

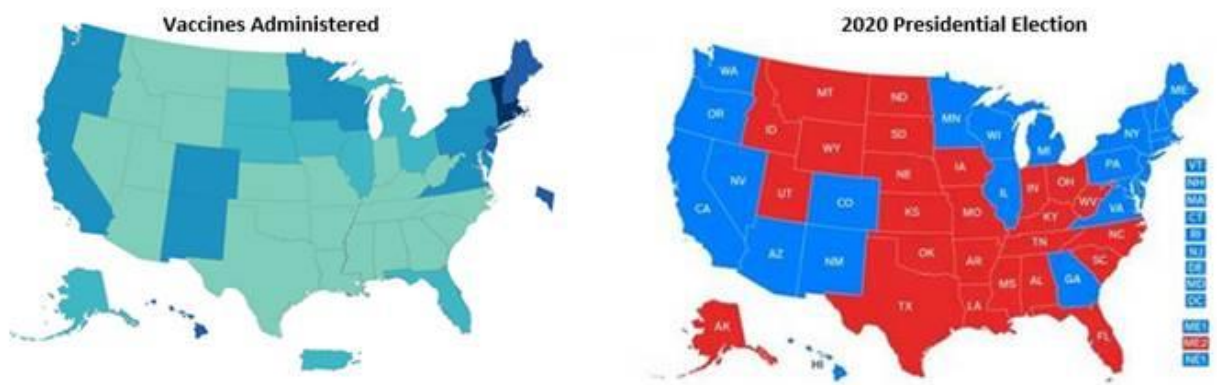
## J. Michael Locke

### Musings

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#### #130: Musing June 12, 2021

It's unfortunate that the vaccine has become so political. IMO, it has become a proxy for how much faith an individual has in government and the mainstream media. Those more trusting are getting vaccinated while those less trusting are not. In this way, vaccination has become a marker of political view and the following maps show it. Basically, the rate of vaccination map mirrors the 2020 presidential election results map. According to CNN recently: *"82% [of democrats] said they were vaccinated compared to a mere 45% of Republicans."*



In my hometown in central Illinois, only 32% are vaccinated which prevents the major local hospital from mandating vaccination as it would lead to a staffing crisis (they are already struggling to fill allied health jobs – nurses, radiology technicians etc – like the rest of the country). A major hospital in Chicago has the same issue. The reduction in labor force participation by women is leading to healthcare capacity issues.

I am a big fan of the “bricks & clicks” model where retailers combine a good online experience with local physical stores. The local stores become more of a distribution and service unit. I had a great customer experience with “Click and Collect” from IKEA. Speaking of IKEA – how about this one about the entrepreneur/founder. From Newsweek: *“the billionaire founder of Swedish flat-pack furniture chain Ikea says he saves money by only buying second-hand clothes. Ingvar Kamprad, who is reportedly worth over \$40 billion, forgoes the Guccis, the Pradas and the Ralph Laurens; instead, he gets his clothes at flea markets.”*

Last week, I commented on the growing scarcity of workers and the demographic trends which indicated trouble ahead as the “system” needs to provide for more retirees from fewer working contributors. Add this one to the mix, according to Dr. Claudia Kawas from the University of California Irvine’s 90+ study: *“Half of all children born today in the United States and Europe is going to reach their 103rd or 104th birthday.”* This is a good example of the danger of averages. From Google: *“Life*

*expectancy at birth is defined as how long, on average, a newborn can expect to live if current death rates do not change. The life expectancy in the United States, before COVID, was 78.7 years.” So the distribution is quite wide with many dying young but many living past 90. If you want to be in the latter, add some weight and cut out alcohol as you age. From the UCI 90+ study, “people who drank moderate amounts of alcohol or coffee lived longer than those who abstained while people who were overweight in their 70s lived longer than normal or underweight people did.”*

Unfortunately, many of our elderly develop Alzheimer’s or Dementia. Illinois even has a Silver Alert on the highways (not to be confused with Amber alerts for abducted children) to help find and safely return people with Alzheimer’s or dementia that go missing. Our society too quickly dismissed the capabilities of those with Alzheimer’s or dementia. Their brain still works, sometimes in unbelievable way. An example is music. I will never forget how my brother could sing Happy Birthday while suffering from post-stroke Speech Aphasia but struggled to say other words. Music is processed differently by the brain. Check out this YouTube video on the power of music for those suffering from dementia and Alzheimer’s: [alive inside henry](#)

Help might be on the way for those suffering. The FDA approved the first drug (made by Biogen) promising to slow the progression of Alzheimer’s “based on evidence it reduces a sticky substance in the brain called amyloid.” [drug-to-slow-disease-is-approved](#). This comes after a study showing drug efficacy fighting early stage BRCA breast cancer. [breast-cancer-pill-reduced-recurrence-death](#). Give our scientists some love next time you can.

Apple continues to take up the privacy cause. I don’t care what the motives are, I like what they are doing. Safari is now going to block websites from grabbing your IP address (basically a way of identifying you) and they are introducing a function which is basically like a private VPN by having your activity bounce among different servers (relay) to make anonymous.

One management thought this week: never underestimate the benefits of a basic sales pipeline review. Make your sales leaders walk through the near term opportunities in detail. Look for the specificity of their answers. Have they been to the account. Ask about the benefits to the clients. You will know quickly whether your leader is on top of his or her game.

jml