MINNEAPOLIS (AdAge.com) -- Fox's big series beat NBC's mini-series -- as well as every other drama, sitcom or reality show that ran against it -- to win the Nielsen ratings race with an overall 5.1/12 rating and share in the ad-centric adult 18-49 demographic. ABC was second with a 3.6/9, followed by CBS (3.0/7), NBC (1.8/5) and The CW (.7/2).

Fox had the top two shows of the night: "House" built up 9% to a season high 6.0/15, and even serialized "24" defied odds by increasing 5% in its sixth hour to a 4.3/10. Both were helped by key competitor CBS running repeats of its hit sitcoms, which were down sharply compared to original episode averages: "The Big Bang Theory" (3.3/8) fared the best, down a relatively modest 13%, while a steeper slide occurred for "How I Met Your Mother" (3.1/7, tumbling 26%), "Two and a Half Men" (down 21% to a 4.1/10) and "Worst Week" (2.2/5, a 31% loss).

During the same 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. period, CBS's corporate cousin, The CW, also ran repeats, with "Gossip Girl" and "One Tree Hill" both falling 56% to a .7/2.
At 10 p.m., CBS's "CSI: Miami" (2.6/7) was also a second showing, which resulted in 37% less showing up. That created an opportunity for ABC's new reality show, "True Beauty" to look pretty merely by holding its 2.9/7 average, which was good enough to win the hour. "Beauty's" program partner turned even more heads, as "The Bachelor" was up 18% to a season high 4.0/10 to finish second during its two-hour airing.

As for NBC, "The Last Templar" won't be the last miniseries -- "Kings" is set to debut on March 15. But the days of miniseries becoming big event programming seem to have passed, as today's multimedia menu of on-demand downloads, DVDs and broadcast and cable dramas have passed it by. And the rich production values of "The Last Templar" are indicative of an expensive form of programming, but with an uncertain payoff in these uncertain economic times: Last night's conclusion only delivered a 2.0/5, down 13% from Sunday's part one, and only a bit above the season finale of "Superstars of Dance" (1.6/4), a cheaper (if not cheesier) dance competition indicative of this generation's genre, reality TV.

WHAT TO WATCH:
Tuesday: Inauguration coverage of the American president made many miss "American Idol." Fans can catch up at 8 p.m. on Fox.
Wednesday: It's awards season, so reward yourself with one of last generation's most honored actors, as four Jack Lemon films play on TCM.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR:
Ratings for Fox's "Fringe," which gets both an "Idol" lead-in and a week off from running against an original episode of "The Mentalist," as CBS is running a repeat. If there's no discernable difference, it will send a signal to Fox as it evaluates the freshman drama's long-term potential.

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NOTE: All ratings based on adults 18-49. A share is a percentage of adults 18-49 who have their TV sets on at a given time. A rating is a percentage of all adults 18-49, whether or not their sets are turned on. For example, a 1.0 rating is 1% of the total U.S. adults 18-49 population with TVs. Ratings quoted in this column are based on live-plus-same-day unless otherwise noted. (Many ad deals have been negotiated on the basis of commercial-minute, live-plus-three-days viewing.)

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