

Reality versus reporting

Something very interesting happened this Black Friday...it went well for retailers. But it wasn't expected to. The news media kept reporting that sales were expected to be lower, with fewer people shopping and shopping for fewer items. In fact, they reported this while they reported that people were camping out for sales and even that people trampled to death a security guard in their rush to enter a New York Walmart store. The final numbers are not in yet, but apparently, sales were better than expected and may even have been higher than last year.

This is interesting because a narrative has been formed in the media: economy is bad and people are not shopping, not matter what. Economy is bad, and people are not traveling not matter what. And yet, planes and roads are full and there is no parking to be had at local malls. Even my local bookstore was packed on Black Friday, even though they had no special sales. In short, there seems to be a disconnect between what is being reported (or what reporters think) and what is actually happening. Often, what is reported is not real but BECOMES real. In this case, it seems to be the opposite. I wonder if the panicked reporting about the dire state of the economy is partially a desire to create a black and white narrative or a true appraisal of reality. What do you think?