

= Women 's Appreciation =

" Women 's Appreciation " is the twenty @-@ second episode of the third season of the US version of The Office , and the third supersized episode of the season . In this episode , Phyllis is flashed in the parking lot , so Michael takes all the women to the mall for " women 's appreciation " , where the status of his relationship with Jan comes to light . Meanwhile , Pam makes a sketch supposedly of the man who flashed Phyllis , when it in fact resembles Dwight , who is unaware and posts the fliers throughout town .

The episode was written by Gene Stupnitsky and Lee Eisenberg and directed by Tucker Gates . While the characters travel to Mall at Steamtown , a shopping center in Scranton , Pennsylvania , filming actually took place in Los Angeles . Cast members Jenna Fischer and Kate Flannery enjoyed the three @-@ day shoot outside the office , and the latter was able to perform her own driving stunts . While filming , the cast were often met with fans " in full force " yelling out Steve Carell 's name and taking pictures . Retailer Victoria 's Secret agreed to close their mall store to the public to allow for episode filming .

" Women 's Appreciation " first aired in the United States on May 3 , 2007 . It garnered an estimated 7 @.@ 0 million viewers , causing it to rank fourth in its timeslot . Television critics gave mixed reviews to the episode . Comedic elements , such as Pam 's prank on Dwight , were praised , but one reviewer felt that Michael 's relationship problems with Jan came out of nowhere .

= = Synopsis = =

After finding out that Phyllis Lapin (Phyllis Smith) was flashed in the parking lot , Michael Scott (Steve Carell) holds a misguided seminar on women 's issues . He closes the meeting by offering to take the women to the Mall at Steamtown . Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) orders Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) to interview Phyllis and make a sketch of " the pervert " . Pam draws a picture of Dwight with a moustache and without glasses . Andy Bernard (Ed Helms) assists an oblivious Dwight in posting fliers with the " predator 's " face .

At the mall , Michael relates his discomfort with his relationship with Jan Levinson (Melora Hardin) . All of the women point out reasons for them to break up , except for Karen Filippelli (Rashida Jones) , who suggests that maybe they are " just having a rough patch " , obviously alluding to her own unstable relationship with Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) . Pam shoots the idea down by stating that " maybe you 're just wrong for each other " . Karen visibly takes this statement personally . Michael thanks them for their help by treating them to one item each at Victoria 's Secret . Pam is visibly upset when she overhears Phyllis helping Karen pick out a sexy outfit for Jim . Pam buys a robe because she is " between boyfriends " but can cut the robe into new hand towels . Later , she takes a step toward asserting herself by changing a flat tire on Meredith Palmer 's (Kate Flannery) car . At the office , Kevin Malone (Brian Baumgartner) sneaks into the women 's bathroom and discovers a plush waiting room . The other men soon join him .

Upon returning to the office , Michael calls Jan to end their relationship , unwisely doing so by leaving a voicemail message . Jan walks into his office to apologize in person for their earlier conversation , but when she receives Michael 's voicemail , she storms out of the office . The episode ends with Jim calling Dwight , informing him he has information about the predator . He says he saw him two minutes before in the women 's bathroom . Dwight dashes to the bathroom and examines the room , looks in the mirror where someone had etched a moustache similar to the predator 's . Dwight realizes the prank and curses Pam .

= = Production = =

" Women 's Appreciation " was written by Gene Stupnitsky and Lee Eisenberg , while Tucker Gates served as the episode 's director . The cold open featuring Jim receiving a demerit from Dwight was initially intended for " Business School " , and the opening of " Product Recall " , which featured Jim and Dwight impersonating each other , was first intended for this episode before it was moved

because of time constraints . Michael 's talking head scene about Jan 's safeword was meant to serve as a " place holder " until a better version could be shot , but was left in the episode because the writers forgot about it . While the characters travel to Mall at Steamtown , a shopping center in Scranton , Pennsylvania , episode filming actually took place near Los Angeles , where the series is normally shot .

Kate Flannery , who plays Meredith , called the episode one of her favorites to shoot because she " was stuck in a van with Mindy Kaling , Jenna Fischer , Angela Kinsey , Rashida Jones , Phyllis Smith and Steve Carell for two days . " Fischer agreed , calling it a " fun episode to shoot " due to having three days of filming with Carell and The Office women . Believing Meredith 's minivan was " another character " in the series , Flannery enjoyed being able to drive and act simultaneously . In a reflection of the character 's personality , the production crew added props such as bottles of alcohol , chips , crushed soda cans , garbage , and 14 air fresheners to the vehicle . The cast however soon developed headaches , leading to the air fresheners ' removal . Flannery was able to perform her own stunts for the episode , explaining that she " was nervous at first , but I think I really could be a demolition @-@ derby star . "

The cast enjoyed shooting at the mall , but were faced with fans " in full force . " Crowds followed them while shooting , holding up camera phones and yelling Carell 's name . Flannery said of the episode , " We shot some really fun stuff with Steve and the ladies just running around the mall . The food @-@ court scene was so much fun . Steve is an amazing actor . " Lingerie retailer Victoria 's Secret agreed to close their store to the public for filming . In the episode , Angela reveals that she wears large sizes of clothes purchased from American Girl , a doll store chain , but will not shop at children 's retailer Gap Kids because it is " too flashy . " In the DVD audio commentary , Kinsey remarked that after the episode broadcast , people would bring up American Girl Doll catalogs for her to sign . Passerby also yelled out Carell 's name during the scene where Pam changes a tire .

The Season Three DVD contains a number of deleted scenes . Notable cut scenes include Kelly learning that Phyllis got flashed , Bob Vance , Vance Refrigeration , calming down Phyllis , Andy trying to earn back Dwight 's favor by bonding over cold soups , Michael imagining himself as a woman , Dwight escorting the women to Meredith 's car , Michael choosing lingerie for Pam , and an alternate version of Michael 's concluding talking head .

= = Reception = =

The episode first broadcast in the United States on May 3 , 2007 on NBC in a special timeslot , airing behind an episode of My Name Is Earl . " Women 's Appreciation " was a " supersized " episode , as it aired for forty minutes . It attracted an estimated 7 @.@ 0 million viewers , and ranked fourth in its timeslot , behind episodes of Survivor : Fiji , Ugly Betty , and Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader ? .

The episode received mixed reviews from television critics . IGN writer Brian Zoromski called " Women 's Appreciation " a " fairly solid episode worthy of the super @-@ sized treatment , " and rated it 7 @.@ 9 out of 10 . He highlighted Pam 's prank as well as Michael 's attempt to break up with Jan via voicemail , calling the latter " easily the funniest moment in the episode , and perfectly played by both Steve Carell and Melora Hardin . " Zoromski did however criticize the series for abandoning plot points , such as the publicity fiasco from the previous episode . Give Me My Remote 's Kath Skerry called it a " hilarious episode , " and observed " I don ? t think The Office has ever pushed the envelope in terms of sexual discussion as much as it did tonight . "

Jay Black from AOL TV disliked the episode 's awkward moments and thought Michael 's unhappiness with Jan came out of nowhere . Black did however praise Pam 's prank as well as Dwight himself , but concluded his review : " A surprisingly weak handling of character combined with fewer laugh @-@ out @-@ loud moments than I 'm used to forces me to give this episode 4 Creed number @-@ twos out of 7 . " Entertainment Weekly staff writer Abby West also critiqued " Women 's Appreciation " , explaining that it " felt exactly like a 30 @-@ minute episode stretched to fill 43 minutes . " She thought the episode " only came together " once the Office women performed an intervention for Michael .

