



## EDWARD R. MURROW OVERALL EXCELLENCE SUBMISSION RUNDOWN



### *Inside the Hot Zone*

*00:11 - 5:47*

In April of 2020, as the coronavirus crisis swept across the nation, hospitals and their medical personnel were drowning with floods of infected patients, still knowing very little about the virus. Doctors and nurses themselves were dying from exposure along with their patients..

For two weeks during the height of the COVID-19 crisis, when hospitals in NY state were told to boost capacity by as much as 100% and many had reached overcapacity, ABC News was granted special access inside Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York. Our cameras documented life on the frontlines for its medical staff and patients, from the emergency room to the hospital's numerous intensive care units. As many around the country sheltered at home, two ABC News producers bravely entered the hospital's hot zones with cameras rolling to provide an intimate and personal portrait of a hospital at war with the virus. Our cameras captured life-saving procedures, as well as the fear, exhaustion, and at times, hopelessness felt by the doctors themselves.

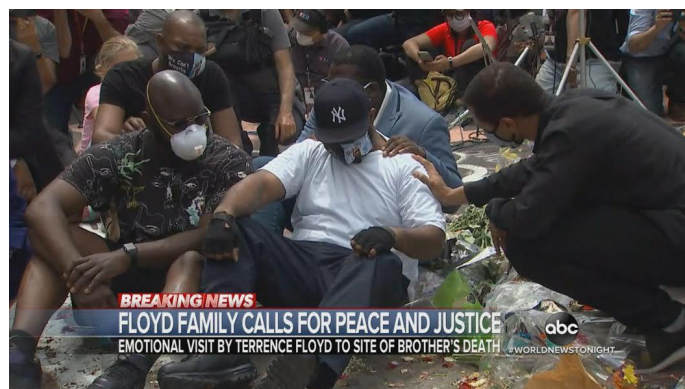


### **Protests on America's Streets**

**5:53-6:50**

There was rage. There was anger. There was righteous indignation. There was sorrow. And there was violence erupting on the streets of city after city across the country.

On the evening of May 30th, a week after the death of George Floyd, ABC News went on the air with a 2-hour breaking news special report. As curfews were declared from Atlanta to Denver, Los Angeles to Louisville, protesters and police clashed. The broadcast was anchored by ABC News' Terry Moran who navigated seamlessly, interviewing mayors handling their city's crises in real-time, experts providing context and historical perspective, former law enforcement officials analyzing the scenes unfolding, and ABC News correspondents in the field walking and talking with the protestors as night fell. Two ABC News correspondents were quickly caught up in the tension on live television.



### **George Floyd: Peace and Justice**

**06:55 - 9:44**

For weeks our team essentially lived in Minneapolis—from the discovery of the horrific video, to the anger on the streets, to the attempts at reconciliation and finding a path forward. In this emotional day of air piece, ABC News’ Alex Perez interviewed George Floyd’s brother, Terrence, moments before he first visited the site where his brother was killed. “My brother did in death what he strived for but could never fully, fully do in life. He changed the world,” he told Perez.



***The Ticket: The First Interview***

***09:50 - 12:47***

In this wide ranging conversation, the first joint interview since accepting the Democratic nomination, former Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Kamala Harris discussed the history-making Democratic presidential ticket with ABC News’ Robin Roberts and David Muir. The former vice president faced tough questions about his agenda for the African-American community and his at-times controversial rhetoric on the topic of race. Senator Harris was pressed to reconcile her current praise of Joe Biden and his campaign with her criticism of the former Delaware senator's decades-old positions on school busing during the June 2019 Democratic debate.



### **One on One with President Trump**

**12:53 - 14:18**

*World News Tonight* anchor David Muir and his small team carefully traveled to Arizona to conduct the first network interview with President Trump, his first major trip since the virus outbreak had worsened. This special edition of the broadcast from the field was socially distanced, with most of the team having to work from home on an incredibly short turnaround. It was one of the more astonishing feats of that moment in time for ABC News.

During this news-making interview, President Trump directly acknowledged that there would be a real, negative human cost in prioritizing an economic revival over a more cautious approach in favor of public health. Trump told Muir, "It's possible there will be some" deaths as states rolled back restrictions aimed at stopping the spread of the coronavirus.. The president was dismissive of two new analyses that offered cautionary tales against a premature reopening of the country, and while he sought to prepare Americans that "more death" was ahead, he expressed optimism that the virus would go away, regardless of whether a vaccine was achieved.



### **Election Night: Your Voice Your Vote 2020**

**14:23 - 18:52**

On election night, the entire news division came together for 20 non-stop hours of coverage on the network, radio and digital with anchors and correspondents spread out across the country to report. ABC News used new augmented reality technology to enhance our spectacular election coverage; The augmented reality took a full year of planning, brainstorming, designing and programming — with an estimated 700 to 1,000 hours of data testing. This was a grand attempt to bring interactive storytelling to our viewers

Election night and the chaotic days that followed capped off an amazing 14 months of political coverage, including three debates, two town halls, eight nights of convention coverage, a six-hour primetime takeover on Super Tuesday, primary debates in New Hampshire and Texas, and countless newsmaking interviews and the biggest political guests all along the way.



***Pandemic: A Nation Divided***

***18:58-22:10***

The coronavirus pandemic quickly became a disproportionately black and brown epidemic in America.

How one experienced the threat of the virus, the health care system and the consequences of the economic shutdown varied wildly by background and zip code. In order for us to fully inform our audiences of this tough truth, we produced the accessible, intimate and deeply personal network-wide series, *Pandemic: A Nation Divided*. From our morning audio podcasts to our late night television broadcasts, ABC News dedicated in-depth coverage on every single platform to stories explaining why, how and the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic was hitting differently across racial, ethnic and social-economic lines. We highlighted voices from across the country that simply had not yet been elevated. We worked hard to respect and showcase the grieving process many families experienced during the pandemic. We connected history with present day struggle.





### *I Am Vanessa*

22:16 - 25:04

This ABC News two-hour program on Fort Hood soldier Vanessa Guillen was the first in-depth broadcast about her disappearance and brutal murder which captured international attention and sparked what has been called the #MeToo movement within the military. Correspondent John Quiñones, was allowed into the Guillen family home to show the world the young woman behind the uniform, and given special access to document the family's journey for justice - from their protests to their trip to the White House.

From the beginning, we knew we needed to demand answers from the U.S. Army. *20/20* was the first program to air interviews with the Secretary of the Army and head of the Army's Criminal Investigation Command. The week after our broadcast, the *I Am Vanessa Guillen Act* was formally introduced in Congress after the family's attorney obtained bipartisan support. The act seeks to set up a third-party to investigate and prosecute sexual misconduct cases in the military and to establish new guidelines for handling the cases of missing soldiers.



## **Turning Point: The Price of Discrimination**

**25:09 - 30:21**

*Turning Point* was a groundbreaking month-long series of reports across all ABC News programs and platforms examining systemic racism and the racial reckoning sweeping the United States and exploring whether it might lead to lasting reconciliation. Our approach was wide-reaching, looking at institutions such as law enforcement, the criminal justice system, housing discrimination, policing and voting. We also examined the economic, physical and emotional toll injustice takes on people of color and how they have sought to cope through art, worship, self-care and community.

In this excerpt, Diane Sawyer revisits and updates her 1991 *True Colors* hidden camera investigation which illustrated racial bias in America was alive and well. Almost 30 years later, much of the discrimination seen in that episode still persists, exemplified by a couple experiencing clear housing discrimination following two separate home appraisals.



## **The Shot: Race for the Vaccine**

**30:27 - 33:39**

This news documentary focuses on the United States' efforts to get a COVID-19 vaccine approved and quickly distributed so our country can return to normalcy. This riveting special gives viewers an intimate look at the science behind the vaccines that are closest to receiving authorization; details of the trials and results; the near misses, the roadblocks and serendipity along the way; personal stories and behind the scenes footage of the scientists leading the charge; and the brave volunteers who participated in the trials.



### **America in Pain**

**33:45 - 40:00**

We have chosen to end with a moving piece from this quick turnaround television special that aired in the wake of George Floyd’s death. In a rare moment of journalism, the background of ABC News’ story-tellers intertwined with the story leading the news night after night. In addition to protesters and police across telling their own stories through natural sound, ABC News' journalists shared their own searing emotional experiences with racism.

While ABC's journalists don't often insert their own perspectives into their storytelling, at this inflection point in our coverage and our nation's history, it felt right. Audience members and members of the journalism community agreed it was, indeed appropriate and impactful. As one viewer wrote, “Extremely powerful and moving special tonight. I especially appreciated your colleagues opening up and telling it like it is.”



**May 27th 2020**

“We have marked these difficult moments together, and they have come with astonishing speed. Just three months into this pandemic, and tonight America has just crossed that awful milestone. And we have said it so often - these are not just numbers, these are American lives.”

– Page 2 *World News Tonight with David Muir*



This was a special edition of *World News Tonight*, not for its location or a giant exclusive, but because of the simplicity and true power of focusing on the loved ones lost to the vicious global pandemic. From the very start, our team was committed to framing the numbers in terms of the -human toll – mothers, fathers, grandparents, brothers and sisters. We were the only broadcast to break from format and devote this much time to the subject, and the *World News Tonight* team worked together with the help of ABC affiliates to identify the pandemic’s victims.

The “wall of faces” behind David was the first time any newscast had shown the massive number of people who had died –just a fraction of the real toll. 215 photos are needed to fill that wall. Not a single photo was repeated and we would add more and more in the months to come, the faces are now much smaller in that screen. We paid tribute to some of the 100,000 and again for 200,000 and for the other awful milestones that would follow.

In addition to this broadcast, *World News Tonight* anchor David Muir and his small team would carefully travel with masks and proper precautions to conduct the only interview with President Trump during the pandemic in Arizona, and the first interview with Bill and Melinda Gates that went viral - after taking on the President for his move to cut funding to the World Health Organization, but in the end, we always come back to this particular broadcast.

We heard from families of the fallen who were grateful we paused to remember, and viewers from all over the country who were moved by the broadcast. As we write this Edward R. Murrow submission, we are producing an extended piece to pay our respects to the 500,000 mark, unfathomable back when this all began.

Other pieces in the broadcast were:

- Alex Perez reported on the police officer who put his knee on George Floyd's neck for more than 8 1/2 minutes, Floyd pleading for air...and his own mother. Officer Derek Chauvin was arrested that day and charged with murder.
- Gio Benitez reported on SpaceX’s historic launch, the initial step in reinvigorating NASA's human spaceflight program and first commercial company looking to put astronauts into orbit. Clouds rolled in and the launch was scrubbed.

Above all, we remain committed to the families forever changed by this pandemic. We proudly submit our May 27th broadcast for your consideration.