

## = Viewing Party =

" Viewing Party " is the eighth episode of seventh season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's 134th episode overall . Written by Jon Vitti and directed by Ken Whittingham , the episode aired on NBC in the United States on November 11 , 2010 .

The series ? presented as if it were a real documentary ? depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania , branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In the episode , Erin Hannon ( Ellie Kemper ) and Gabe Lewis ( Zach Woods ) invite the office over to Gabe 's house for a Glee viewing party . Michael Scott cannot handle the fact that the office workers think of Gabe as their boss instead of him . Growing more jealous of Gabe and Erin 's relationship , Andy Bernard ( Ed Helms ) goes to extremes in order to impress her . Dwight Schrute ( Rainn Wilson ) helps Pam Halpert ( Jenna Fischer ) with Cece , much to her husband Jim 's chagrin .

The episode featured several direct references to the Fox series Glee , in addition to various other cultural references . " Viewing Party " was viewed by 7 @.@ 15 million viewers and received a 3 @.@ 6 rating among adults between the age of 18 and 49 , marking a decrease in the ratings when compared to the previous week . The episode was also the highest @-@ ranked NBC series of the night , and it received moderately positive reviews from critics with one main detractor ; many reviewers enjoyed the character interaction and development , although Alan Sepinwall derided the entry for being dull .

## = = Plot = =

Michael Scott ( Steve Carell ) becomes frustrated when Kevin Malone ( Brian Baumgartner ) refers to Gabe Lewis ( Zach Woods ) as his boss . Erin Hannon ( Ellie Kemper ) and Gabe invite the office over to Gabe 's house for a Glee viewing party . When the show starts , Michael and Gabe get into an argument over how high the volume should be . After taking turns raising and lowering the volume , Michael retreats to Gabe 's bedroom , hoping that his employees will follow him there . Meanwhile , Pam Halpert ( Jenna Fischer ) has been having a hard time with getting her daughter Cece to go to sleep at night , so Dwight Schrute ( Rainn Wilson ) picks her up to try to calm her down . Pam is stunned that Cece becomes completely quiet in Dwight 's hands .

Jim Halpert ( John Krasinski ) changes the channel from the Glee episode so he can check sports scores . Oscar Martinez ( Oscar Nunez ) asks Jim to change the channel back to Glee , but discovers that Erin had neglected to record the episode . To avoid his co @-@ workers ' anger , Jim goes into the bedroom to see Dwight holding a sleeping Cece . Angela Martin ( Angela Kinsey ) comes in and demands that Dwight meet her outside for fulfillment of their sex contract . Determined to put an end to Cece 's " reverse cycling " , Pam persuades Dwight to stay with the baby under the condition that Jim feeds Dwight pizza and beer while Pam goes outside to tell Angela that Dwight cannot see her .

Andy Bernard ( Ed Helms ) is growing increasingly jealous of Gabe 's relationship with Erin . While observing Gabe 's room , Ryan Howard ( B.J. Novak ) tells him that a Chinese virility supplement that Gabe keeps in his room is incredibly potent . Once alone Andy drinks the entire bottle of the supplement , which makes him intoxicated , prompting him to admit his jealousy to Phyllis Vance ( Phyllis Smith ) . Phyllis volunteers to talk to Erin and find out if she is having sex with Gabe , but as Phyllis is fairly intoxicated herself , her inquiries segue into an explicit account of her sexual experiences with her husband Bob , which mortifies Erin . Andy 's intoxication turns into sickness , and he ultimately retreats to Gabe 's room and vomits on the bed .

Becoming irritated that no one joined in him in walking out on Gabe , Michael goes outside and pulls the cable connection , causing it to turn off . Hysteria erupts , and Michael becomes self @-@ conscious over the commotion he has caused . He goes outside to fix the cable . There he is discovered by Erin , who throughout the evening has been trying to encourage Michael to bond with Gabe . Michael , still indignant over the idea that his office views Gabe as his boss , is initially irritated by her efforts , but eventually realizes that Erin views him as a father figure . He jokes

around and tells her to go to her room , leading to a bonding moment between the two . As he leaves the party , Michael brings Gabe into the joke by threatening to kill him if he breaks Erin 's heart .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Jon Vitti , a long @-@ time writer of The Simpsons . It was his first writing credit for The Office after joining the staff the show in the seventh season as a consulting producer . It was directed by Ken Whittingham , who has directed several episodes of The Office previously .

The Season Seven DVD contains a number of deleted scenes from this episode . Notable cut scenes include Gabe inviting Stanley to his party and Stanley 's reaction , Michael making fun of Gabe and then noting in a talking head that he does not really know Gabe , Michael raiding Gabe 's kitchen cabinet for additional items to add to his pizza , Michael comparing himself to Tom Hanks in the 1988 film Big and Gabe to Hanks in the 1993 film Philadelphia , Michael trying his pizza , only to spit it out , and Pam and Jim marveling at CeCe sleeping .

= = Cultural references = =

Gabe compares the Scranton Strangler to the Waco siege ; Erin incorrectly believes he is mispronouncing " wacko " . Jim notes that the Scranton Strangler car chase , witnessed in the episode 's cold opening , is on the same level as " Balloon Boy " and Michael Jackson 's funeral . The Glee episode viewed during the party was the season two episode " Duets " . When turning up the volume at the party , he comments , " Turn it up to eleven . Spinal Cord " , an obvious mis @-@ reference to This Is Spinal Tap . Michael comments that his favorite character on Glee is " the invalid " , a reference to character Artie Abrams . Abrams is played by Kevin McHale . McHale appeared in the season four episode of The Office , " Launch Party " , as the pizza delivery boy .

= = Reception = =

" Viewing Party " aired on NBC on November 11 , 2010 . In its original American broadcast , it was viewed by an estimated 7 @. @ 15 million viewers and received a 3 @. @ 6 rating / 10 percent share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that 3 @. @ 6 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ old households watched the episode , and ten percent of that demographic had their televisions tuned to the channel at any point . The Baltimore NBC affiliate carried the Ravens / Falcons NFL game , so ratings for the regular Thursday NBC programming were lower than usual .

Myles McNutt of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " B " . He compared it to the earlier seventh season episode " Sex Ed " , writing that both featured " a Michael story wherein a large collection of unfortunate behaviors is capped off with a moment of sincerity " ; however , McNutt criticized this narrative structure , calling it " a bit cheap " . Despite this , he felt that Dwight 's subplot " was successful in that it strayed true to the office dynamic " , and that the actual viewing of the Glee episode was a " highlight " because it showcased the characters " fall [ ing ] into some really fun ( and familiar tropes . " Bonnie Stiernberg of Paste magazine awarded the episode an 8 @. @ 4 out of 10 , and called it " a solid episode " . She argued that " it left me wanting to tune in next week and see what ? ll happen next " , largely because of the " surprising " amount of character development .

Dan Forcella of TV Fanatic awarded the episode four out of five stars . He was complimentary towards the main plot , and he felt empathy towards Michael because he felt that " Gabe is the absolute worst " . In addition , Forcella wrote that Pam and Jim 's subplot " had its moments , as well " , and called the scene featuring Jim feeding Dwight pizza " fantastic " . Not all reviews were glowing , however . Alan Sepinwall gave the episode a critical review , calling it " dreadful " . Although he said it was better than " Christening " , he felt that " so , so much of the episode didn 't work " . Sepinwall felt that the major problem with the episode was that it was " lifeless " and " light

on jokes " , and only featured " Michael being petulant and crabby for a whole episode " , rather than featuring him in a character study . He concluded that " Ellie Kemper and Steve Carell almost were able to save the episode in the closing moments with Erin 's reaction to Michael declaring that he 's not her father , [ but ] it came far too late in an episode that was more concerned with Andy vomit humor . "