

= Summer Catalog =

" Summer Catalog " is the 20th episode of the second season of the American comedy television series Parks and Recreation , and the 26th overall episode of the series . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on March 25 , 2010 . In the episode , Leslie organizes a reunion with the last four Pawnee park directors , but is disappointed when it turns out they despise each other . Meanwhile , Tom tries to take a photo of Ann and Mark for the city 's summer catalog , while the budding relationship of Andy and April continues to develop .

The episode was written by Katie Dippold and directed by Ken Whittingham . It featured a guest appearance by Michael Gross , best known for his role as Steven Keaton from Family Ties , as one of the former park directors . According to Nielsen Media Research , " Summer Catalog " was seen by 4 @.@ 47 million household viewers . It suffered competition from CBS footage of the first round of the 2010 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament , which drew 9 @.@ 68 million household viewers . " Summer Catalog " received generally positive reviews .

= = Plot = =

While working on the Pawnee summer catalog , Leslie ( Amy Poehler ) excitedly organizes a reunion between Ron ( Nick Offerman ) and his three predecessors . She anticipates a joyous occasion and plans to write a letter about it for the catalog . However , none of the four men get along with each other , and all of them are difficult to get along with . One of them ( Dakin Matthews ) litters repeatedly , treats everybody disrespectfully , and cheerfully says he never gave a damn about the Parks department and only took the job because it had an easy path to job security and a lucrative pension . Another one ( Jack Wallace ) exhibits a sexist attitude , and tells Leslie she should not be working there due to menstruation issues . The third ( Michael Gross ) constantly talks about his affinity for marijuana , going so far as to say " I 've planted marijuana in community gardens across this city , " and particularly clashes with Ron ( who forced him out of the position years ago ) who cheerfully confirms he screwed his predecessor over and otherwise is his usual detached self . Later , a frustrated Leslie decides she cannot write the catalog letter ; she stops treating the former directors with any respect by telling the sexist to shut up and calling them " turds " when she briefly takes a throwaway picture and then walks away from without another word . Ron takes her out to dinner to apologize , and the two process their mutual respect for each other , and vow they will never grow to hate each other the way the four former directors do . Ron even tells Leslie that he wants her to take over his Parks Director position if he becomes Pawnee 's City Manager . However , Ron cheerfully says in an interview that one of his first acts as City Manager would be to eliminate the Parks department , while Leslie gives an equally upbeat interview where she says one of her first acts as City Manager , were she to leapfrog Ron for the job , would be to double the department 's size .

Tom ( Aziz Ansari ) is tasked with taking the cover photo of the summer catalog , and convinces Ann ( Rashida Jones ) and Mark ( Paul Schneider ) to pose for photos at a community park . Tom is repeatedly frustrated with Ann , who has a difficult time appearing happy . When the photos are finished , Ann agrees that she looks miserable and asks that the pictures not be used . Mark appears concerned that Ann 's unhappiness is a reflection of their relationship . She insists everything is fine , but he is unconvinced . Meanwhile , April ( Aubrey Plaza ) and Andy ( Chris Pratt ) appear to be growing closer . After helping Leslie set up her picnic , Andy asks whether April wants to get drinks after work , and she agrees . However , when they arrive at a bar , the bouncer ( Mike Mauloff ) easily notices April is underage , and her identification confirms she is 20 . April tells Andy they can go to another bar , but Andy decides to go home instead , seemingly uncomfortable about their age difference . April is visibly disappointed , but does not convey it to Andy . Later , the summer catalogs arrive , with a photo on the cover of April and Andy appearing happy together at the picnic .

= = Production = =

" Summer Catalog " was written by Katie Dippold and directed by Ken Whittingham . The character Michael Tansley , one of the former parks directors , was played by guest actor by Michael Gross , best known for his role as Steven Keaton from Family Ties . At the end of the episode , Leslie and Ron have dinner at J.J. ' s Diner , an eatery previously featured in the first season episode " The Reporter " . Although the exterior shots of the restaurant are the same , the interior set of the diner is a completely different one from the other episode .

Shortly after the episode aired , a copy of the Pawnee Summer Catalog 2010 that was featured in the episode was made available for download on the official Parks and Recreation website . The map of Pawnee contained within the catalog is based off the map of central Christchurch , New Zealand . Within a week of the episode 's original broadcast , two deleted scenes from " Summer Catalog " were made available on the official Parks and Recreation website . In the first , a two @-@ minute clip , April and Andy flirt while walking along a trail to set up Leslie 's picnic . When April complains about her feet hurting , Andy volunteers to give her a piggyback ride . Later , Leslie tries to write her summer catalog letter based on the picnic , but struggles due to how rude the four men acted . The second clip , which lasted two minutes and 15 seconds , includes further scenes of Tom leading Ann and Mark through a photo shoot at the park . Tom forces them to enter into unusual , avant @-@ garde poses , and yells at young children who get in the way of the shot while playing .

= = Cultural references = =

Leslie compares the summer catalog to the Pawnee version of Vogue , a fashion and lifestyle magazine . During one scene , Tom makes a joke , then says , " Am I right , Justin ? " The line is a reference to Leslie 's stylish ex @-@ boyfriend Justin , played by actor Justin Theroux earlier in the season , who Tom desperately admired . When Jerry takes a bad picture for the catalog , he indicates he will use the graphics software Adobe Photoshop to change the image , prompting April to ask , " Can you Photoshop your life with better decisions , Jerry ? " During the picnic , when Andy and April are talking . Andy talks about writing a song called " Life is a Picnic , " Andy makes a reference to NFL quarterback Peyton Manning .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast on March 25 , 2010 , " Summer Catalog " was seen by 4 @.@ 47 million household viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research . For the second week in a row , the show suffered in comparison to CBS footage of the 2010 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament , which drew an average of 9 @.@ 68 million household viewers during Parks and Recreation 's 8 : 30 p.m. time @-@ slot . Also for the second consecutive week , Parks and Recreation was outperformed by the ABC drama series FlashForward , which drew 6 @.@ 2 million household viewers . " Summer Catalog " had an overall 2 @.@ 9 rating / 6 share , and a 3 / 1 rating / 11 share among adult viewers between ages 18 and 49 .

" Summer Catalog " received generally positive reviews . Alan Sepinwall , television columnist with The Star @-@ Ledger , called the episode a " nice character piece for most of the ensemble " , and said it demonstrated how much Leslie has developed as a character since the first season . He praised the jokes about Ron 's hunger and the scenes with Tom 's demanding photography sessions . Entertainment Weekly television writer Ken Tucker said the storylines moved along briskly , provided a " constant stream of laughs " and displayed the " rich texture " of the characters . Tucker also said the romances in Parks and Recreation were more believable than contemporary ones in shows like The Office and 30 Rock .

Matt Fowler of IGN called it a " particularly strong " episode that used all of the characters well . Fowler especially liked that although Ron and Leslie bickered throughout the episode , they still displayed a mutual respect for each other . He also said Tom 's photography sessions were a good way to display Ann and Mark 's deteriorating relationship . The A.V. Club writer Steve Heisler said " Summer Catalog " laid the foundation for several future developments , like changes to the Andy /

April and Mark / Ann relationships , but also kept the episode funny and enjoyable . Heisler said Tom had the best lines of the episode . Kona Gallagher of TV Squad said she was saddened by the decline in Mark and Ann 's relationship and the setback for the April and Andy courtship , and feared the subplot might not reach a satisfactory conclusion by the end of the season . Gallagher also said the mainplot with Leslie and the former park heads was predictable , and that guest star Michael Gross was underused .

= = DVD release = =

" Summer Catalog " , along with the other 23 second season episodes of Parks and Recreation , was released on a four @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on November 30 , 2010 . The DVD included deleted scenes for each episode .