

= Regional Holiday Music =

" Regional Holiday Music " is the tenth episode of the third season of the American television series Community , and 59th overall episode of the series . It was originally broadcast on December 8 , 2011 on NBC and is the final episode before the show went on hiatus during the 2011 ? 12 midseason . The Christmas @-@ themed episode is a musical featuring original songs performed by cast members . After Greendale 's glee club members become incapacitated , the study group is asked to join . Despite their dislike of the club , each of them is lured into joining after their vulnerabilities are exploited .

The episode was directed by Tristram Shapeero and written by Steve Basilone and Annie Mebane . The musical format , along with other more subtle elements in the episode is a parody of the Fox television series Glee . Creator Dan Harmon is known to dislike Glee and the series has satirized aspects of the musical TV series in previous episodes . The premise of " Regional Holiday Music " also draws on an event in season 2 's " Paradigms of Human Memory " (Community 's " clip show ") and provides closure to it . Taran Killam guest @-@ starred as the glee club instructor .

The episode received mostly positive reviews , with many critics disagreeing with NBC 's decision to bench the series . Critics praised the episode 's high @-@ concept satire and character @-@ driven moments . Opinion was divided on the quality of the original songs . According to Nielsen Media Research , " Regional Holiday Music " was seen by an estimated 3 @.@ 6 million viewers , a drop from the previous week .

= = Plot = =

While meeting in the cafeteria , the study group reveal their plans for Christmas . Some are spending time away , disappointing Abed (Danny Pudi) , who had wished to spend the holidays with the group , even renting the critically reviled Inspector Spacetime holiday special to watch with them . Their conversation is interrupted by a performance by the obnoxious Greendale glee club . Midway through , Chang (Ken Jeong) stops them with a cease and desist order from ASCAP ? tipped off by Jeff (Joel McHale) ? for performing copyrighted music without permission . The glee club members suffer a nervous breakdown and are taken to the hospital .

The glee club instructor , Mr. Rad (Taran Killam) , invites the study group to join and perform the Christmas pageant but is rebuffed promptly due to their collective dislike for the club . However , through a series of events performed as songs , the members of the group are lured into joining the club one by one .

" Glee " : Mr. Rad manages to convince Abed to join the club by tapping into Abed 's desire to spend Christmas with the group .

" Christmas Infiltration " : Troy (Donald Glover) is next to join when Abed reaches out to his desire to celebrate Christmas with the group despite being a Jehovah 's Witness .

" Baby Boomer Santa " : Troy and Abed exploit Pierce 's (Chevy Chase) baby boomer narcissism .

" Teach Me How to Understand Christmas " : Before this song , Annie (Alison Brie) catches the glee club virus after being cornered by Troy , Abed , and Mr. Rad . She then dresses up in a sexy Santa outfit to seduce Jeff .

" Happy Birthday Jesus " : Pierce invites a children 's choir to sing to Shirley about how the public school system has thrown out the meaning of Christmas (the birth of Jesus) during its celebrations . Unable to resist her religious fervor , Shirley springs into song , proclaiming " Happy Birthday Jesus ! " .

With Britta (Gillian Jacobs) the only non @-@ glee club member left , she seeks out Jeff , only to find that he too has been turned .

As the group are backstage preparing for the Christmas pageant , Mr. Rad informs Abed of his long @-@ term intentions for the group . As Abed had only made the group join to brighten up Christmas , he sets forth upsetting Mr. Rad 's plans . While the group performs " Planet Christmas " on stage , he asks Britta (who was originally cast as the mute tree) to replace him as the Mouse King . She

does and ruins the pageant with her poor singing and bad , improvised lyrics and choreography .. Despite Mr. Rad 's objections , Dean Pelton (Jim Rash) and the audience supportively agree to ' let Britta finish her awkward song ' in the spirit of inclusion . However Mr. Rad then becomes enraged at the idea and inadvertently reveals that he caused the bus crash that killed the glee club members mentioned in " Paradigms of Human Memory " before distracting everyone and running off . Abed regrettably concedes that " forcing things to be bright just makes the darkness underneath it even darker . "

Back at the apartment , Abed is watching Inspector Spacetime alone . The group suddenly arrives and they announce that after a dark year , they have cancelled their plans in order to spend the holidays with him . The episode ends with them joining him in viewing the Inspector Spacetime holiday special .

= = Production = =

" Regional Holiday Music " was written by Steve Basilone and Annie Mebane , both their debut writing credits for the series . It was directed by Tristram Shapeero , his seventh directing credit . The music for the episode was composed by series composer Ludwig Göransson , with lyrics by the writing staff .

The episode took six days to shoot , which Danny Pudi said is one of the longest for a single episode .

Taran Killam , a cast member of Saturday Night Live , guest starred as glee club instructor Cory Radison . Killam previously worked with Community executive producers Neil Goldman and Garrett Donovan in the pilot of Nobody 's Watching . The show was not picked up .

Series creator Dan Harmon has long been known to dislike Glee . Community has parodied the musical television series in previous episodes . In " Modern Warfare " , the show referenced Glee 's lack of original music . In " Paradigms of Human Memory " , the study group fills in for the glee club members who died in a bus crash , though they sing a song with no real lyrics . These events are brought up during " Regional Holiday Music " , which also reveals the true reason behind the crash .

Following the footsteps of season 2 's " Abed 's Uncontrollable Christmas " , Abed spends the episode trying to get the group to embrace the holiday spirit during Christmas .

= = Cultural references = =

" Regional Holiday Music " is a satire @-@ at @-@ large of the television series Glee . The audio transitions for this episode mimic the a capella audio transitions featured in Glee , whilst the glee club instructor Cory Radison (" Mr. Rad ") shares many similarities to Will Schuester (" Mr. Schue ") . The episode also makes reference to the concept of " Regionals " , which , similar to the nature of the television series , is never fully explained or clarified . Unlike most songs on Glee , the music on " Regional Holiday Music " is entirely original .

Jeff remarks in a scene that not liking the glee club does not make the group bullies , in reference to Glee creator Ryan Murphy 's criticism of musicians who don 't want their music on the show . When Mr. Rad reveals that he killed previous glee club members , he shouts " Look , Kings of Leon ! " to distract the audience before escaping . Kings of Leon had previously clashed with Murphy over permission to use their songs on Glee .

The song " Glee " speaks about the namesake series ' tendency to sing their feelings instead of " making a face " . While performing " Baby Boomer Santa " , Troy and Abed recreate musical styles from the 1940s to 1980s , including performing " Dancing in the Dark " and Troy impersonating Bob Dylan . The episode continues the show 's recurring spoof of the British television series Doctor Who through Inspector Spacetime , while also making a nod to the infamous 1978 Star Wars Holiday Special . While the group discusses their Christmas plans , Annie reveals she will spend time with her bubbe (the Yiddish word for grandmother) , which Troy confuses for " boobie " (breast) . The scene where Britta discovers that Jeff has been turned is a spoof of the ending of the 1978 remake of Invasion of the Body Snatchers .

In the end tag , the heads of the Dean (Jim Rash) , Chang (Ken Jeong) , Magnitude (Luke Youngblood) , Starburns (Dino Stamatopoulos) and Leonard (Richard Erdman) are superimposed on ornaments as they perform a version of " Carol of the Bells " using their names and a few recurring lines .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original American broadcast , " Regional Holiday Music " was viewed by an estimated 3 @. @ 6 million households , with a Nielsen rating / share of 1 @. @ 5 / 4 in the 18 ? 49 demographic . It finished fourth in its 8 pm time slot among broadcast networks and was outperformed by CBS sitcom The Big Bang Theory , which was seen by 14 @. @ 4 million households ; Fox reality show The X Factor , which was seen by 9 @. @ 9 million households ; and a special holiday episode of ABC reality show Wipeout , which was seen by 6 @. @ 6 million households . The episode outperformed a repeat airing of The Vampire Diaries on The CW , which was seen by 1 @. @ 2 million households . Community was NBC 's lowest performing show of the night in the demographic despite The Office , Parks and Recreation and Whitney all slipping to season lows .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Regional Holiday Music " received mostly positive reviews from critics , many of whom pleaded for the show to return . BuddyTV placed it # 17 in its list of 50 best TV episodes of 2011 , calling the songs the " best original songs TV has heard in a long time " .

Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club gave the episode an ' A ' , saying " Community is going away for a while , but it 's going away with an episode that reminds me why I love the show so much . This is a very personal thing ? since humor 's subjective like that ? but for me , this was the funniest episode since the clip show ... I laughed myself silly at this one , to the point where I was devolving into hiccups at certain scenes , and I 'm glad we get to go out on an episode like this , one that plays around with form and makes me laugh . " Alan Sepinwall of HitFix also praised the Glee @-@ spoofing , saying " ' Regional Holiday Music ' was the logical , clever , funny endpoint to it . " Sean Gandert of Paste said , " As with its best theme @-@ episodes , the show bridged the gap between high @-@ concept parody and character @-@ based comedy . " TV Fanatic 's Leigh Raines gave the episode a 4 / 5 rating , saying while the show " definitely went out with a bang , it didn 't totally blow my socks off ... While there were a few moments that upped the ick factor , overall this episode fell on the positive side . " She praised Troy and Abed 's rap performance , but called the scene where Annie seduces Jeff " creepy " . Robert Canning of IGN said it was a " great " episode , but " faltered just a bit " at the end : " Abed 's realization that his attempts to brighten the holiday only made things darker , as Jeff had previously suggested , fit the character well enough , but the study group 's follow @-@ up felt a bit forced and holiday hokey . Of course , that could well have been the point . "

Kelsea Stahler of Hollywood.com gave the episode a bad review , calling the original songs " terrible " . She remarked , " fans merit a better episode , better commentary , and better parody of the subject at hand . " Nonetheless , she praised the episode 's ending and asked , " Who cares that the story was a bit weak this time around ? It 's the last episode we have before the dreaded undetermined hiatus gets underway , and it 's Christmas . Let 's just cherish the episode for what it is ... " Sean Campbell said although he enjoyed the episode 's concept , " the execution left much to be desired " and that the quality of the songs " varied from okay to bad " .

The Atlantic 's Kevin Fallon compared " Regional Holiday Music " to Glee 's own 2011 Christmas episode " Extraordinary Merry Christmas " which aired on December 13 . Fallon said " Regional Holiday Music " " relentlessly exposed Glee 's most repetitive cliches " and " couldn 't have invented better illustrations of Glee 's cringe @-@ inducing , everyone @-@ is @-@ loved @-@ as @-@

long @-@ as @-@ they @-@ sing @-@ a @-@ song motif . " However , on a final note , he highlighted the two shows ' similarities , explaining how both shows stick to their bold delivery and heartwarming moments .