

= Public Relations ( Mad Men ) =

" Public Relations " is the season premiere of the fourth season of the American television drama series Mad Men , and the 40th overall episode of the series . It was written by series creator and executive producer Matthew Weiner , and directed by Phil Abraham . It originally aired on AMC in the United States on July 25 , 2010 . The episode takes place in November 1964 , as the advertisement agency Sterling Cooper Draper Pryce has just started up , and Don Draper ( Jon Hamm ) is struggling with his divorce . The agency partners are concerned about the narrow breadth of their client base , which is not helped by Don coming across as less than sympathetic in an interview with a trade magazine . Peggy Olson ( Elisabeth Moss ) attempts a viral marketing stunt to bring back a disgruntled client , with unexpected repercussions . Meanwhile , Don 's ex @-@ wife Betty ( January Jones ) is struggling to fit in with her new family , and Don encounters problems in his romantic life .

" Public Relations " was heavily promoted in the weeks leading up to its airing , with an endorsement by President Obama and product tie @-@ in by Mattel toys helping with publicity . Weiner expressed displeasure with what he considered a media revelation of plot details , though other journalists called his objections unwarranted . " Public Relations " was critically acclaimed by television critics , who expressed that the series returned to form . Upon airing , the episode was viewed by 2 @.@ 92 million viewers and attained a 0 @.@ 9 rating in the 18 @-@ 49 demographic , according to Nielsen ratings .

= = Plot = =

Don Draper ( Jon Hamm ) is being interviewed by a reporter from Advertising Age and declines to speak about his personal life . As a result , he comes across as arrogant and a cipher in the published story , a fact that senior partners Roger Sterling ( John Slattery ) and Bert Cooper ( Robert Morse ) lament . The effects of the bad publicity is brought home just after Harry Crane ( Rich Sommer ) has sold a Jai Alai special to ABC , but it must be pulled because the client , Pete Campbell 's ( Vincent Kartheiser ) college friend , Horace Cook Jr . , nicknamed " Ho Ho " , fires the agency because Draper did not mention the client in his interview . Because of the agency 's narrow client base , the loss is financially detrimental . Bert suggests Don do an interview with The Wall Street Journal to make amends , but Don demurs . Later , Peggy Olson ( Elisabeth Moss ) comes up with an idea to regain the Sugarberry Ham account . She hires two actresses to fight over a ham in a grocery store . The plan goes awry when the fight turns real and one of the women sues the other for assault , and Peggy has to ask Don for bail and hush money . Don disapproves of the stunt ( which was carried out behind his back ) , but Peggy points out that they did retain the account .

Don settles in as a bachelor after last season 's divorce from his wife Betty ( January Jones ) . Roger sets him up on a date with a friend of his wife Jane . After the date , Bethany ( Anna Camp ) expresses interest in seeing Don again , but rejects his sexual advances . On Thanksgiving Day , Don spends time with a prostitute , and Betty has problems fitting in with the family of her new husband Henry ( Christopher Stanley ) . At Thanksgiving dinner with his family , Betty 's daughter Sally ( Kiernan Shipka ) makes a scene when she complains about the food . Henry 's mother later privately expresses displeasure with her son 's new wife , observing that her children are clearly scared of her . The next day , Don picks up his two oldest children for an overnight visit , and Don is disappointed he can 't see baby Gene , whom Betty sent to Carla 's . Betty curtly tells Don to have the kids back by 9 . When he returns the next evening , the house is empty and he has to wait for Betty and Henry to come back . When they return , at 10 : 30 pm , an argument ensues about the house ; Don angrily reminds them they were supposed to be out a month ago , and to either buy him out , pay him rent , or leave . A minor argument later sparks between Henry and Betty , when Henry agrees with Don 's point . Betty stubbornly reiterates that they will leave on her time , not Don 's .

A different client , Jantzen swimwear , asks for help to maintain a family @-@ friendly image in a field where bikinis are becoming more common and more revealing . Don Draper tries to sell a pitch wherein the model 's breasts are covered by the slogan , " So well built , we can 't show you the

second floor " . The Jantzen representatives reject the ad as overly risqué , and Draper - exasperated by the clients ' refusal to acknowledge a changing culture and the realities of their business - ends up throwing the men out of the meeting room . As they leave , he finally agrees to do the interview with The Wall Street Journal . As the episode ends , Don is seen telling the journalist the swashbuckling story of how he instigated the formation of SCDP by having Lane Pryce fire them .

= = Production = =

" Public Relations " was heavily advertised in the weeks prior to its broadcasting . Producers of the series ' entered into a cross @-@ promotional deal with Banana Republic , and Janie Bryant , the show 's costume designer , collaborated with QVC to design a clothing line inspired by mod subculture . President Barack Obama , a fan of Mad Men , had sent series creator Matthew Weiner a letter to express his admiration . Attention was further boosted by the release of a series of Barbie dolls based on characters from the show by toy manufacturer Mattel . A week prior to the premiere of the episode , recurring cast member Crista Flanagan ( who plays Lois Sadler ) posed nude for Playboy .

Screenings for the episode was shown in Los Angeles , California on July 21 , 2010 , and again five days later at Duffy Square in New York City an hour before it was televised nationwide . An estimated 10 @, @ 000 people appeared at the screening in New York City . The designs of costumes were altered , according to Bryant , to reflect the general fashion development and changes in mainstream pop culture during the 1960s . In an interview with the San Francisco Chronicle , she teased : " My characters are in an office environment in New York ; it 's very different from what was going on in London at the time . But there will be some progression in their costumes , just like in real life .

The press were given advanced copies of the episode . Matthew Weiner pronounced himself shocked by what he considered spoilers in the review . Weiner criticized the episode 's review by Alessandra Stanley of the New York Times , expressing that the publication revealed too much information . He continued : " I 'm kind of powerless . It 's the bargain you make . I wanted to have press , and it was nice to get that kind of space with those pictures . The alternative is not to share these things with the press any more ? but how can you expect journalists to write about the show if you don 't ? It was all very disappointing to me .

" Public Relations " features several references to media , music , film , and other pop culture phenomena . Peggy and a coworker engage in a humorous conversation , in which they subsequently refer to " A Dear John and Marsha Letter " by Stan Freberg . The episode depicts the growing acceptance of the bikini in mainstream popular culture in the United States during the 1960s .

= = Reception = =

" Public Relations " first aired in the United States on July 25 , 2010 on AMC . It was watched by 2 @. @ 92 million viewers , and attained a 0 @. @ 9 rating in the 18 @- @ 49 demographic , according to Nielsen ratings . Total viewership increased 5 % from the previous season premiere , " Out of Town " , which was viewed by 2 @. @ 76 million viewers . In contrast , ratings for " Public Relations " were constant to that of " Out of Town " . Likewise , total viewership were significantly up from the previous episode , " Shut the Door . Have a Seat " , which attained 2 @. @ 32 million viewers .

The episode was critically acclaimed by television critics . Alessandra Stanley of the New York Times opined , " Those cues also hold out the promise that the coming season will once again pivot the story on the workplace . It 's where Mad Men started and where it was best . A fresh start at the rat race is just what the series needs . " Eric Goldman of IGN gave the episode a nine out of ten , signifying an " amazing " rating . Goldman felt that it start of the season on a strong note , writing , " It 's a clever beat to start out with , leading into a strong premiere that quickly drops us into what can be described as Mad Men 2 @. @ 0 . " Praise was also directed to the musical selection of the

episode , which Goldman described as excellent . In concurrence , Keith Phipps of The A.V. Club gave the episode an ' A ' grade , praising the character development of Don Draper and Peggy Olson . Expressing that she had more confidence , Phipps said of Peggy : " [ She 's ] the person who 's changed most notably over the last year . She drinks at work like the boys and [ ... ] goes into a Don @-@ like trance as she searches for inspiration . She bosses Joey around and tells him when he ? s gone too far . And she ? s not afraid to get creative to sell ham and wants credit for her idea , even if it encounters a minor disaster along the way . Most significantly , she ? s standing up to Don at every turn now . He bullies her in front of her fiancé but hears about it later . And she provides a devastating mixture of admiration and chiding when she reminds Don that everyone at SCDP is there because of him and out of a desire to make him happy . " Similarly , James Poniewozik of Time praised the performance of Elisabeth Moss , exclaiming that " she has come a long way . "

TV Fanatic 's Dan Forcella felt that " Public Relations " was an fantastic episode , and asserted : " All in all it was a great start to the fourth season of Mad Men . " In conclusion , Forcella gave the episode a 4 @.@ 5 out of 5 stars . The Wall Street Journal journalist Cheryl Berman opined that the episode had a " little bit of everything we love about Mad Men . " William Bradley wrote in The Huffington Post that the series got off to " a cracking start " with " Public Relations " . Similarly , Scott D. Pierce of the Deseret News found it to be " a very good episode and a very promising restart " , after what he considered a disappointing third season .