

= Diwali ( The Office ) =

" Diwali " is the sixth episode of the third season of the American comedy television series The Office and the show 's 34th overall . It was written by Mindy Kaling , who also acts in the show as Kelly Kapoor , and directed by Miguel Arteta . The episode first aired on November 2 , 2006 , on NBC , twelve days after the actual Diwali holiday .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania , branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In the episode , Kelly invites the office to a Diwali celebration , where Ryan ( B.J. Novak ) struggles to make a good impression on Kelly 's parents and Michael ( Steve Carell ) considers taking his relationship with Carol ( Nancy Carell ) to the next step . Meanwhile , at the Stamford branch , Jim ( John Krasinski ) and Andy ( Ed Helms ) get drunk while working late , leading Karen ( Rashida Jones ) to give Jim a ride home .

Kaling and executive producer Greg Daniels came up with the episode idea after Kaling held a Diwali party in 2005 for series staff . She undertook research about Indian culture and the resulting episode was substituted in place of one that would have been Halloween @-@ themed . The episode was directed by Miguel Arteta . According to Nielsen Media Research , an estimated 8 @.@ 8 million viewers tuned in ; it earned a 4 @.@ 2 / 10 rating among adults aged 18 to 49 , placing first in this demographic group . Critical reception to the episode was largely positive , with many praising Kaling 's writing , Carell 's performance , and other comedic elements . As a result of the episode , The Office became the first American comedy series to depict the holiday , and several commentators have credited it with helping introduce Indian customs to American audiences .

= = Synopsis = =

Kelly Kapoor ( Mindy Kaling ) invites the entire office staff to a celebration of Diwali , the Hindu Festival of Lights , which Michael Scott ( Steve Carell ) mistakenly believes to be an Indian version of Halloween . Ryan Howard ( B.J. Novak ) fails to make a favorable impression on Kelly 's parents , who in turn try to set up Kelly with a young doctor . Initially reluctant to attend the festival , Pam Beesly ( Jenna Fischer ) gives in and ends up enjoying herself . Inspired by a conversation with Kelly 's parents about Hindu marriage customs , Michael publicly proposes to Carol ( Nancy Carell ) . Uncomfortable , Carol declines his offer and leaves the room . She later explains that this is only their ninth date , and drives home , leaving Michael to find a ride .

Meanwhile , in Stamford , Jim Halpert ( John Krasinski ) decides to bike to work . Working late , Andy Bernard ( Ed Helms ) , Karen Filippelli ( Rashida Jones ) , and Jim turn a late night of paperwork into an excuse to drink , although Karen , unbeknownst to Jim and Andy , pours her shots into her wastebasket . Pam sends a text message to Jim , who does not answer because he is passed out on his desk . At the end of the evening , Michael mistakenly thinks that he and Pam have a connection , and is rejected when he tries to kiss her . She gives him a ride home on the condition that he sit in the back seat . Jim tries to bicycle home but is too drunk and an amused Karen gives Jim a ride .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing and filming = = =

" Diwali " was written by Mindy Kaling and directed by Miguel Arteta . While the episode is partly set at West Scranton High School , filming actually took place at Grant High School in Los Angeles , the same building where Freaks and Geeks was shot . That series ' co @-@ creator , Paul Feig , has directed several episodes of The Office , including " Email Surveillance " .

Kaling used her own Indian cultural background as inspiration when writing the episode , which portrays the Indian festival of Diwali . She and her friend , My Name Is Earl writer Vali Chandrasekaran , had held a Diwali party in 2005 for the cast of their two shows . According to

Kaling , NBC was " so excited . They were like , ' What the hell is this holiday ? I 've never heard of it ' . " The following year , while discussing the possible creation of a Halloween episode , she and executive producer Greg Daniels agreed to instead create one that was Diwali @-@ themed , as the two holidays fall near each other .

When it came time to write the episode however , Kaling had to perform a Google search , as she had forgotten many details . She explained , " I was a little embarrassed with how little I knew about it . I 'm Hindu , but I 'm not really a practicing Hindu , so I had to do a lot of research . " Kaling was pleased to learn more about her culture , at first being concerned that Daniels " and people I work with were a little antsy about assigning the Hindu writer the Indian episode . I didn 't want to feel like they pigeonholed me , but I felt like I 'd done enough episodes that it was okay . " She found that making the episode " was kind of the perfect meeting of being the child of immigrants and writing for a comedy show . " The series writers have since joked that they should do a Diwali @-@ themed episode every year in the same vein as the Christmas specials .

When creating the story , Kaling knew that " a lot of stuff has to happen " in the midst of the festival , including Michael and Carol 's relationship becoming " very roller @-@ coastery . " As with other series storylines , this development was decided upon before Kaling began writing the episode . She stated , " But it was always sort of built in that the peak of ' Diwali ' would be this incredibly romantic overture [ and its uncomfortable aftermath ] . " Kaling was pleased that much of " Diwali " took place at Stamford , especially as she was able to explore the contrasts between the two offices . She also liked that the episode contained " romance , people getting dressed up in costumes , lots of food , smooching and making out ... and little girls making fun of B.J. Novak . "

In her weekly blog for TV Guide , actress Kate Flannery wrote that " Mindy shares that B.J. Novak talent of being able to write an incredibly funny episode ( " Hot Girl , " " The Injury " ) and be in it . Diwali is the Indian festival of lights . So this week Dunder @-@ Mifflin gets a spicy taste of Indian culture in a hurry . Michael decides the office needs an outing to the local high school for the annual Indian Diwali party . "

= = = Casting = = =

Kaling cast her own mother and father , a doctor and an architect respectively , as the parents of her character . Kaling was proud of their acting , though she admitted that their presence on set was at first " mortifying . " She commented , " Of course I sort of lapsed back into that pre @-@ teen attitude of every single thing my parents do embarrasses me . But they were great about it . They were such pros ? they had all these scenes with Steve Carell and they were completely unafraid . They got along effortlessly . " Kaling injected elements of Romeo and Juliet and Pride and Prejudice into her character 's relationship with Ryan , with her parents attempting to persuade her to date an Indian doctor . She remarked , " Kelly 's family has , like , nine daughters , and if only they could marry them off it would be wonderful . But Kelly is the oldest and most idiotic of them all . "

Though he wanted to avoid becoming an actor , Chandrasekaran was cast by Kaling as the " suitable boy " Kelly 's parents want her to marry . Chandrasekaran later stated , " I asked Mindy to write as few lines as possible . Acting is not a skill that I have particularly a lot of . " Other guest stars included Creed Bratton as Creed Bratton , Charles Esten as Josh Porter , Ed Helms as Andy Bernard , and Rashida Jones as Karen Filippelli . Nancy Carell , Steve Carell 's wife , reprised her role as Carol Stills , the girlfriend of his character .

= = = Deleted scenes = = =

The third season DVD contained a number of deleted scenes , including Angela complaining about attending the Diwali party , Michael hoping that the office does not embarrass themselves , Kelly explaining that Diwali is an " Indian Halloween " to Michael , an initially angry Jan being supportive about the office attending the festival , Michael explaining to the office that Ben Kingsley liberated India and then became an actor , Carol meeting Ryan and Dwight , and Angela leaving the party with Dwight .

## = = Reception = =

" Diwali " first aired on November 2 , 2006 in the United States on NBC during November sweeps week . According to Nielsen Media Research , an estimated 8 @. @ 8 million viewers watched the episode , and it earned a 4 @. @ 2 / 10 ratings share among adults aged 18 to 49 . In other words , it was seen by 4 @. @ 2 percent of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds , and 10 percent of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This was the series ' highest rating since the season premiere . The episode also ranked first in its timeslot among both adults and men aged 18 to 34 .

" Diwali " received generally positive reviews from television critics . Entertainment Weekly columnist Abby West thought the episode " hit all the show 's major buttons , " focusing on Michael while also furthering the Jim / Karen and Pam / Roy storylines as well as showcasing the other characters . West added that " Kaling gets what makes the show work , and she pulled it together while displaying great timing . " AOL TV 's Michael Sciannamea considered the episode " a classic , " though he thought that " the Stamford scenes don 't seem to add much to the story other than the burgeoning flirtation between Jim and Karen . " Sciannamea concluded that it was " a terrific episode . The scenes inside the hall were hysterical , especially the dancing . "

Brian Zoromski of IGN rated " Diwali " 9 @. @ 3 out of 10 , an indication of an " amazing " episode . He wrote that " Michael completely stole the episode with a truly dizzying number of uncomfortable situations . Daily Show vet Steve Carell has become the king of the uncomfortable moment , throwing himself completely into situations viewers know won 't end well . " Like West , Zoromski also appreciated the other characters ' moments , such as Angela 's " xenophobic " comments during the festivities . Television Without Pity gave the episode an A grade .

## = = Cultural impact = =

As a result of this episode , The Office became the first American comedy series to depict the Diwali holiday . Lauren Markoe of The Huffington Post has credited the episode with helping to introduce Diwali to the American public , writing that it " represents perhaps the brightest spotlight ever shone on Diwali in the United States . " In their 2012 book Diversity in U.S. Mass Media , Catherine A. Luther , Carolyn Ringer Lepre , and Naeemah Clark noted that " Diwali " " introduces the audience to Indian dancing and singing , a tradition rarely seen on television . "