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Sex and Some Cities

By Tobin Harshaw

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Well, if nothing else, it explains how the Opinionators managed to find themselves brides ...

“Creative Class” guru Richard Florida has produced this awesome chart of American urban areas with the greatest numbers of single men and women, and in New York “where single women outnumber single men by more than 210,000.”

The message, apparently, is, Go West, Young Woman:

Women do have an advantage in the American West and Southwest. In greater Los Angeles, for example, there are 90,000 more single men than women. In Phoenix and the San Francisco Bay Area, single men outnumber single women by roughly 65,000. There are considerably more single men than women in San Diego, Dallas, and Seattle, too. Each of these regions has grown substantially over the past two or three decades, offering jobs in everything from high tech to construction and services. As numerous studies of migration show, men - especially those in regions with declining economies - are initially more likely to move long distances for economic opportunity, while women are more likely to stay closer to home and family.

The goal for cities, Florida feels, is not just to have a large singles pool but to have a relatively even balance, and he says Boston is at the top of the list:

This high ranking is good news, because singles attract other singles. Numerous studies have found that young people pick where they want to live first and then search for a job in those places. When Forbes magazine asked young singles of both genders what matters most in the places they live, more said ‘number of other singles’ than said ‘great career prospects’; things like ‘wild nightlife’ and ‘low cost of living’ came in much farther behind.

Ann Althouse has a good quibble: “Florida’s map leaves you on your own to figure out the extent to which an oversupply of one sex means a lot of gay people choose to live there. ”

(Note: The Boston Globe, which is owned by The Times, ran an earlier version of the chart on March 30.)