

= Smoke Gets in Your Eyes (Homicide : Life on the Street) =

" Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " is the eighth episode of the first season of the American police drama television series Homicide : Life on the Street . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on March 24 , 1993 . In the episode , Howard and Bayliss attempt to quit smoking , Gee discovers secret asbestos removal in the squad room , and Munch and Bolander investigate the beating death of a 14 @-@ year @-@ old boy . The episode was written by James Yoshimura and Tom Fontana , and was directed by Wayne Ewing , who doubled as director of photography .

The episode featured a cameo appearance by film director and Baltimore native John Waters as a bartender . " Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " was originally supposed to be the first season finale , but the episode " Night of the Dead Living " was moved to the end of the season because NBC programmers felt it was too slow @-@ paced to show any earlier in the season . During one scene , Munch and Bolander convince a suspect the copy machine is a dangerous lie @-@ detector machine . This was inspired by a real @-@ life trick used by the Baltimore Police Department and documented in David Simon 's 1991 non @-@ fiction book Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets , on which the series was based . It was later used in an episode of Simon 's police drama series , The Wire .

Since ratings for Homicide had gradually declined throughout the season , NBC announced a decision about whether the series would be renewed would depend on the Nielsen ratings of the final four episodes , including " Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " . Nevertheless , it was seen by 7 @.@ 08 million household viewers , which was considered relatively low , although it was an improvement over the previous episode " And the Rockets ' Dead Glare " .

= = Plot summary = =

Howard (Melissa Leo) quits smoking , and her partner Felton (Daniel Baldwin) fears her edginess will endanger his safety . Bayliss (Kyle Secor) also tries to quit smoking , but tries to live vicariously through his smoking partner Pembleton (Andre Braugher) . Howard and Bayliss petition Gee (Yaphet Kotto) to set up a non @-@ smoking section for the squad room , but an amused Gee refuses because most of the detectives smoke . Howard , Felton , Bayliss and Pembleton find they share a common suspect in a Union Square murder , and plan a joint stakeout . Howard and Bayliss decide to ride together so Pembleton and Felton can smoke in the car . Although outwardly critical and skeptical , Pembleton and Felton are actually impressed with their partners ' willpower and discuss the merits of quitting smoking . Howard and Bayliss , however , talk about nothing but smoking , prompting Bayliss to walk to Pembleton 's car window and ask for a cigarette . As the result , the four detectives almost miss the suspect , and have to engage him in a foot chase to arrest him .

Meanwhile , an intrusive public works inspector (Carter Jahncke) tests the air quality at the squad room , but insists to an inquisitive Gee that everything is fine . The next day , however , Gee goes upstairs and finds a team wearing protective respirator suits removing hazardous asbestos from the wall . Gee angrily confronts Captain Barnfather (Clayton LeBouef) and Colonel Granger (Gerald F. Gough) for not informing the detectives about the work , and demands it be stopped until precautionary medical checks can be conducted . Barnfather and Granger insist the removal work is safe , but give in when Gee threatens to go to the media . Meanwhile , Lewis (Clark Johnson) brags repeatedly to Crosetti (Jon Polito) about his new Ford FE V8 engine and the car he plans to build . Crosetti feigns disinterest , but the next day presents Lewis with a rear @-@ view mirror as a gift .

Munch (Richard Belzer) and Bolander (Ned Beatty) investigate the death of a 14 @-@ year @-@ old boy found dead in a hospital waiting room . The victim , Percy Howell , appeared to suffer sustained blows to the head from a blunt object but waited days before seeking treatment . Although initially suspicious of the boy 's cold and uncaring father (Dan Moran) , a devout Christian who makes antisemitic remarks at Munch , the detectives eventually question another teen (Gavin Goren) who spent time with Howell right before he died . After convincing the gullible teen that the

copy machine was actually an " electrolyte neutron magnetic scanner " that could detect lies , they learn Howell was killed by Colin Dietz (Joe Fersedi) , the teenage leader of a gang called the Zaps , with a baseball bat . Munch and Bolander arrest Dietz , who says he loved Howell like a brother and the beating was an initiation . Bolander is deeply disturbed by Dietz 's cold casualness in discussing the murder . Later , Bolander talks to a bartender (John Waters) about his divorce , and the episode ends with Bolander drinking alone at the bar , quietly singing an Elvis Presley song .

= = Production = =

" Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " was written by James Yoshimura based on a story by executive producer Tom Fontana , and was directed by Wayne Ewing , who doubled as director of photography . The title of the episode refers both to Bayliss and Howard seeking to quit smoking , and to the hazardous asbestos being removed from the squad room . The episode includes a cameo appearance by film director John Waters , who plays a bartender speaking with Bolander in the final scene . Waters , a Baltimore native who develops and sets most of his films in the city , would make another guest appearance in the third season episode , " Law & Disorder " in a different cameo role .

" Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " was originally supposed to be the Homicide : Life on the Street first season finale , but the episode " Night of the Dead Living " was moved to the end of the season . Although originally scheduled as the third episode , NBC programmers were worried " Night of the Dead Living " , which takes place entirely within the detective 's squad room , was too slow @-@ paced for a series still trying to win viewers . Although Homicide producers felt " Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " had a sense of resolving storylines , NBC executives believed it was too somber and preferred the ending of " Night of the Dead Living " , which ends with the detectives happily smiling and laughing .

During one scene in " Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " , Munch and Bolander force a suspect to take a " electrolyte neutron magnetic scan test " , which involved placing his hand on a copy machine and photocopying his hand as they asked him questions . Prior to giving the exam , the detectives loaded papers with the words " True " and " False " into the machine , so when the final copies came out it appeared the machine was giving answers to the questions . The detectives pretended the test was radioactive and dangerous to further make the suspect nervous . This scene was based on a real @-@ life trick used by Baltimore Police Department detectives in 1988 . The real @-@ life instance was featured in Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets , the 1991 David Simon non @-@ fiction book about a Baltimore Police Department , which was adapted into the Homicide series . This hoax was also used in " More with Less " , the fifth season premiere episode of David Simon 's later police drama series , The Wire .

= = Release and reception = =

Ratings for Homicide : Life on the Street gradually declined since the series first premiered . In response , NBC announced to fans that a decision about whether Homicide would be renewed or canceled would depend on how the last four episodes of the season fared in the ratings , including " Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " . In its original American broadcast on March 24 , 1993 , the episode was watched by 7 @. @ 08 million households , according to Nielsen Media Research , earning the episode a 7 @. @ 6 rating . This constituted a slight increase in viewership compared to the previous week 's episode , " And the Rockets ' Dead Glare " , which was seen by 6 @. @ 61 million viewers and received a 7 @. @ 1 rating . Homicide ranked low in the Nielsen ratings compared to other shows the week of " Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " , ranking 77th for the week of March 15 to 21 , with the CBS news magazine series 60 Minutes ranking number one with 21 @. @ 9 million household viewers .

" Smoke Gets in Your Eyes " and the rest of the first and second season episodes were included in the four @-@ DVD box @-@ set " Homicide : Life on the Street : The Complete Seasons 1 & 2 " , which was released by A & E Home Video on May 27 , 2003 .

