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# Geographic gender mix limits dating

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Women at Boston University who face daunting dating prospects -- with a 60-40 female-to-male ratio at school -- can find more dates on the West Coast than in West Campus, a new book has found.

Single men will have more luck finding women in metro areas along the East Coast, while single women fare better out West, according to census statistics in the book *Who's Your City?*, released March 10.

In the greater Boston area though, single women outnumber single men by only 1,600, the census said.

"Finding the right place is as important -- if not more important -- than finding the right job or partner because it not only influences those choices but also determines how easy or hard to it will be to correct mistakes made along the way," author Richard Florida said in an email.

Florida said people flock to regions with lots of restaurants, arts and public transportation, as well as a variety of residents -- singles, gays and families with children.

He said authentic, amenity-filled communities thrive in a creative economy. Of 150 regions, the best cities for young singles are San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Boston, Los Angeles and New York, Florida and his colleagues found.

The New York metro area has the biggest mismatch of single men and women with 210,000 more single women ages 20 to 64 than single men, according to the 2006 Census American Community Survey.

Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., have the same inequality -- with 50,000 more single ladies than single guys -- while Los Angeles boasts 90,000 more single men than single women.

Florida said an influx of technology, construction and service jobs in many western regions cause the East Coast-West Coast gender gap. Men are more likely to move long distances for economic opportunity than women, who are more likely to stay closer to home and family, he said.

Meghan O'Connor, a graduate student in Boston University's Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, said she moved to Boston from the University of Delaware's suburban setting because a city offers more jobs and a better social life for her demography.

BU urban sociologist Daniel Monti said cities attract young people because they can live with people their own age, find jobs and decide what they "really want to do with their lives."

"It's happenstance; every once and a while you'll find bubbles of certain people, but it tends to even itself out over time," Monti said.

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