

= The Coup ( The Office ) =

" The Coup " is the third episode of the third season of the American comedy television series The Office . It first aired on October 5 , 2006 on NBC in the United States .

The series depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In this episode , Jan Levenson ( Melora Hardin ) becomes unimpressed with how Michael Scott ( Steve Carell ) is controlling his branch , so Dwight Schrute ( Rainn Wilson ) tries to take his job and an office power play ensues . Meanwhile , Pam Beesly ( Jenna Fischer ) conducts a lunchtime fashion show , and the Stamford branch plays Call of Duty as a team @-@ building exercise , something Jim Halpert ( John Krasinski ) does not do well in .

The episode was written by co @-@ executive producer Paul Lieberstein and directed by executive producer Greg Daniels . Several cast members noted that the episode contained Shakespearean elements , such as Angela Martin 's similarities with the Macbeth character Lady Macbeth . According to Nielsen Media Research , the episode was viewed by 4 @. @ 1 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 11 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . Critical reception was largely mixed , with several reviewers criticizing Jim 's Stamford storyline .

= = Synopsis = =

Jan ( Melora Hardin ) berates Michael ( Steve Carell ) when she discovers that he calls the entire office into the conference room every Monday to watch a movie . Angela ( Angela Kinsey ) prods Dwight ( Rainn Wilson ) to ask Jan to give him Michael 's job . After her awkward meeting with Dwight , where he declares he can be a better boss than Michael , Jan calls Michael and demands he get his branch under control .

The Stamford branch plays Call of Duty under the guise of a team @-@ building exercise . New to the game , Jim ( John Krasinski ) plays poorly and draws the ire of his teammates . As he leaves for home , Jim pretends to toss a grenade at Karen ( Rashida Jones ) , who responds by creating a pretend explosion with paper clips . Karen longingly watches Jim leave .

Meanwhile , Pam ( Jenna Fischer ) decides to revamp her wardrobe after her separation from Roy and ordered some new clothes . When Pam 's clothes are shipped to the office , Kelly ( Mindy Kaling ) insists that Pam perform a lunchtime fashion show to show off a new blouse . When it draws unwanted attention , Pam concludes that it is too revealing .

Michael leads Dwight to believe that he has been given control of the branch before revealing the ruse . Dwight begs for his job and for Michael 's forgiveness while Angela and the rest of the office watch . Dwight offers to do Michael 's laundry for a year . When it appears that Michael is on the verge of firing Dwight , Michael insists that they " hug it out , bitch . " Dwight quickly returns to being Michael 's loyal right @-@ hand man , but Michael is still resentful , and forces Dwight to stand atop a box in the middle of the office , wearing a sign that says " LIAR " ? and then promise to do Michael 's laundry for a year .

= = Production = =

" The Coup " was written by co @-@ executive producer Paul Lieberstein , who plays series regular Toby Flenderson , and was directed by executive producer and series creator Greg Daniels . Several cast members believed the episode contains Shakespearean themes , in particular elements of the Macbeth character Lady Macbeth in Angela 's storyline . Lady Macbeth was depicted as an ambitious woman who " exerted an evil influence over her husband , " characteristics that fit with Angela attempting to push her lover , Dwight , into power . In her weekly blog for TV Guide , actress Kate Flannery previewed the episode , " Behind every great man is a pushy woman . Or in this case , a pushy , short , judgmental blonde named Angela . It 's the ultimate Adam @-@ and @-@ Eve saga . Angela is about to push the apple in Dwight 's face as she persuades him to

try to take Michael 's place at Dunder @-@ Mifflin [ sic ] . "

In preparation for some episode scenes , Rashida Jones " took some serious Call of Duty " lessons from the writers , as they all play the online game . In the DVD audio commentary , Rainn Wilson stated that he was happy that the series could " have the nuanced stuff and then the really broad stuff " ; he referred specifically to Michael confronting Dwight in this episode as well as to the season 's twenty @-@ third episode " Beach Games " , where " people are running around in inflatable outfits bashing each other . " Also in the audio commentary , Jones suggested that Dwight 's punishment ? being forced to wear a " liar " sign and stand silently on some boxes in the middle of the office ? was reminiscent of the iconic photo of the Abu Ghraib torture and prisoner abuse .

The season three DVD contains a number of deleted scenes that were edited from the episode . These include Creed revealing that he sleeps under his desk four nights a week , Dwight and Angela flirting in the break room after he tries to persuade her to join Movie Monday , Dwight responding to Angela 's initial suggestions that he should push Michael out by saying " Michael has the best sales figures in the company 's history--I 'll never come close to his numbers " , Michael becoming suspicious when Pam interrupts to tell him that he has a phone call , Pam responding to Kevin 's unwanted attention to her neckline , and Creed reacting to having Dwight as the new boss .

= = Reception = =

" The Coup " first aired on October 5 , 2006 in the United States on NBC . It received a Nielsen rating of 4 @. @ 1 / 11 . This means that it was seen by 4 @. @ 1 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 11 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . The episode placed as the 24th most @-@ watched episode for the week in that demographic .

The episode received mixed reviews from television critics . IGN columnist Brian Zoromski rated " The Coup " 7 @. @ 8 / 10 , indicating it as a " good " episode . He felt that after the " brilliant " episode from the previous week , " The Coup " was " somewhat anticlimactic , as Jim doesn 't interact at all with the Scranton branch and the Pam @-@ Jim storyline is pretty much ignored . " Despite his disappointment with Jim 's storyline , Zoromski commented that the " best moments of the episode were the completely random ones , such as Dwight knowing that Jan wears blouses from Liz Claiborne and earrings from Ann Taylor . " AOLTV 's Michael Sciannamea was also unhappy with Jim 's scenes , writing that they were " beginning to grate on [ him ] . Is every branch office at Dunder Mifflin filled with crazies ? How then does the company stay in business ? I think it would have been funnier if Jim ended up in an office where it 's nothing but work and no play at all . The Call of Duty bits didn 't do much for me . "

Kath Skerry of Give Me My Remote called Dwight 's groveling " hilarious , " but was unsure about Jim and Karen 's ending scene , explaining that it " was adorable . Too adorable . And I ? m not quite ready to handle the fact that I ? m not HATING the idea of Jim and Karen . I feel like I ? m betraying Pam . I ? m still a JAM shipper all the way , but it ? s nice to see Jim smile again . " Skerry concluded that " there were some seriously funny , laugh out loud moments tonight , but I don ? t think this episode is going to make my favorites list . But even when The Office isn ? t at its best , it ? s still hands down the best comedy on TV . " Television Without Pity graded the episode with an A- . In the audio commentary , Wilson noted that " The Coup " is " not a fan favorite , " though it was submitted for an Emmy Award . For his work on this episode , Paul Lieberstein was nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for Best Screenplay ? Episodic Comedy .