

J. Michael Locke

Musings

#202: Musing December 11, 2022

The push away from law enforcement is now becoming an economic issue. Walmart is warning it will need to raise prices to cover rising losses from theft. At Target, shoplifting has jumped about 50% costing over \$400 million. [walmart-ceo-says-shoplifting-could-lead-to-price-jumps-store-closures](#). Retail employees are trained to just get out of the way. Not good.

Another economic issue is the labor participation and societal participation of younger men. The decline in men going to college, moving out of home, getting a job and having good relationships is stunning. Some stats from an article by Michael Moe ([a-few-good-men](#)):

- Seven million men ages 25–54 aren't working or looking for work.
- Over 50% of men between 19 and 29 live with their parents and just 25% get their drivers license when they turn 16.
- Women are 2X more likely to graduate from college and 70% of the high school valedictorians are women.
- 1/3 of men under 30 haven't had sex in the past year compared to just 1 in 10 in 2008.

I often write about the leader's need to be focused on the collective "we" and empowering her/his team to achieve excellence. All individuals deserve respect and there is no room for Trumpian narcissism. Here are a couple simple ones: 1) Don't make people wait. Run your schedule on time like the commuter trains. Build buffer if you need it. It is disrespectful to make someone wait. Notoriously, former Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer would have people waiting for hours for their meeting. No wonder she wasn't successful. 2) Clean up after your meetings in conference rooms. Straighten the chairs. Get everything off the table and even wipe it down. Why is that someone else's job?

Make sure to "circle back" when someone gives you an introduction. All too often the recipient of a connection "takes it and runs with it" but never tells the initial referrer what happened. As a matter of courtesy, make sure to circle back and tell them if an introduction worked out or not.

Learned a new one from John Hughes: "Unicorpse" which is a company that was previously valued at \$1 billion dollars but that is now worth much less.

In healthcare, payors (the insurance companies) and providers (doctors/hospitals) are merging. United Healthcare is buying physician groups and now employs 70,000 doctors making it the largest MD employer in the country. Hospital systems are fighting back and starting to create their own insurance programs. Meanwhile, our family often goes to an urgent care because accessing the "system" is so difficult. This is all messed up.

From the WSJ on declining professionalism of today's leaders: *"Cynical behavior has a different meaning when it comes from people at the top of the ladder. In the age of social media, some of the wealthiest*

and most famous people on Earth have found that the best way to gain even more attention is to display contempt for ordinary standards of discourse and behavior. Elon Musk has long been a master of this strategy, as when he smoked a marijuana blunt during a livestreamed interview in 2018.”

Our kids have persistently challenged me on my acceptance of alcohol and opposition to marijuana. I am starting to think they might be right and I am just beholden to historical norms. We need some long-term studies of THC impact on body. *“Are edibles actually better for you than alcohol—or at least less bad? More people are asking the question as edible products containing cannabis, often in gummy form, become widely available. As people explore other ways to relax, cannabis aficionados say that compared with alcohol, edibles have fewer calories, don’t disrupt sleep and aren’t linked to diseases like cancer.”*
[marijuana-edibles-alcohol-questions-answered](#)

Google released its top searches for 2022. Here is the top 10 in the US. What does it say about our society when the vast majority are so shallow:

1. Wordle
2. Election Results
3. Betty White
4. Queen Elizabeth
5. Bob Saget
6. Ukraine
7. Mega Millions
8. Powerball Numbers
9. Anne Heche
10. Jeffrey Dahmer

From my curmudgeonly side:

I don’t know exactly what the pre- boarding rules are for airplanes but I think they need to be reviewed. Increasingly, I see as many as 20 people pre-boarding who appear to be in fine health. I also love the wheelchair pre-boarders who then pop up when you land and deplane first.

Enough with the Covid protocols. The virus has mutated and weakened so it is now no more dangerous than the flu. The national emergency should end. Student borrowers should start payments on their loans. Landlords should be free to evict nonpaying tenants. Enough.

Stop playing the Mariah Carey song.

Who cares about the royals.

jml