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## “Headline Thoughts No. 2”

“Headline Thoughts” reflect our contemplations of, and conclusions about, recent, and important media/press headlines from a Black American economic perspective. Nearly by definition, bad news is good news because it sells. Below, we consider certain “good” news after a brief meditation on—of all things—newspaper cartoons.

### Questions

Do our lettered generations read printed newspapers and the addictive comic strips provided within them? Why do today’s cartoons not include a Black American child character that is as “mischievous,” as “likeable,” and as “cute” (as defined by White US standards) as “Dennis the Menace”?

### Answer

Media consumers should never forget about the media’s power to shape behavior. We do not see a Black “Dennis the Menace”-like comic strip because it would not be good for business. Black Americans comprise a small proportion of newspaper readership and cannot compensate for a loss of readership—already in decline—that might disappear in response to the appearance of a Black “Dennis the Menace”-like character.

### Comment

On the flipside, a decision to permit a Black “Dennis the Menace”-like character to compete with or replace the existing White character would ultimately serve to unseat

White males generally as favorable personas on the world stage. “Dennis the Menace” is disarming and generates an acceptance of (or a failure to penalize) White males’ bad behavior, and it helps enable White males’ domination of world events—despite their devilishness and destructiveness.

### Headline Thoughts

- Given the prevalence of press pieces concerning the Ukraine-Russian War in Europe and the Israel-Hamas War in the Middle East, no citations are given. No doubt, the current focus in the US is heavily on the latter conflict due to numerous demonstrations on US college campuses. Is US hypocrisy concerning these two wars not transparent? Are not the US positions on the two wars inconsistent? Irrespective of which party fired the first shot, how can the US side with Ukraine, which is a victim in search of liberty in one war, but not support Hamas and the Palestinian people, who are clearly the victims in the second war?
- There is an ongoing flood of media stories about alleged past sexual misconduct of popular/famous White males in the US (we do not provide citations). If you are unfamiliar with these cases, then consider updating yourself through social media. When you have these accounts in hand, we invite the following actions: (i) Refresh your

memory concerning notable past, recent, or ongoing cases involving past alleged sexual misconduct by popular/famous Black males in the US; and (ii) perform a comparative analysis as best you can of the differences in the treatment of these cases by the press and US governments. For this comparative analysis, please focus on the roles of the press and governments, not on underlying details of the cases. From your analysis, would you conclude that there is, or was, equal and unbiased treatment under the law for these Black vs. White males?<sup>1</sup>

- “As Supreme Court Take Up Homeless Ban, a City’s Unhoused Feels Abandoned.”<sup>2</sup> Questions that we should ask about this case are whether it is emblematic of the state of the US and its

people? Specifically, how can the nation’s moral authority (SCOTUS) hear the case, but not one Justice digress briefly to ask a simple question: Why is “homelessness” increasing so rapidly in the wealthiest nation in the world?<sup>3</sup> In other words, why did the case arise? How can all levels of governance (Federal, State, and local governments) collect taxes and devote billions to homelessness, but these resources do not produce enough safe and affordable housing rapidly enough to close the affordable housing gap? Why are tax dollars intended for “homelessness” sufficient to provide “good” jobs that enable certain Americans to afford housing, but insufficient to ensure that the homeless have access to housing?

Your thoughts about these thoughts are welcomed at [BlackEconomics@BlackEconomics.org](mailto:BlackEconomics@BlackEconomics.org).

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<sup>1</sup> To forestall potential legal actions against us, we purposely avoid naming intended personalities.

<sup>2</sup> Reis Thebault and Anne Marimow (042024). *The Washington Post*.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2024/04/20/supreme-court-homelessness-oregon-camping-ban/>; (Ret. 050124).

<sup>3</sup> The April 22, 2024 argument transcript for the case includes 46 references to “why questions” but none

of them search for the fundamental reason for the case: Grant Pass wants to reduce, if not eliminate, its homeless “problem.” The number of homeless persons has become too much of a problem for the city. (See the transcript here: [https://www.supremecourt.gov/oral\\_arguments/argument\\_transcripts/2023/23-175\\_dc8f.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts/2023/23-175_dc8f.pdf); (Ret. 050224).