

= The Convention Conundrum =

" The Convention Conundrum " is the 14th episode of the seventh season of the U.S. sitcom The Big Bang Theory and the 149th episode of the show overall . It first aired on CBS on January 30 , 2014 .

The episode features guest appearances by James Earl Jones and Carrie Fisher . In contrast to previous guest stars , Jones takes a liking to Sheldon (Jim Parsons) and the main plot is focused on the two having a night out together . Fisher appears when Jones suggests they knock on her door and run away . The episode received high ratings and mainly positive reviews , with many complimenting the cameo appearances .

= = Plot = =

Leonard (Johnny Galecki) , Sheldon , Raj (Kunal Nayyar) and Howard (Simon Helberg) are in Leonard and Sheldon 's apartment , waiting for Comic @-@ Con tickets to go on sale online . After ten minutes of trying , Leonard finally gets in the queue but is 15,211th in line . Tickets run out and the four men are disappointed that they will not be able to attend , especially as they had spent so much time on their costumes , intending to go as different versions of the Hulk as portrayed by Lou Ferrigno , Eric Bana , Edward Norton , and Mark Ruffalo .

Sheldon decides to set up his own Comic @-@ Con , and tries to convince several celebrities to appear , including Stan Lee , Bill Nye the Science Guy , Leonard Nimoy , and Wil Wheaton . Since he has restraining orders from Lee , Nimoy , and Nye , he asks Leonard to contact them . He then discovers James Earl Jones , whom he reveres for voicing the Star Wars villain Darth Vader , is going to a sushi restaurant and meets him there .

Unlike many celebrities Sheldon has met , James Earl Jones welcomes his company , and the two spend the night doing various activities ; they go to an ice @-@ cream parlor , a carnival , a strip club , and a sauna . Sheldon asks Jones questions about himself and learns that he was functionally mute for eight years , he was a pre @-@ med in college , and that sound designer Ben Burtt used scuba equipment to create the sound of Darth Vader 's breathing . They also sing at a karaoke club and prank Carrie Fisher by knocking on her door and running away . At the end of the night , James Earl Jones learns that Sheldon and his friends failed to get Comic @-@ Con tickets and invites them along as his guests .

Meanwhile , Leonard , Raj , and Howard attempt to solve their Comic @-@ Con problem by illegally buying scalped tickets . After arranging for a scalper to come to Leonard 's apartment , they begin to get worried as Sheldon pointed out they could get charged for petty theft . When the scalper is heard arriving , they quickly turn out the lights and stay silent .

Penny (Kaley Cuoco @-@ Sweeting) , Amy (Mayim Bialik) and Bernadette (Melissa Rauch) go to a tea room in an attempt to feel more like adults . At the tea room , they discover only mothers and their children are there and go to the bar . They discuss how they do not feel grown up and how being an adult is not necessarily a good thing .

= = Production = =

The episode features guest stars James Earl Jones and Carrie Fisher , actors from the Star Wars film series . It was first announced that they would be appearing on the show on January 12 , 2014 . The day after , Steve Molaro revealed the basic plot outline for the episode , although he refused to explain exactly what Fisher 's " very small , very funny , very weird part " would be . The episode was filmed on January 21 , 2014 . In real life , James Earl Jones is said to be a " good sport " when meeting Star Wars fans , similar to his character in the episode . Jim Parsons described having James Earl Jones around as " pretty insane " and said " there 's no way ever you can even realize the amount of work he 's done . "

" The Convention Conundrum " is the first episode to credit Kaley Cuoco , who plays Penny , as Kaley Cuoco @-@ Sweeting . She married Ryan Sweeting on December 31 , 2013 ; this was the

third episode to air after their wedding .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

On the night of its first broadcast on January 30 , 2014 at 8 p.m. , the episode was watched by 19 @. @ 05 million households in the U.S. Including 5 @. @ 70 viewers watching on DVR , the episode was watched by 24 @. @ 75 million viewers in total . It received a Nielsen rating of 11 @. @ 3 / 14 overall , and 5 @. @ 2 / 15 for viewers aged 18 to 49 . The episode was the most watched episode that night .

In Canada , the episode aired at the same time as in America , on CTV Television Network and was watched by 4 @. @ 38 million viewers , ranking it third on both Canadian television and CTV that week . Australia first broadcast the episode on Nine Network on March 25 , 2014 , and was watched by 994 @, @ 000 households . It was ranked third on the network that night and eighth on cable . In the UK , it aired on May 1 , 2014 on E4 . The episode received 1 @. @ 84 million viewers (according to BARB) , ranking it number 1 that week on the channel ; the episode had 0 @. @ 46 million viewers on E4 + 1 , giving it a total of 2 @. @ 31 million viewers .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received mostly positive reviews , with many critics complimenting James Earl Jones and Carrie Fisher 's cameo appearances . Jesse Schedeen of IGN rated it eight out of 10 , summarizing that " When it comes to celebrity guest stars , James Earl Jones raised the bar on this week 's Big Bang Theory . " Oliver Sava of The A.V. Club gave the episode a B , complimenting the show for having enough " nerd currency " to secure two high @-@ profile guest stars in one episode ; Jason Hughes of The Huffington Post agreed , describing the episode as " one of the best uses of celebrity guest stars playing themselves we 've seen on television " . Billy Nilles from Zap2it said " Jones has proven himself a powerful comedy performer " .

Carla Day from TV Fanatic gave the episode a very positive review , describing it as " by far the funniest episode of the season " and giving it an editor rating of 4 @. @ 9 out of 5 . Tom Eames of Digital Spy gave it a mixed review . He complimented the cold opening , and described Carrie Fisher 's " surprise cameo appearance " as " pretty cool " . However , he said the girls ' subplot of acting like grown @-@ ups was " used a bit too often " and thought the scalper ticket subplot being " dropped without a conclusion " was " a shame " .

However , Robin Pierson of The TV Critic rated the episode 40 out of 100 , describing it as " classic bad Big Bang Theory " . Pierson said " a story like this makes it a bit harder to believe in Sheldon " and suggested that Sheldon should " take something from this experience " . Pierson also disliked the girls ' subplot as it did not " go anywhere " and described the guys as " cowards " .