

Author: Manchester gets high marks

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A University of Toronto business professor and best-selling author gives high marks to the Manchester area in his latest book.

Richard Florida's "Who's Your City?" looks at America's cities and how they rank for people in different stages of life. Florida cites the Manchester area as the best "small region" for families with children.

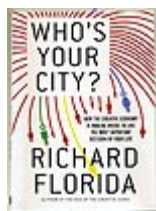
Manchester also is named the fifth-best small region in America for mid-career professionals, the best small region for gays and lesbians with children, and the third-best small region for gay and lesbian retirees.

In addition, Florida ranks Manchester the fourth-best small region for singles, his classification for recent college graduates between the ages of 20 and 29.

A small region, as defined by Florida, is one with a population between 250,000 and 499,999.

Florida arose to national prominence with "The Rise of the Creative Class," a 2002 best-seller that examined professionals working in creative industries such as the sciences, education and engineering.

His new book argues that the decision about where to live is the most important decision one can make, as it has an affect on one's job, career path, lifestyle and other personal considerations.



"The place we choose to live affects every aspect of our being," Florida says in the introduction. "It

can determine the income we earn, the people we meet, the friends we make, the partners we choose, and the options available to our children and families. People are not equally happy everywhere, and some places do a better job of providing a high quality of life than others."

Florida also says in "Who's Your City?" that married people are happier with where they live than separated or divorced people, while old people are happier than the young. The more educated also are generally happier with where they live than those with little education, he says.

Income also has an impact on people's happiness in an area -- although only a generally small one, according to Florida.

The author attributes his findings to hundreds of thousands of Internet-based personality surveys.

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Bring on more immigrants, minorities, young professions and gays and lesbians with families or retired. In my Manchester ALL are loved, respected and welcome!

Greg Barrett

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- **Greg Barrett, Manchester**

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