### Cities and Product Variety

Nathan Schiff Sauder School of Business University of British Columbia

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# Variety and cities

Why study product variety in cities?

- Consumer cities literature suggests consumption amenities attract people to cities (Glaeser et al, 2001)
	- Unique consumption goods of cities are non-tradeable
	- The types and range of these goods is a key consumption amenity of cities
- Product differentiation provides insight into how firms compete
	- If cities show markedly higher differentiation it may suggest a different competitive environment from smaller places

Very little evidence of non-tradeable variety across cities

Question: do cities have greater non-tradeable variety and if so, why?

## Main Question

How does demand density—aggregation of demand in geographic space–affect product variety?

Specifically, for non-tradable consumer goods–bars, music venues, hair salons, health clubs, specialty boutiques, restaurants–how does a city's population and land area affect the variety available?

Two forces:

- Scale: greater populations support greater variety
- Transportation cost: dispersed consumers lower demand for any firm

This paper: show how these competing forces affect restaurant variety in US cities

## Describing consumption good variety

Many models characterize variety as:

- 1. Symmetric: representative consumer views all varieties as equal (Dixit and Stiglitz, 1979)
- 2. Unique: each firm is modeled as one variety (# firms= # varieties)

In the context of a consumption amenity I characterize variety as:

- 1. Asymmetric: some varieties are preferred to others, labels are important
- 2. Non-unique: classes or categories (ex: clothing styles, music tastes, cuisines), multiple firms compete within the same class

#### Population, number of restaurants, number cuisines



### Idea and empirical approach

Idea: For industries characterized by significant transportation costs, heterogeneous tastes, and a fixed cost of production, the ability of cities to aggregate niche groups of consumers in a small space will lead to greater variety.

Industry of study: restaurants

- Important consumption amenity of cities
- Cuisines are an easily measured and fairly uncontroversial form of product differentiation
- Transportation costs are important
- Extensive information on industry firms

# Key findings

Restaurants exhibit a pattern of cuisines across cities consistent with a model of cuisine-specific entry thresholds that depend upon population and land

- A one std. dev. increase in log population leads to a 57% increase in cuisine count for large cities and a 155% increase for small cities
- Decreasing log land area by one std. dev. increases cuisines by 10% for large cities but has little effect for small cities
- The specific cuisines found in each city follow a hierarchy closely related to population and land–big, dense cities have all varieties found in small, sparsely populated cities but also many varieties not found in the smaller cities

# Literature on product variety and cities

Market size and differentiation

- 1. New Economic Geography models with CES and increasing returns (ex: Krugman 1980)
- 2. Competition and efficiency: Syverson (2004), Campbell and Hopenhayn (2005)
- 3. Vertical differentiation: Berry and Waldfogel (2010)
- 4. Handbury and Weinstein (2012)

Horizontal differentiation in restaurant industry

- 1. Waldfogel (2008): local preferences
- 2. Mazzolari and Neumark (2011): local preferences and local skills

This paper focuses on differentiation (not efficiency) with local preferences but tries to show how general features of cities affect entry.

# Main argument: illustrative figure



Population=N, 3 Firm Types Population=N, 1 Firm Type



Population=N, 3 Firm Types Population=N/2, 1 Firm Type





#### Main argument: Phoenix vs Philly



# Population, land area, and entry

Focus of model: How do population and land area affect the *minimum* conditions for entry of the first firm?

Monopolistic Competition with Reserve Good (Salop, 1979)

- Consumers choose between a firm's product and a reserve good
- Consumers are distributed uniformly around perimeter of a circle; positive transportation cost
- Firms have constant marginal cost and a fixed cost
- <span id="page-10-0"></span>• Free entry: one firm will enter and make zero profit

### Two cases in coverage of market

#### Price determines location of indifferent consumer

Define geographic market extent (g) as distance to indifferent consumer on both sides of firm



#### Monopolist chooses market extent to maximize profit

Monopoly profit:  $\Pi = D(p(g) - c)g - F = 0$ Small land area constrains monopolist



#### Zero profit condition

$$
\Pi=D(p(g)-c)g-F=0; \, p(g)=c+\tfrac{F}{Dg}
$$



### Required density for zero profit

#### For every value of land *L* there is population density such that profit is zero



# Minimum conditions for entry

What is the minimum population for each value of land that would allow entry?

No land: consumers pay entire surplus (over reserve good), minimum population is *N* ∗

Land introduces transportation cost, two cases:

- 1. Full coverage: firm captures the entire market
- 2. Partial coverage: firm chooses profit-maximizing market extent *L*<sup>\*</sup>; not all consumers purchase good (gaps)

Critical value of land *L* <sup>∗</sup> determines which case

### Entry frontier in land-population space

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# Adding multiple types

*T* types of consumers; each consumer of type *t* demands one unit of type *t* good

 $\Rightarrow$  there is no competition between firms of different types

Comparing across cities (in model); assume fraction δ*<sup>t</sup>*

consumers are *t* type



# Multiple types in land-population space

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### Testable implications of model

- 1. Holding land constant, more populous markets will have more types
- 2. Holding population constant, smaller geographic markets will have more types
- 3. There will be a hierarchical relationship between the number of types and the composition of those types
- 4. This hierarchy will be associated with thresholds in population and land; rarer types will be found in bigger, denser markets

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### Description of data

<span id="page-20-1"></span>Collected data from website citysearch.com using software and custom programming in Spring 2007 and Summer 2008

- Restaurants collected for metro areas of 88 of 100 largest US cities, over 300,000 restaurants
- Each restaurant assigned a unique cuisine type (ex: restaurant cannot be pizza and Italian)
- Detailed address information allowed precise placement on map, assigned every restaurant to Census Place
- Matched count of restaurants in every Census Place to count from Economic Census 2007. Kept Census Places with .7<match ratio<1.1, leaving 726 places
- Count of restaurants [4,13644], cuisines1 [2,82], cuisines2 [2,277]



## Number of Cuisines vs. Number of Restaurants

#### Cuisine Measure 1

Cuisine Measure 2



Simulation:  $n_m$  draws from uniform multinomial over cuisines, where *n<sup>m</sup>* is the number of restaurants in city *m*

# Number Average Size Rule

#### Average Number of Restaurants in Cities with a Given Cuisine (Mori, Nishikimi, Smith 2008) Cuisine Measure 1 Cuisine Measure 2



# Hierarchy Diagrams (MNS 2008)

#### Cuisine Measure 1

#### Cuisine Measure 2



#### Hierarchy picture from random assignment

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# Looking at population thresholds

$$
C_{mv} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } N_m - \alpha_V * L_m \geq \frac{N^*}{\delta_V} \\ 0 & \text{o/w} \end{cases}
$$

$$
Pr(C_{mv} = 1) = Pr(\Pi_{mv}^* > 0)
$$
  

$$
\Pi_{mv}^* = \gamma_{1v}N_m + \gamma_{2v}L_m + \eta_v + \epsilon_{mv}
$$

- *Cmv* : binary indicator for variety (cuisine) *v* in market *m*
- δ*<sup>v</sup>* percent of people who like variety *v*
- $\eta_{\mathbf{v}}$ : cuisine fixed effects (constant)

Run separate regressions for each cuisine

- Population intercept should be higher for rarer cuisines
- Slope of frontier should be higher for rarer cuisines

# Intercept and slope estimates

#### Population Intercept **Estimates**

#### Slope on Land Area **Estimates**



# Outline of empirical work

Model predictions:

- Population increases # cuisines, land decreases # cuisines
- Hierarchy related to thresholds in population and land

**Testing** 

- 1. Cross city regressions on number of cuisines
- 2. Cuisine level regressions (pooled)
- 3. Counterfactual simulation
- <span id="page-28-0"></span>4. Spatial clustering of ethnic populations

#### Estimating variety across cities

$$
In(\#Cuisines_m) = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 In(N_m) + \gamma_2 In(L_m) + X_m \wedge \beta + \epsilon_m
$$

- *Nm*: population of city *m*
- *Lm*: land area of city *m*
- *Xm*: demographic variables as covariates

$$
Pr(C_{mv} = 1) = Pr(\Pi_{mv}^* > 0)
$$
  

$$
\Pi_{mv}^* = \gamma_1 N_m + \gamma_2 L_m + X_m / \beta + \eta_V + \epsilon_{mv}
$$

Predict  $\gamma_1$  to be positive and  $\gamma_2$  to negative

Estimate pooled and separately by land quartile

#### Estimation: number of cuisines



 $16$ 

#### Likelihood of having a cuisine



## Counterfactual Simulation

$$
Pr(C_{mv} = 1) = Pr(\Pi_{mv}^* > 0)
$$
  

$$
\Pi_{mv}^* = \gamma_{1v}N_m + \gamma_{2v}L_m + X_m/\beta_v + \eta_v + \epsilon_{mv}
$$

#### **Steps**

- 1. Estimate cuisine-specific logits (86 separate regressions) with full set of covariates (including ethnicity, percent college, average HH size)
- 2. Predict cuisines in each city, denote base case
- 3. Increase each covariate by one std. dev. (decrease land)
- 4. Use cuisine-specific logits to re-predict cuisines in each city, compare to base case
- 5. Show smoothed results of each effect against land area

#### Simulation results

<span id="page-33-0"></span>All effects

#### No Population



### Ethnicity and space

<span id="page-34-0"></span>Alternative supply-side story: big dense cities have greater variety of skilled producers

- Arguably less important explanation: much harder to move demand
- Cannot be ruled out without dataset on restaurant producers

Will show evidence more suggestive of critical mass of demand:

- 1. Show city-level spatial concentration of an ethnic group predicts presence of ethnic restaurant
- 2. Show that ethnic population size predicts location of ethnic restaurant at *tract* level



#### Spatial clustering of ethnic populations



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# Summary of findings

Both population and population density affect variety of non-tradable consumer goods in cities

- variety rises very slowly with population; only large increases in population increase variety count
- partial effect of land area alone is persistent for geographically large cities but magnitude is small
- cuisine diversity is higher in big dense cities due to additional cuisines
- bigger denser cities are more likely to have any type; rarer types are found in cities with greater populations and smaller land areas

#### Interpretation

City structure–geographic distribution of population–may directly increase consumption good diversity by aggregating heterogeneous preferences in space

Hierarchical relationship is consistent with a model of entry thresholds and increasingly rare tastes

Urban policies (ex: zoning) encouraging density may lead to greater variety and provision of varieties appealing to minority tastes

#### End of main slides

# Thank you!

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#### Data Summary Table

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# Minimum market conditions: multiple firms

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### Likelihood of having a cuisine: simpler specification

#### Model Specification

#### Probit Specification



### Testing hierarchy: random labeling hypothesis

<span id="page-42-0"></span> $H_0$ : cuisine labels are drawn uniformly from set of cuisines

Testing procedure (Mori, Nishikimi, Smith 2008)

- for each city randomly draw cuisine labels from total set
- calculate hierarchy share: count of events where cuisine is found in all more diverse cities
- run simulation 10,000 times to generate p-value



#### Simulation results

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#### Moran's I

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$$
I = \frac{N}{\sum_{i=1}^{N} \sum_{j=1}^{N} w_{ij}} \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N} \sum_{j=1}^{N} w_{ij} (X_i - \bar{X})(X_j - \bar{X})}{\sum_{i=1}^{N} (X_i - \bar{X})^2}
$$

[Ethnicity and Space](#page-34-0)

# Equations for minimum population frontier

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$$
N_{min}(L; \delta_V) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\delta_V} * \frac{2N^*L^*}{2L^*-L} & \text{if } L \le L^*, \text{ "full coverage"} \\ \frac{1}{\delta_V} * \frac{2N^*L}{L^*} & \text{if } L^* < L, \text{ "partial coverage"} \end{cases} \tag{1}
$$

$$
\frac{\partial N_{min}(L; \delta_v)}{\partial L} = \begin{cases} \frac{\alpha_v L^*}{(2L^* - L)^2} & \text{if } L \le L^*, \text{ "full coverage"} \\ \frac{2N^*}{\delta_v L^*} = \alpha_v & \text{if } L^* < L, \text{ "partial coverage"} \end{cases} \tag{2}
$$

