

= The Dundies =

" The Dundies " is the first episode of the second season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's seventh episode overall . Written by Mindy Kaling and directed by Greg Daniels , who is also a producer for the show , the episode originally aired in the United States on September 20 , 2005 on NBC .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In the episode , Michael Scott (Steve Carell) hosts " The Dundies " , the annual awards show in which he presents awards to various members of the office . But the night does not turn out as he plans , and Michael ends up angering or humiliating the majority of the office staff . Meanwhile , after Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) argues with her fiancé and becomes obviously intoxicated , she kisses Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) .

" The Dundies " was the second episode of the series directed by Greg Daniels . Many of the scenes at the Chili 's had to be changed so the restaurant would allow filming , most notably the scenes where Pam falls over . " The Dundies " was viewed by an estimated 9 @. @ 0 million viewers and received a 4 @. @ 3 / 10 % rating share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 , making it the highest episode of the series to air at that time , since the show 's pilot . The episode received positive reviews from critics .

= = Plot = =

Michael Scott (Steve Carell) is the only person who looks forward to " The Dundies " , his annual awards show at the local Chili 's restaurant . Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) tries to dissuade Michael from once again awarding Pam Beesly (Jenna Fischer) the " World 's Longest Engagement " award . Meanwhile , Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) learns that there is graffiti about Michael on the ladies ' room wall , and his attempts to investigate are embarrassingly unsuccessful .

At the awards show , Michael 's performance as MC falls flat . Ryan Howard (B.J. Novak) is embarrassed when Michael awards him " Hottest in the Office " . Pam 's fiancé Roy Anderson (David Denman) and Darryl Philbin (Craig Robinson) leave , taking Pam with them . In the parking lot , Roy and Pam argue , and Pam returns alone to the restaurant , where she begins drinking beer and margaritas . Heckled by other customers , Michael decides to end the show , but an intoxicated Pam leads the office in encouraging him to continue . Relieved upon winning the Dundie for " Whitest Sneakers " , Pam gives a drunken acceptance speech and kisses Jim on the lips . This leaves Jim surprised , but happy .

As Jim recaps the Dundies for the camera , Pam stares at Jim with dazed fascination and then falls off her stool , and Dwight springs to her rescue , thinking Pam is having a seizure . He then tries to take off his dress shirt and tie , but a Chili 's employee stops him . After the party is over , Pam runs to the camera and screams " I would just like to say that this was the best Dundies ever ! Whoo ! " . In the parking lot , Pam admits to Jim that it was she who wrote the graffiti . She begins to ask Jim a question , but stops when she notices the camera . A Chili 's employee then talks to the camera and says that Pam apparently was sneaking drinks off of others ' tables , which is against the restaurant 's rules . He then tells the audience that he Xeroxed her driver 's license and she is never welcome at Chili 's again . Jim helps Pam into Angela Martin 's (Angela Kinsey) car and smiles as they leave .

= = Production = =

" The Dundies " was the second episode of the series directed by Greg Daniels . Daniels had previously directed the first season episode " Basketball " . " The Dundies " was written by Mindy Kaling , who also acts for the show as customer service representative Kelly Kapoor . According to Daniels , while he worked on the Fox animated series King of the Hill , the show would have an annual Dundies @-@ type event called the " Swampy Awards " . He previously considered using the plot from this episode for the pilot , but decided it was a " very risky thing to do " and decided to

make the pilot a direct adaption of the first episode of the British version . Following the mixed reaction towards the first season , the writers attempted to make the series more " optimistic " and make Michael more likable . They also established the supporting characters of the series more , giving them actual personalities , and the producers also made the lights to the office brighter , which allowed the series to differentiate itself from the British version .

The episode was filmed at a former Chili 's in the San Fernando Valley , in the city of Burbank . The episode was filmed " from dawn , until very late at night " , according to Kaling . During filming breaks , Kaling later joked that she took " ladylike " naps , while Paul Lieberstein made notes on the episode and its script . While filming , many parts of the script were changed so the restaurant would allow the shoot to continue . For instance , in the original script , Pam vomits at Chili 's and Dwight responds , " A woman has vomited ! " Because the completed script was not available for Chili 's to review until shooting had already started , when they were finally given a chance to read it , they objected to a customer vomiting in their restaurant . Chili 's withdrew its permission to shoot , but , after a few hours , Steve Carell developed a compromise : Pam would fall off her bar stool and Dwight would respond , " A woman has had a seizure ! " In original version , Pam was also to be over @-@ served alcohol by the Chili 's staff , but Chili 's ? feeling that this would reflect poorly on their character as a company ? did not want this in the episode either . To solve this issue , the writers had Pam steal drinks off other tables . The writers and producers also agreed to include a scene in which the actual owner of the Chili 's restaurant (Jon Bosshart , not an actor) makes it clear that the restaurant does not over @-@ serve alcohol to its customers . Since Jenna Fischer does not drink much in real life , B. J. Novak took her out so she could get drunk while Novak described to her how she was behaving and how it did not match her own perception . She drew upon this experience for her performance .

= = Cultural references = =

Michael calls Jim " Fat Halpert " , using a voice reminiscent of the cartoon character Fat Albert . During the " Last Year 's Dundies " video , Michael awards Oscar the " Show Me the Money " award , a reference to the 1996 movie Jerry Maguire . Dwight later plays a recorder version of Lou Bega 's 1999 cover of " Mambo No. 5 " while Michael sings parody lyrics . During a phone call , Jan makes reference to a " tsunami relief fundraiser which somehow lost a lot of money . " Michael defends his actions , noting that it was a " fun @-@ raiser " , in an attempt to raise the morale of the people in the office following the events of the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami . Michael 's psychic act is a blatant rip @-@ off of Johnny Carson 's Carnac the Magnificent act .

At the Dundies party Michael sings various song parodies , including spoofs of Naughty by Nature 's 1991 hit " O.P.P. " , Elton John 's 1971 hit " Tiny Dancer " , and Hot Chocolate 's 1975 single " You Sexy Thing " during the " Hottest in the Office " award . Originally , a parody of Eminem 's 2002 hit " Lose Yourself " was slated to be featured in the episode , but was axed when Eminem refused to allow permission . In the background of one scene , Michael is seen singing the 1987 song " (I 've Had) The Time of My Life " , by Bill Medley and Jennifer Warnes . The final scene in the episode features " Tiny Dancer " playing over the actual footage of the show .

= = Release and reception = =

" The Dundies " originally aired on NBC in the United States on September 20 , 2005 . In its original American broadcast , the episode received a 4 @. @ 3 / 10 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 2 @. @ 4 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 6 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . The episode was seen by 9 @. @ 0 million viewers , making it the highest @-@ rated episode of the series at the time , sans the show 's pilot episode .

" The Dundies " represented a turning point in the series , in which the show found its own tone and differentiated itself from the British version . It received critical acclaim unlike the first season . In its " The Top 10 Moments from The Office " , IGN ranked Pam 's drunken scene at Chili 's as number

five . Michael Sciannamea of TV Squad stated that " This season 's first episode showed a marked improvement over the final episode from last season " , and went on to praise the episode 's expansion of supporting characters as one of the main reasons for the improvement . In a Flashback review , Travis Fickett of IGN complimented the episode for creating the personalities of the supporting characters and for the workers affection towards Michael in the episode . He also praised the Jim and Pam moments in the episode . He ultimately gave the episode a 9 @ . @ 0 / 10 . Seb Patrick of Noise to Signal , while comparing the American version of The Office favorably to its UK counterpart , writes that the series " could be finding its feet again over the course of its opening couple of episodes . "

Jacob Clifton from Television Without Pity gave the episode an A rating . Erik Adams of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B " , citing the scene wherein Pam and Jim both convince Michael to continue on with the Dundies celebration , noting that " they ? re clapping and chanting for Michael Scott , human being , and that ? s incredibly important for the episodes that will follow " . However , he felt that the episode 's reputation was slightly inflated by its success , and that the episode , while good , is merely just a start for the success that would follow it .