

= Sexual Harassment ( The Office ) =

" Sexual Harassment " is the second episode of the second season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's eighth episode overall . The episode was written by B. J. Novak and directed by Ken Kwapis . The episode first aired in the United States on September 27 , 2005 on NBC . " Sexual Harassment " introduced the character of Todd Packer , played by David Koechner , who would become a recurring character on the series .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In this episode , Michael Scott ( Steve Carell ) is concerned when he believes Dunder Mifflin is targeting him for sexual harassment training . Meanwhile , Pam Beesly ( Jenna Fischer ) anxiously awaits the arrival of her mother , and Michael 's obnoxious friend Todd Packer ( David Koechner ) spends the day in the office .

Novak was inspired to write the episode after attending an NBC sexual harassment seminar that the cast and crew had to attend before the series began . Many jokes and personal experiences involving sexual harassment were added into the script . This episode aired with a warning that it contained adult content and subject matter , which is rare for a network comedy . Novak explained that he had to fight NBC to get the word " boner " on the air . One station refused to air the episode due to the language . " Sexual Harassment " received moderately positive reviews from television critics . The episode was viewed by 7 @. @ 13 million viewers .

= = Plot = =

Michael Scott 's ( Steve Carell ) " best friend forever " Todd Packer ( David Koechner ) offends the staff with crude gossip about an upper management scandal . Toby Flenderson ( Paul Lieberstein ) informs Michael that he will conduct a review of the company 's sexual harassment policies because the CFO resigned after allegations made by his secretary . Michael 's indignation that this will put a damper on his easygoing office environment rises to outrage when he learns that the corporate headquarters is sending down a lawyer to talk to him . Michael and the warehouse staff mock the sexual harassment video , but the crude remarks come to a screeching halt when Jan Levinson ( Melora Hardin ) and the lawyer arrive from Corporate .

While Michael angrily announces that he can no longer be friends with his staff and that he will never tell another joke again , Jim Halpert ( John Krasinski ) goads Michael into breaking his vow immediately , to the approval of Packer . Michael 's attitude suddenly changes when he realizes that he is not in trouble , and that the lawyer 's job is to protect him . After Packer tells a crude joke at the expense of Phyllis , Michael defends her , telling the entire office that he finds Phyllis attractive and that the only thing he worries about when he 's near her " is getting a boner " .

Meanwhile , Pam Beesly ( Jenna Fischer ) waits with anticipation for her mother ( Shannon Cochran ) to arrive from out of town . Pam 's mother arrives and asks in whispers ( shushed by an embarrassed Pam ) , " Which one is Jim ? " Michael stops Packer when he tries to share another inappropriate joke and concludes with his misguided thoughts on sexual harassment .

= = Production = =

" Sexual Harassment " was written by B. J. Novak , who also acts on the show as Ryan Howard . The episode was the third entry of the series directed by Ken Kwapis . Kwapis had previously directed " Pilot " and " Diversity Day " . The inspiration for the episode was the NBC sexual harassment seminar that the cast and crew had to attend before the series began . Having both worked in office environments prior to filming The Office , Jenna Fischer and Angela Kinsey both noted that on the days of sexual harassment seminars , they would be harassed by their co @-@ workers as a joke . This experience was added to the script for the episode . " Sexual Harassment " introduces Michael 's catchphrase " That 's what she said , " which writer B. J. Novak says was something he heard repeated in college . The " What has two thumbs and X ? This guy " joke also comes from Novak 's college days . Jenna Fischer later revealed that a good majority of Dwight 's

exchange with Toby about female anatomy was improvised .

When it came time to cast Todd Packer , the crew 's first choice was David Koechner , who had starred alongside Carell in the hit 2004 comedy movie Anchorman : The Legend of Ron Burgundy . Production for the episode had to be delayed so that Koechner could be secured for the part . Novak noted that Koechner was one of the few actors who was " talented enough to make Steve Carell break up on set " , a feat that he notes was " worth " the delays .

When deciding what car Packer would own , writer B. J. Novak wanted to use a Mustang , but none were available . Producer Kent Zbornak decided to get Packer a red Chevrolet Corvette , which Novak now admits is " even better " . This episode aired with a warning that it contained adult content and subject matter , which is rare for a network comedy . Novak explained that he had to fight NBC to get the word " boner " on the air because the replacement " schwing " didn 't have , according to Novak , " the same redemption for Michael at the end . " The disclaimer was a compromise . A station in Kentucky nevertheless refused to air this episode . Pam 's mother was played by Shannon Cochran in this episode of the series , in the first appearance of the character at this point in the show . Cochran was unable to return to play the character for the season six episode " Niagara " , due to scheduling conflicts with a year @-@ long theater contract , and was thus replaced by Linda Purl .

= = Cultural references = =

Michael forwards Jim a joke chain @-@ email entitled " Fifty Signs Your Priest Might Be Michael Jackson " . Michael later compares the members of the office to the cast of Friends , saying that he is both Chandler Bing and Joey Tribbiani and Pam is Rachel Green . He claims that Dwight is Cosmo Kramer , failing to realize that he is a character in the sitcom Seinfeld and not Friends . Todd Packer 's license plate reads " WLHUNG " , a reference to a large penis , but Ryan interprets it to mean he is a fan of singer William Hung . Darryl asks whether Michael got his pants at " Queers R Us " , a reference to Toys R Us . The episode is the first to feature what would become Michael 's catchphrase : " That 's what she said . "

= = Reception = =

" Sexual Harassment " originally aired on NBC in the United States on September 27 , 2005 . The episode was viewed by 7 @. @ 13 million viewers . The episode ranked as the sixty @-@ third most @-@ watched episode of television for the week it aired . An encore presentation of the episode , on May 31 , 2006 , received 2 @. @ 2 rating / 6 % share and retained 100 % of its lead @-@ in viewership from My Name is Earl among 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds . The encore presentation was viewed by over 4 @. @ 5 million viewers .

" Sexual Harassment " received moderately positive reviews from critics . Michael Sciannamea of TV Squad wrote that the episode " was OK , nothing great . " Sciannamea went on to explain that the " subject was funny , but I thought the writers were trying too hard to push the envelope " , making the episode " uneven " . " Miss Alli " of Television Without Pity gave the episode a " B + " grade . Erik Adams of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B ? " and called it " a slightly above average episode " , but that its greatest success was its ability to reach " some of its greatest heights on a moment @-@ by @-@ moment basis " , similar in style to vignettes . Adams was slightly critical of the main plot , noting that the show had " difficulty maintaining the comedic momentum " , but he reasoned that this was probably largely due to " Michael @-@ on @-@ defense " being a " difficult character to write " , because " there aren 't many good ways of displaying his humanity while he 's also fighting for the right to be an asshole . "

TV Fanatic reviewed several quotes from " Sexual Harassment " , and rated several of Todd Packer 's lewd jokes , as well as Michael 's " You wouldn 't arrest a guy who was just passing drugs from one guy to another " monologue 5 out of 5 . Entertainment Weekly named Michael Scott 's line , " Toby is in HR , which technically means he works for corporate . So he 's really not a part of our family . Also , he 's divorced , so he 's really not a part of his family , " one of " TV 's funniest lines "

for the week ending October 3 , 2005 . Dan Phillips from IGN named " Michael 's Boner " the tenth most awkward moment of the show , noting that , " The camera holds the others ' reactions just long enough to drive home the awkwardness of the scene , making you want to crawl inside of a hole along with the rest of the cast . "