

Calorie Posting in Chain Restaurants

Bollinger et al. 2016 AEJ-EP

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Why Do We Care?

- Policy: Does mandatory calorie reporting cause consumers to make healthier choices?
- Economics: How do consumers process and value information?



Data

- Starbucks institutional data on transactions and rewards members

Methodology and Research Design

- DiD: outcome is calories, compare NYC to Boston and Philadelphia before/after NYC posts calories on menu

Contribution

- Small caloric reduction, pushed entirely by food choices
- Gains in consumer knowledge (Seattle / San Francisco surveys)



Things I Liked

- What a great dataset!



Concerns

- Under-utilization of dataset
- Parallel trends
- Supply-side response
- Bad writing

Extension

- Don't aggregate to “store-day” level. Use modern computing power to make the most out of the data.