

Live 'Who Killed JFK?' tops L.A. primetime ratings race

By STEVE SANDERS

The controversial two-hour, live-event special "Who Killed JFK?" effectively wiped out the competition in the Los Angeles market Wednesday, with independent station KCOP beating out every other station in town during the premium 8-10 p.m. primetime hours.

Marking the first day of the Arbitron November sweeps ratings period, the special, hosted by investigative journalist Jack Anderson, also gave a shot in the arm to KCOP's newscast that evening, posting an 8.2/16 in Arbitron and a 7.2/15 in Nielsen. Channel 13's 10 p.m. news show was the market's highest-rated newscast of the evening, even beating out the three affiliate stations airing news the following hour.

"Who Killed JFK?" pulled in a 16.0/4 rating and 24 share in Nielsen for KCOP, and a 15.7/24 in Arbitron. KABC came in second during the 8-10 p.m. time period, with "Growing Pains," "Head of the Class" and "Wonder Years" averaging a 14.7/22 in Nielsen and a

14.1/22 in Arbitron. NBC was third with a 9.5/14 Nielsen and an 8.9/14 in Arbitron for "Unsolved Mysteries," "Night Court" and "Baby Boom." CBS was last, delivering a slim 7.7/11 Nielsen and 5.8/9 Arbitron for "The Van Dyke Show," "Annie McGuire" and "The Equalizer."

The special posted a national 11.6/18 in 16 metered markets.

In New York, the program posted a 10.3/16 for WWOR in New York, outperforming the NBC- and CBS-owned stations there. On WTXF in Philadelphia, the program delivered a 12.6/18, beating both the NBC and CBS primetime slates.

In Chicago, the story was quite different, though, with "JFK" airing on WPWR (Channel 50), and being beaten by all three affiliates as well as independent station WGN. "JFK" pulled in a 5.9/9, compared to WGN's 8.1/13. WLS (ABC) won the time period with a 22.0/35, followed by NBC's 11.4/18 and CBS 7.9/13.

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In Dallas, scene of the JFK assassination, the show produced a 20.6/31, allowing independent station KTVT to dominate the evening over its competition. ABC's Hartford, Conn., affiliate, WTNH, also won the time period with a 15.8/23 and KOVR, the ABC affiliate in Sacramento, won the time period as well with a 13.9/26. Other major market ratings data were not made available by Orbis Communications at press time.

The program was produced by Saban Prods. in association with Barbour-Langley Prods. and distributed by Orbis Communications and aired in 90% of all U.S. households.

The special had Anderson presenting "evidence" laying responsibility for the assassination to organized crime, with the Warren Commission helping to cover up the truth. As of mid-morning Thursday, 405,442 viewers phoned into the special favoring the reopening of the murder case, with only 6,598 viewers voting against doing so.