)  
New: Trading frictions and/or GE
- ▶ **Illiquid assets & macro:** Kaplan Violante (2014), Cui Radde (2019), Jeenas Lagos (2020)  
New: Dynamic firm's problem with liquidity frictions
- ▶ **Hyperbolic discounting:** Krusell Smith (2003), Azzimonti (2011), Amador (2012), Cao Werning (2018)  
New: Hyperbolic discounting as a result
- ▶ **Short-termism:** Graham Harvey Rajgopal (2005), Terry (2022)  
New: Don't need additional constraints

## Frictionless case, $\phi = 0$

Disagreements about **future** valuations simplifies to

$$\theta_{t+j+1}^i \left( \frac{\frac{\partial d_{t+j+1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} + \left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j+1}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i}{1 + r_{t+j,t+j+1}^i} - \left( \frac{\partial q_{t+j}}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)^i \right)$$

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**Owners** have  $\theta_{t+j+1}^i > 0$ :

- ▶ Not at the borrowing constraint:  $r_{t+j,t+j+1}^i = r_{t+j}$
- ▶ Compare costs and benefits at the **market** interest rate
- ▶ This implies **no disagreement** on future valuations
- ▶ The marginal propensity to pay depends only on **current impact**

$$\mathcal{P}_{t,t+z}^i = \theta_t^i \left( \frac{\partial d_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} + \frac{\partial q_t}{\partial k_{t+z}} \right)$$

- ▶ **Standard problem of the firm:** Maximize current value  $d + q$

▷ back

## Firm: static labor choice

- ▶ Static labor choice

$$\max_l (r^\gamma k^{1-\gamma})^\psi - wl$$

with labor demand  $l = \psi\gamma \frac{y}{w}$

- ▶ In equilibrium  $w = \psi\gamma k^{(1-\gamma)\psi}$
- ▶ Dividends are

$$d_t = F(k_t, k_{t+1}) = zk_t^\alpha + (1 - \delta)k_t - k_{t+1}$$

where  $z = (1 - \gamma\psi) \left(\frac{\gamma\psi}{w}\right)^{\frac{\gamma\psi}{1-\gamma\psi}}$  and  $\alpha = \frac{(1-\gamma)\psi}{1-\gamma\psi}$

▷ [back](#)



# Government bonds

- ▶ Introduce government bonds
- ▶ Lump-sum taxes to pay for the debt services
- ▶ Bonds market clearing

$$\int b'(\theta, b, h) d\Gamma(\theta, b, h) = B^g$$

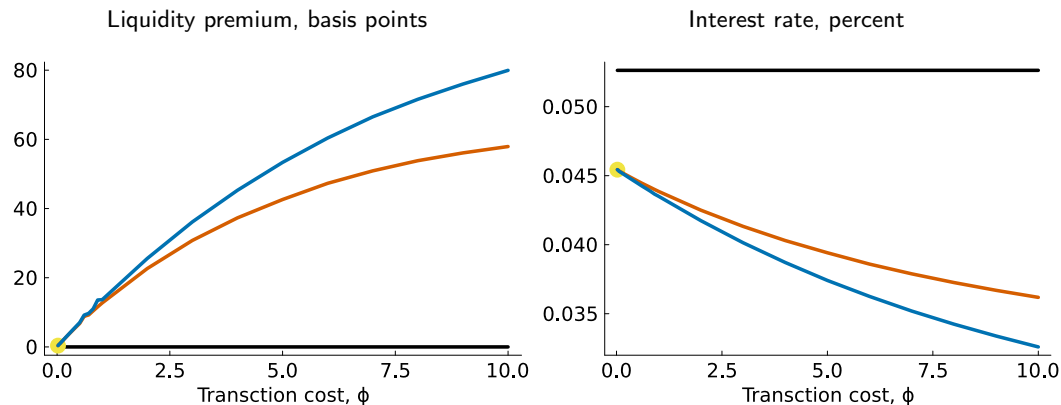
- ▶ As  $B^g$  increases: more liquid assets

## Public vs private firms

- ▶ Asker et al. (2015) finds that public firms invest substantially less than private firms.
- ▶ We add private firms to the benchmark equilibrium. Private firms are owned by only one household and are not traded in financial markets.
- ▶ The investment decisions of private firms are independent of  $\phi$ , while investment in public firms decreases with the transaction cost.
- ▶ For most values of  $\phi$  private firms invest more than public firms, consistent with the empirical evidence.

▷ [Back](#)

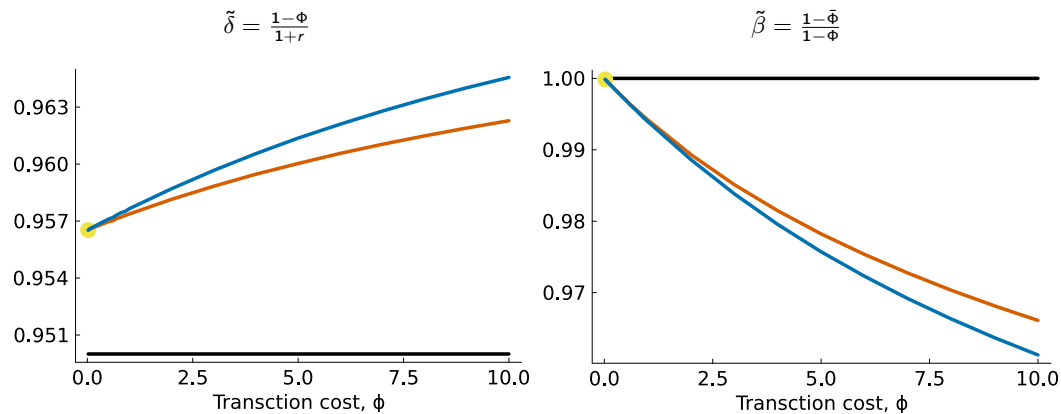
## Commitment: constant discounting



- ▶ Higher  $\phi \rightarrow$  bonds *better* than stocks  $\rightarrow$  higher liquidity premium & lower  $r$
- ▶ Capital with commitment about constant, recall  $\tilde{\delta} = \frac{1-\phi}{1+r}$

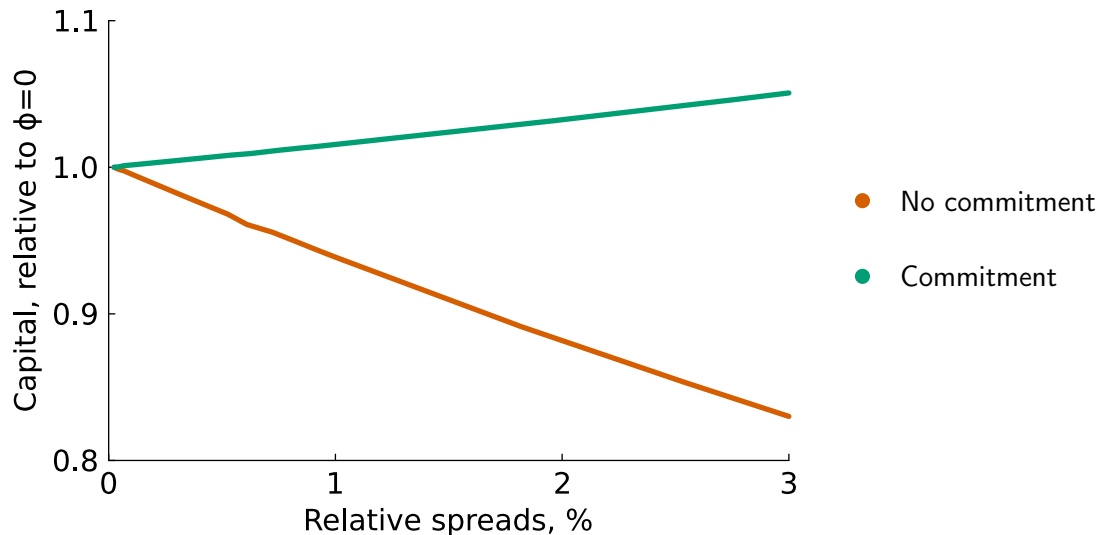
▷ Back

## Lack of commitment: quasi-hyperbolic discounting with present bias



► Back

## Capital and relative spreads



Data: relative spreads, weighted by market capitalization

	Relative Spreads, %				
	Mean	St. dev.	p10	p50	p90
2000Q1-2022Q1	2.31	1.26	1.24	1.98	3.78
2000Q1-2006Q1	2.64	1.27	1.39	2.35	4.23
2010Q1-2019Q4	1.88	0.8	1.15	1.69	2.84

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## Relative spreads

