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“Dorner Effect”

The *raison d’être* of predictions is for scientists to come along and test them. In this case, we propose a prediction that economic scientists can test. It involves economic data patterns that will unfold as a result of Christopher Dorner’s actions. In other words, we are predicting a “Dorner Effect.”

As you know, Christopher Dorner was a member of the US Navy and was terminated by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). He became enraged following his release from the LAPD, which he said stemmed from discriminatory practices. His rage took the form of an extended and expensive manhunt and the seemingly senseless killings of four persons.

What effect will Dorner’s actions have on economic data and why?

To answer these two questions, it is important to link Dorner’s actions to the related media coverage. If you consumed any of Dorner’s media coverage, then you are aware that he was generally depicted as a jovial, even smiling, Black man in military uniform. In other words, Dorner’s violent personality was inextricably linked to a smiling Black man who performed military service.

From our perspective, this composite image could be interpreted to mean that “hiring officials can’t trust Black men—even those who have served in the nation’s military. They will smile in your face; but, if they feel the least bit wronged, they will divulge the secrets of your organization and ultimately resort to violence using skills obtained during military service.”

Against this background, our prediction is that, going forward, the Black male unemployment rate will edge higher; most importantly, the unemployment rate for Black military veterans will increase.

The duration of this effect, on the other hand, may be short- or long-lived. In part, it depends on the media’s continuing coverage of Dorner’s actions, and coverage of the actions of other Black men who may take similar action. Nevertheless, we believe existing coverage of Dorner’s story is sufficient to affect negatively the Black male unemployment rate.

Typically, Black veterans reflect a lower unemployment rate than Black nonveterans. However, as a result of Dorner’s actions, it is logical to expect that the employment advantages enjoyed by Black veterans will diminish.

It makes sense that private and public sector going concerns will think more than twice about hiring a Black veteran who matches Dorner's profile in the least. However, we should also monitor the nation's military services to determine whether they slow their absorption of Black males fearing that they will train future killers of American citizens.

It might be argued that Dorner was an aberration, and that the public will soon forget his exploits. We question that thinking with a reminder that the nation does not forget about Black men who have sufficient knowledge to plan and take injustices against Blacks into their own hands. Dorner's notoriety may not fade; he may become an "Urban Legend." Moreover, he may come to be viewed as a justice seeker. Under these circumstances, you can be assured that our prediction will come true.

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02/13/13