

Bad polls, fake news, and that damned needle: Here's how the media covered a twisty Election Night | Nieman Journalism Lab

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November 6, 2020

That was quite a ride, wasn't it? Or, rather, this election *is* quite a ride, given that it's still going on. The quadrennial media rituals — “too early to call,” a sudden awareness of the nation's counties, Steve Kornacki — all returned for the 2020 presidential election. As of Wednesday afternoon, no news organization has been able to declare an overall winner, and there are still meaningful votes left to count.

There weren't a ton of meaningful innovations in last night's media coverage — unless you count “caution” as an innovation, which maybe you should. The added complexity of massive early voting and the still-fresh scars from 2016 generally led to outlets more willing to let the night develop. But it certainly wasn't a happy night for many viewers, readers, and obsessive doomscrollers. Here are a few of the things we noticed.

[...]

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