

= The Target (The Office) =

" The Target " is the eighth episode of the ninth season of the American comedy television series The Office and the 184th episode overall . The episode originally aired on NBC on November 29 , 2012 . It features guest star Chris Gethard as Trevor .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In the episode , Angela Lipton (Angela Kinsey) goes to Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) for help when she learns that her husband is having an affair . Stanley Hudson (Leslie David Baker) and Phyllis Vance (Phyllis Smith) take advantage of Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) when he needs a favor , and Pete (Jake Lacy) distracts Pam Halpert (Jenna Fischer) as she begins painting her mural .

" The Target " received positive reviews from critics , with many commenting on Nunez and Kinsey 's performances . The episode was viewed by 3 @.@ 88 million viewers and received 1 @.@ 9 / 5 rating among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 , ranking fourth in its timeslot . The episode , however , ultimately ranked as the highest @-@ rated NBC series of the night .

= = Plot = =

Oscar Martinez (Oscar Nunez) believes that Angela Lipton (Angela Kinsey) does not know about his affair with her husband , but in fact she is playing dumb in order to keep Oscar off his guard while she makes arrangements to have him killed . She goes to Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) for help , without telling him the details , and he calls a fellow former volunteer sheriff 's deputy named Trevor (Chris Gethard) for assistance . After Trevor shows his credentials , Angela says she wants the target murdered , which Dwight protests is too extreme , so they compromise to breaking the target 's kneecaps . Dwight realizes the target is Oscar when Angela angrily crushes a cookie given to her by Oscar . Dwight tries to get Angela to reconsider , but Trevor has already arrived to carry out the job . Dwight rushes to get Oscar out . They run into Trevor outside . A struggle between the three men ensues , with Oscar ultimately managing to take away Trevor 's lead pipe . When Trevor runs away , Oscar and Dwight are confronted by Angela , who blames Oscar for turning her husband gay . Oscar says that he was always gay , and refuses to hand the lead pipe over to Angela . She kicks him in the shin instead . Upset that they don 't understand homosexuality , Dwight and Angela go to Toby Flenderson (Paul Lieberstein) , who is confounded by their outlandish questions over homosexual activity .

Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) asks Dunder Mifflin CEO David Wallace (Andy Buckley) if he can work part @-@ time so he can go to Philadelphia to help with his sports marketing job . David Wallace says that he might be needed in the office if there 's a crisis with one of his clients , to which he responds that Stanley Hudson (Leslie David Baker) and Phyllis Vance (Phyllis Smith) have agreed to cover for him , though he in fact hasn 't asked them yet . Stanley and Phyllis respond with their usual disinterest in helping others , so Jim offers to treat them to lunch . Stanley and Phyllis order extra side dishes and help themselves to an excess of wine , annoying Jim with drunken behavior and silencing him whenever he brings up the subject of their covering for him . When they arrive back at the office , a drunk Stanley and Phyllis are seemingly passed out in Jim 's backseat . When Jim puts his coat on them to keep them warm , Phyllis and Stanley say they will cover for him as they care for Jim and his family , laughing as they reveal they were only pranking him . Jim gives both of them a hug .

Pam Halpert (Jenna Fischer) decides to start painting her mural in the warehouse , but has a hard time getting started as she is afraid of it not being perfect . Meanwhile , bored with having to fill out customer complaint cards (which he finds redundant because the complaints are already in the computer) , Pete (Jake Lacy) uses them to build a card tower in the annex with other employees . The card tower takes on a deeper meaning for the employees when Pete points out that it is composed of failures made by every one of them (excepting only Pam) , and thus proves that they should not be ashamed of their failures . They decide to try to make it go all the way to the ceiling , but end up one complaint card short . Not wanting to use a blank card as it would defy the point of

the tower , Pam offers to complete the tower by getting her first customer complaint . She calls one of their smaller clients , delivers a yo mama joke , and hangs up . The client , whose mother was actually obese and is now deceased , drops Dunder Mifflin as their paper supplier , leaving them simultaneously excited over getting that last complaint and disappointed over losing a client . After celebrating the completion of the card tower , Pam finally starts painting the mural , saying artists should not care too much in what others think , further asserting this by telling off Hide (Hidetoshi Imura) when he insults her artwork .

= = Production = =

" The Target " was written by producer Graham Wagner , marking his debut writing credit for the series after joining the writing staff in the ninth season . It was directed by executive producer Brent Forrester , his fourth directing credit for the series and first since the eighth season episode , " Test the Store " . Ed Helms and Clark Duke did not appear in the episode . This is due to the fact that they were both written out of several episodes of the season in order to film *The Hangover Part III* and *Kick @-@ Ass 2* , respectively .

The official website of *The Office* included several cut scenes from " The Target " within a week of the episode 's release . In the first 58 @-@ second clip , Pam feels further pressure over her mural and reveals that several of the warehouse workers think her name is Pat . In the second 60 @-@ second clip , The Senator comes by the office , Jim pretends to beg to Stanley and Phyllis while they are sleeping , and Pam talks more about her mural . In the third 66 @-@ second clip , Angela checks out Trevor 's qualifications .

= = Cultural references = =

Dwight assures Angela that she is not stupid , rather " Jazz is stupid . " Angela concurs , saying : " Just play the right notes ! " " The Target " features several meta @-@ references and references to previous episodes . Dwight tells Angela and Trevor that " this documentary crew has been following our every move for the past nine years but I don 't see them so I think we 're good " , when they are in Trevor 's van . Angela and Dwight question Toby about the tendencies of homosexuals in a way similar to how Dwight questions Toby about the appearance of female genitalia in the second season episode " Sexual Harassment " . While working on her mural , Pam is seen wearing a Pratt Institute hoodie , which she attended for three months during the fifth season . Angela tells Dwight to meet up in the " usual place " , which Dwight shows up to nude , referencing their previous secretive relationship .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" The Target " originally aired on NBC on November 29 , 2012 . In its original American broadcast , the episode was viewed by 3 @. @ 88 million viewers and received a 1 @. @ 9 rating / 5 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 1 @. @ 9 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 5 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This made " The Target " the lowest rated episode of the series , tying with " Here Comes Treble " . The episode also ranks as the least @-@ viewed episode of the series and the first one to fall below the 4 @-@ million viewer mark . Despite this , *The Office* was the highest @-@ rated NBC television program . When DVR ratings were taken into account , the episode was viewed by 6 @. @ 047 million viewers , a 56 percent increase .

= = = Reviews = = =

" The Target " received mostly positive reviews from critics , with many praising the performances of Oscar Nunez and Angela Kinsey . The A.V. Club reviewer Erik Adams wrote that the episode was a perfect mix , between the more subtle , realistic style of the early seasons , and the more @-@ farcical style of the most recent seasons . He named the Oscar @-@ Angela plotline a " season highlight " , and complimented Angela Kinsey 's commitment to Angela throughout the plotline . He also praised the other storylines of the episode for showing the family @-@ like bond between the whole ensemble . He ultimately gave the episode an " A ? " . Cindy White of IGN commented that the episode proved the series did not need a character in the role of the boss . She complimented the confrontation between Oscar and Angela and the Pam subplot for marking some " development " in her character , but criticized the Jim @-@ Stanley @-@ Phyllis subplot for being " over the top " . She ultimately gave the episode an 8 @. @ 0 / 10 . Paste writer Bonnie Stiernberg called the episode " strong " , and compared it to the older episodes . She praised the Oscar @-@ Angela plotline , calling it Oscar Nunez and Kinsey 's best performance of the year . She also complimented the Jim @-@ Stanley @-@ Phyllis subplot , calling the ending to it sweet , and the Pam @-@ Pete @-@ Erin subplot , calling it " more complex @-@ but no less enjoyable " and praised the development of Pam 's character , considering it to be " touching " . Stiernberg ultimately gave the episode an 8 @. @ 6 / 10 .

Michael Tedder of New York praised the writers work and for giving " nice character moments " to the cast , particularly Kinsey . He also praised them for giving Kinsey " more to work with " , comparing her role in previous episodes which featured her character being " exaggerated to cartoon levels for the sake of a laugh " . ScreenCrush reviewer Damon Houx was slightly more critical with his review , writing that while the cast was quite good , the episode was too struggled with " find [ing] stuff for everyone to do " , and that the Pete @-@ Erin @-@ Pam and Jim @-@ Stanley @-@ Phyllis subplots " ultimately have nowhere interesting to go " . Multiple critics noted similarities between the style of this episode with the early seasons of the series , particularly for its use of callbacks .