

= Don Geiss , America and Hope =

" Don Geiss , America , and Hope " is the fifteenth episode of the fourth season of the American television comedy series 30 Rock , and the 73rd overall episode of the series . It was directed by Stephen Lee Davis , and written by Jack Burditt and Tracey Wigfield . The episode originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) network in the United States on March 18 , 2010 . Guest stars in " Don Geiss , America and Hope " include John Anderson , Scott Bryce , Marceline Hugot , James Rebhorn , and Michael Sheen .

In the episode , Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) attempts to avoid running into Wesley Snipes (Sheen) after they fail to hit it off in their first encounter , but fate seems to want them together . At the same time , Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) deals with the impending purchase of NBC . Finally , Tracy Jordan (Tracy Morgan) does damage control after his former nanny publishes a tell @-@ all book .

The episode continued a story arc involving Wesley as a love interest for Liz , which began in the previous episode . " Don Geiss , America and Hope " makes reference to the real @-@ life acquisition of NBC Universal by cable company Comcast , as well as that of professional golfer Tiger Woods ' extramarital affairs scandal .

This episode of 30 Rock has received generally positive reviews from television critics . According to the Nielsen Media Research , it was watched by 6 @.@ 857 million households during its original broadcast , and received a 3 @.@ 0 rating / 9 share among viewers in the 18 ? 49 demographic . For his performance in " Don Geiss , America and Hope " , Alec Baldwin received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination in the category for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series .

= = Plot = =

Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) , outgoing Vice President of East Coast Television and Microwave Oven Programming for General Electric (GE) , researches company Kabletown (which recently purchased the NBC network as a charitable , tax @-@ deductible act) , to find a way he can contribute in the corporation 's development . NBC page Kenneth Parcell (Jack McBrayer) lets it slip that he may have been living forever , when he shows concern that Kabletown may impose new rules for " age limits and age verification " for pages . A former colleague , Dave Hess (Scott Bryce) , who left NBC for Kabletown , reveals that Kabletown 's success comes from running pay @-@ per @-@ view adult channels ; the company runs " the perfect business " and needs no investment in new services or products . On learning this , Jack is horrified at the prospect of no longer making things . Later , however , while giving a eulogy at former GE CEO Don Geiss 's (Rip Torn) funeral , he has an epiphany and proposes to Kabletown executives that they produce " porn for women " (specifically , channels featuring attractive men who " listen " while women blather on) .

Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) tries to avoid meeting with Wesley (Michael Sheen) , the British man she met and flirted with while under the influence of anesthesia . Liz finds him to be annoying , but they continually run into each other , which leads them to believe they are meant to be together . However , after visiting the dentist office where they met , Liz and Wesley come to terms with the fact that the anesthesia was the cause of whatever they experienced , and agree to stop seeing each other . But when they run into each other yet again , Wesley suggests that they should probably just " settle " for one another . Liz is horrified at this prospect and consults Jack for advice , but he is still disconsolate at the prospect of " settling " for a company without upward momentum , and cannot help her . Later , Liz meets Wesley to tell him her answer is no , and she believes both of them can do better than being with each other ; she is further dismayed to learn he shares his name with actor Wesley Snipes .

Meanwhile , Tracy Jordan 's (Tracy Morgan) nanny publishes a tell @-@ all book , revealing that he has never actually had an affair with anyone , a secret he had shared only with Jack in " The Ones " . In order to restore his womanizing persona , Tracy holds a press conference announcing he is leaving show business to spend more time with a stripper , but no one is convinced . To make matters worse , women begin to come forward and admit that they did not have sex with Tracy . His wife Angie even advises him to have an affair in order to save his career , a suggestion which Jenna

Maroney (Jane Krakowski) urges him to take seriously . Tracy attempts to proposition Liz , but is unable to pretend he wants to cheat on his wife . Liz rebuffs Tracy 's advances , admitting she envies his happy marriage and urging him to embrace his monogamy .

At the end of the episode , Liz is seen watching and being intrigued by some of the " porn for women " content , which somehow features her fantasy boyfriend Astronaut Mike Dexter .

= = Production = =

" Don Geiss , America and Hope " was directed by series first assistant director Stephen Lee Davis , and written by Jack Burditt and Tracey Wigfield . This was Burditt 's first written episode for the season , as he had moved to Los Angeles , California , to become a staff writer on the CBS comedy show The New Adventures of Old Christine . Overall , this was Burditt 's twelfth writing credit . This was Wigfield 's third writing credit , and was Davis 's first directed episode . " Don Geiss , America and Hope " originally aired in the United States on March 18 , 2010 , on NBC as the fifteenth episode of the show 's fourth season and the 73rd overall episode of the series . This episode of 30 Rock was filmed on January 25 and January 27 , 2010 .

In January 2010 , it was announced that Welsh actor Michael Sheen would guest star as a love interest for series creator Tina Fey 's character , Liz Lemon . He made his debut as Wesley in the previous episode , " Future Husband " . Actor Scott Bryce guest starred as Dave Hess , a former colleague of Jack Donaghy 's . Bryce first appeared in the season three episode " Flu Shot " as a different character named Michael Templeton . Actress Marceline Hugot made her ninth appearance as Kathy Geiss , the daughter of GE CEO Don Geiss . In the episode , Kathy performs the song " Ave Maria " with a trumpet at her father 's funeral . Dr. Kaplan was played by actor James Rebhorn , who first guest starred as the character in " Future Husband " . At the end of " Don Geiss , America and Hope " , where Liz is shown watching one of the " porn for women " channels , the man depicted as speaking to her was portrayed by actor John Anderson , who has guest starred previously on the show as Astronaut Mike Dexter . At the end of the credits , Anderson is credited as Astronaut Mike Dexter . Jack learns from former GE CEO Jack Welch , in the last episode , that current GE CEO Don Geiss (Rip Torn) has died . In " Don Geiss , America and Hope " , a funeral service is held for Geiss . Television critic Bob Sassone of TV Squad , in his recap of this episode , wondered if Torn was written out of the series due to an alcohol @-@ related incident that occurred to Torn in January 2010 .

This episode was inspired by the real @-@ life acquisition of NBC Universal by cable company Comcast in November 2009 . After winning her fourth Screen Actors Guild Award as her 30 Rock character at the 16th Screen Actors Guild Awards ceremony in January 2010 , Fey was asked whether or not the show would make reference to the Comcast acquisition to which she said that it would be dealt with . " The sale of NBC to another company is integral to our show and it will be hard for Jack . " In the episode , Kabletown ? a fictional Philadelphia company network ? has taken over GE Sheinhardt NBC Universal , and Jack tries to contribute his ideas to the company . In April 2010 , the NBC network created a website for the Kabletown company . When asked by a contributor from The Philadelphia Inquirer why the characters on 30 Rock refer to the network 's new owner as " Kabletown , with a K " , co @-@ showrunner and executive producer Robert Carlock revealed that the reason for this was that the staff writers came up with the name " Cabletown " , however , they later learned that there was a real company with a similar name , so NBC 's legal team department " wanted to emphasize the difference , and after a while , everyone just liked the sound of it . "

Tracy Jordan 's storyline in which his former nanny writes a tell @-@ all book revealing that he has never actually had an affair with anyone mirrored ? though in reversal ? the real life of professional golfer Tiger Woods ' extramarital affairs scandal that occurred in late 2009 . In one scene , it is revealed that women have come forward admitting to never have had a sexual relationship with Tracy ; After news broke of Woods 's infidelities , numerous women came forward admitting to having affairs with the golfer . To re @-@ establish his womanizing persona , Tracy holds a press conference announcing he is leaving show business to spend more time with a stripper ; In

December 2009 , Woods announced he would take an indefinite leave from professional golf to focus on his marriage after he admitted infidelity . Other women , who Tracy did not have a relationship with , have released voice mails to the news media . In one of them , Tracy leaves a message to his wife , Angie (Sherri Shepherd) , in which he is loving and sincere in the message ; One of Woods 's mistress produced voice and text messages as evidence of a relationship with the golfer . As a result of him being outed as monogamous , Tracy loses various endorsements ; After admitting to his affairs , Woods lost various endorsement deals with different companies .

= = Cultural references = =

In the beginning of the episode , Jack announces at a staff meeting that NBC has been bought by Kabletown , a company network from Philadelphia . Immediately , Jack and Liz exchange opinions about Philadelphia and Boston ; Liz , who grew up near Philadelphia , declares " Go Eagles ! Philly rules ! Cheesesteaks ! Bobby Clarke ! Will Smith ! [Boston] sucks ! " . Jack , who is from Boston , responds " Boston is the greatest city in the world . Boston Tea Party . Boston cream pie . Boston Rob Mariano . Birthplace of Benjamin Franklin . " Liz interjects " Yeah , then [Franklin] looked around , realized it sucked , and moved to Philadelphia ! " Jack and the New York staff then deride the city of Los Angeles , provoking an NBC executive teleconferencing in from Los Angeles to assert that " LA rules : Michael Bay , freeways , Legoland ? " before Jack shuts off his feed . While meeting with Kabletown executives , Jack learns that they focus on adult films and sees their list of features , including Assatar , The Lovely Boners , The Hind Side , and Fresh @-@ Ass : Based on the Novel Tush by Assfire , puns on the 2009 films Avatar , The Lovely Bones , The Blind Side , and Precious : Based on the Novel " Push " by Sapphire .

Jenna claims to Tracy that she " ate the pig that played Babe , " in a reference to the 1995 film Babe based on the British novel The Sheep @-@ Pig . At Don Geiss 's funeral , the trumpet solo that his daughter Kathy Geiss (Marceline Hugot) performs is Ellens dritter Gesang by Franz Schubert , a melody best known as a setting for the Latin Catholic prayer Ave Maria .

When Liz tells Tracy that he has a life with his family and should enjoy it , after Tracy tries to have sex with her in order to restore his womanizing reputation , she tells him " You know what I have ? A Sims family that keeps getting murdered . " The Sims is a video game in which players create virtual people called " Sims " and places them in houses and helps direct their moods and satisfy their desires . Tracy responds " One day , you will have what I have because you are an amazing , strong , intelligent woman , like Hilary ... from Fresh Prince of Bel @-@ Air . " The Fresh Prince of Bel @-@ Air was a series that previously aired on NBC , and the Hilary character was a dull @-@ witted individual who lacked intelligence . Before going their separate ways , Liz discovers that Wesley 's last name is Snipes , but Wesley tells her that it is a name more fitting for a " pale English guy " , than actor Wesley Snipes . Liz and Wesley also attend a second run of the movie Hot Tub Time Machine , which provokes arguments between them despite their mutual enjoyment of the film .

Star Wars is frequently referenced in 30 Rock , beginning with the pilot episode in 2006 where Tracy is seen shouting that he is a Jedi . Liz admits to being a huge fan of Star Wars , saying that she had watched it many times with Pete Hornberger (Scott Adsit) , and dressed up as the Star Wars character Princess Leia during four recent Halloweens , and while trying to get out of jury duty in Chicago and New York . Star Wars is also referenced when Tracy takes on the identity of the character Chewbacca . In this episode , at Don Geiss 's funeral , he is shown to be frozen in carbonite similar to that of Star Wars character Han Solo in the 1980 film The Empire Strikes Back . Fey , a fan of Star Wars herself , said that the weekly Star Wars joke or reference " started happening organically " when the crew realized that they had a Star Wars reference " in almost every show " . Fey said that from then on " it became a thing where [they] tried to keep it going " , and that even though they could not include one in every episode , they still had a " pretty high batting average " . Fey attributed most of the references to executive producer and writer Robert Carlock , whom she described as " the resident expert " .

= = Reception = =

According to the Nielsen Media Research , " Don Geiss , America and Hope " was watched by 6 @. @ 857 million viewers during its original United States broadcast . The rating was a 3 percent increase in viewership from the previous week 's episode , " Future Husband " , which was seen by 5 @. @ 894 million American viewers . The show claimed a 3 @. @ 0 rating / 9 share among viewers aged 18 to 49 , meaning that 3 @. @ 0 percent of all people in that group , and 9 percent of all people from that group watching television at the time , watched the episode . For his work in this episode , Alec Baldwin received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination in the category for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series at the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards , but lost it to actor Jim Parsons .

Television columnist Alan Sepinwall of The Star @- @ Ledger wrote that despite " Don Geiss , America and Hope " not being " strong " as the last episode it had " many funny moments scattered throughout " that he was satisfied with . He noted that the uncomfortable relationship between Liz and Wesley " worked better " here than previously . Sepinwall said it " was a good story " for Jack 's character , and that it was " nice " to see 30 Rock " fearless about mocking their future Comcast overlords as they are at making fun of NBC " . The A.V. Club 's Nathan Rabin enjoyed Michael Sheen 's return , said that every part of Liz and Wesley 's story was " brilliant " . He observed that Jack 's midlife crisis here was " poignant as well as funny . " Overall , Rabin gave it a B + rating , and concluded " ... it was a rock @- @ solid episode " . Despite enjoying Sheen 's role on the show , Time contributor James Poniewozik confessed he had a problem with his story arc with Tina Fey 's Liz . " I assume that [Sheen] is not going to become a permanent cast member , and so however much I might enjoy parts of this story , I can never forget that this is probably one more relationship that Liz will go through and end up at status quo ante . " Bob Sassone of AOL 's TV Squad was complimentary towards the NBC / Kabletown deal , enjoyed Tracy 's subplot , noting it gave the character " something important to do ... it also shined some new light on the Tracy Morgan character . " Adam Mersel for TV Guide reasoned " I can officially say that almost no episode of 30 Rock falls flat for me , and this one certainly didn 't [...] All in all , this is one of my favorite episodes of the season . " Paste magazine contributor Sean Gandert was favorable to it , noting " I 'm not sure when the last time I thought every plot in a 30 Rock episode was a winner , but ' Don Geiss , Hope and America ' delivered on the exuberant claims of the episode 's title " . Nick Catucci of New York magazine wrote that Jack trying to fit in at Kabletown , along with his suggestion of " porn for women " , was " meh " , Liz dealing with Wesley and Tracy " dealing with the world 's discovery of his fidelity to his wife " were all " quite comfortably situated in the show 's wheelhouse " .

Not all reviews were positive . IGN contributor Robert Canning felt that " Don Geiss , American and Hope " felt " a bit rudderless as well . The main stories eventually crossed over in meaningful ways , but aside from those connections , their direction was a bit weak and unsure . They all had a great bit or two ... but the general feel of the episode was mostly blah . That could likely be the result of the main characters coming off as mostly blah . " In conclusion , Canning gave it a 7 @. @ 5 out of 10 rating . Meredith Blake , a contributor for the Los Angeles Times , was not positive towards Fey and Sheen 's story here , explaining that the premise of the two characters settling for one another " fell flat " and " it just wasn 't as funny as it could have been . "