

= Gossip (The Office) =

" Gossip " is the sixth season premiere of the American comedy television series The Office , and the 101st overall episode of the series . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on September 17 , 2009 . The episode was written and directed by Paul Lieberstein . It features Max Carver , Kelli Miyata and Elvy Yost in guest appearances as Dunder Mifflin 's summer interns .

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 , Michael spreads a rumor about Stanley having an affair , then spreads a series of false rumors to try to convince everyone the original rumor was not true . The rumors cause Andy to question his sexuality , and Pam and Jim to debate whether or not to tell the office that Pam is pregnant .

" Gossip " confirmed the fact that protagonist Pam was pregnant , which was strongly hinted in the fifth season finale , " Company Picnic " . " Gossip " was the first episode to feature Ellie Kemper as a regular cast member , and the first Office episode since Ed Helms achieved box office success with the summer comedy film , The Hangover . " Gossip " received generally positive reviews , with several commentators particularly praising the subplot in which Andy questions whether the rumor about him being gay might actually be true . According to Nielsen ratings , the episode was watched by 8 @. @ 21 million viewers . Although The Office had the highest 9 p.m. rating among viewers aged between 18 and 49 , the overall episode constituted an 18 percent drop in viewership compared to the fifth season premiere , " Weight Loss " . " Gossip " was nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for best episodic comedy .

= = Synopsis = =

As the three summer interns prepare to depart , Michael (Steve Carell) hears from various members of the office that two of the interns might be dating , and feels upset that he was left out of the gossip . He talks about the situation with the third intern , and learns that the interns had recently gone out to a young people 's club , where they saw Stanley (Leslie David Baker) dancing with a woman , presumably his wife Teri . Michael , wanting to start some gossip of his own , forms the conclusion that Stanley was out because he was having a mid @- @ life crisis and shares it with the office , but Phyllis (Phyllis Smith) claims Stanley does not like crowds and that Teri is out of town . When Michael confronts the interns about this , they insist they saw Stanley there " making out " with a woman . Now realizing that Stanley is possibly having an affair and he is the first person to learn of it , Michael starts telling the employees . Jim (John Krasinski) urges Michael to stop spreading a rumor that he does not know for certain to be true . When Stanley is leaving , Michael heads to the parking lot to discuss the rumor with him . Stanley initially denies it , but when Michael mentions that he was spotted in the club by the interns , he reveals that since Teri has been out of town constantly , he has been seeking company from a nurse named Cynthia , whom he met in rehab . Stanley urges Michael not to say anything since he is breaking it off with Cynthia , and Michael agrees , despite having already told the entire office .

Hoping to obscure the truth about Stanley 's affair , Michael starts spreading a variety of false rumors , among them that there is another person physically inside Kevin (Brian Baumgartner) , that Kelly is anorexic , that Toby (Paul Lieberstein) is still a virgin , that Pam (Jenna Fischer) is pregnant , and that Andy (Ed Helms) is gay . When Andy hears about this , he realizes that many people have thought this about him in the past and gets increasingly insecure as he begins to question his sexual orientation . Jim and Pam , who were trying to keep Pam 's pregnancy a secret , think they have been found out . The couple then notice that there have been various absurd rumors about office employees being spread . When Jim brings it to everyone 's attention , they trace one particular rumor back to Michael , who then tries to slip out of the office .

The employees pursue Michael , and he confesses that he created the rumors to conceal the one true rumor . Andy fears that it might be the one about him . The employees urge Michael to tell them which one is true , but just as Michael is about to give in , Jim announces that Pam is actually

pregnant to save Stanley . Michael denies it , but Pam shows her baby 's ultrasound picture to prove it . Later , while Michael discusses her pregnancy with Jim and Pam in his office , Stanley 's wife Teri returns Michael 's call from earlier . He picks up the phone with the intention of making an excuse for his earlier call so as to not tip her off , but he accidentally calls her Cynthia twice before Jim hangs up the phone for him . Teri had already been suspicious of Stanley and Cynthia , so Michael calling her Cynthia is enough for her to figure out what is going on . Michael , feeling guilty , watches from his office window as Stanley attacks Michael 's car with a tire iron in a fit of rage . At the end of the episode , the three interns discuss what they have learned at Dunder Mifflin , which they essentially reveal was nothing .

= = Production = =

" Gossip " was written and directed by Paul Lieberstein , a producer and screenwriter for the series who also plays Toby . The episode confirmed the fact that Pam was pregnant , which was strongly hinted in the fifth season finale , " Company Picnic " . " Gossip " was the first episode to feature Ellie Kemper as a full cast member ; she had guest starred in several episodes at the end of the fifth season as receptionist Erin Hannon . It was also the first episode of The Office to air since the release of the Ed Helms comedy film The Hangover . The film was a surprise box office success , grossing more than twice the amount of The 40 @-@ Year Old Virgin , which established Steve Carell as a comedy movie star . Commentators were split on what the success would mean for The Office , with some believing it would allow the show 's writers to better realize his potential and write better material for Helms , and others expressing concern Helms would not be as dedicated to the Andy Bernard role . One of the interns , portrayed by Elvy Yost , also appeared in an earlier episode from season four , Job Fair .

The official website for The Office included three cut scenes from " Gossip " within a week of its original release . In the first 40 @-@ second clip , Dwight has the interns pass hand @-@ written notes to officemates , while Ryan orders them to search thousands of pennies for rare coins . In the second clip , which is one minute and 10 seconds , Dwight has the interns pick up their own cake , but chastises them for not picking up candles . In the final two @-@ minute clip , Dwight makes the interns memorize trivial bits of information , then tells them what he believes are inspirational stories .

= = Cultural references = =

During the episode 's cold open , Michael , Dwight and Andy run throughout the office climbing on desks , jumping off chairs and pushing themselves off objects . The actions are their attempts to engage in parkour , the art of moving from point A to point B as creatively as possible , which Jim describes as " the Internet sensation of 2004 " . Jim points out parkour was used in a chase scene in the 2006 James Bond film Casino Royale . This is the first season premiere to include an internet trend in the cold open . The second was in Nepotism where the office make a lip dub video of the song Nobody but Me . The third was in The List where multiple characters plank in various places throughout the episode .

Pam says the Dunder Mifflin office previously did not have interns for years because Michael kept making jokes about Monica Lewinsky , an intern at the White House who had a sexual relationship with President Bill Clinton in 1995 and 1996 . Michael discusses the 1960 film Spartacus , which he calls as a great " whodunit " due to the ending , in which dozens of people claim to be the real Spartacus in order to protect the actual title character .

While trying to figure out whether he is gay , Andy says he would reluctantly accept a kiss from movie star Brad Pitt . The three summer interns say Michael constantly says they look like actors Jet Li , Julia Stiles and Alan Thicke . Michael spreads a rumor that Oscar is the voice of the Taco Bell dog , a chihuahua used as an advertising character in the 1990s and 2000s for the restaurant chain Taco Bell . Michael also claims Angela is dating a billionaire who manages a Quiznos , a fast @-@ food submarine sandwich restaurant . Michael starts a rumor that someone in the office is a J.Crew

model , originally referring to himself , although everyone believes it to be Jim . J.Crew is an American clothing and accessories retailer .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast on September 17 , 2009 , " Gossip " was seen by 8 @. @ 21 million viewers , according to Nielsen ratings . The viewership was an 18 percent drop compared to the fifth season premiere , " Weight Loss " . " Gossip " received a 4 @. @ 0 rating among viewers aged between 18 and 49 . It was the highest rating of that age group in the 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. slot , competing with CBS ' CSI : Crime Scene Investigation , Fox 's Fringe , ABC 's Grey 's Anatomy (a rerun) and The CW 's Supernatural . However , the rating was a drop compared to a 4 @. @ 9 rating among ages 18 to 49 for " Weight Loss " . " Gossip " served as the lead @- @ in for the series premiere of NBC 's Community , which held on to 93 percent of The Office 's 18 to 49 audience to premiere with a 3 @. @ 7 rating , garnering 7 @. @ 68 million viewers . The episode was viewed by 931 @, @ 000 households during its Canadian premiere on September 17 , 2009 , making it the 28th highest viewed program of that week .

" Gossip " received generally positive reviews . Several commentators particularly praised the comedic performance of Ed Helms , as well as the line by Kevin , " Who 's been saying that there 's another person inside of me working me with controls ? " Alan Sepinwall of The Star @- @ Ledger called the episode " not an instant classic , but a solid start to the season " . Sepinwall said it started slowly , but gradually built to a " very funny , and kinda sweet climax in the conference room " . New York magazine writer Will Leitch said " Gossip " appeared to be a return to a more normal Office atmosphere , compared to the surprises and twists of the fifth season . Rick Ingebritson of The Palm Beach Post said he was concerned the season premiere would not be good because Steve Carell , John Krasinski and Ed Helms would be too distracted with their growing film careers . But , he said , " Thankfully , if Thursday 's premiere was any indication , it appears that the Dunder Mifflin crew still has a lot to offer . " Entertainment Weekly writer Margaret Lyons said , " ' Gossip ' had some terrific moments , but I don 't know that I 'd put it on my all @- @ time great episodes list . " She specifically praised the performances of Brian Baumgartner and Jenna Fischer .

Chicago Tribune television columnist Maureen Ryan called " Gossip " a " solidly entertaining premiere " , specifically complimenting the Ed Helms subplot and the various office rumors . Hopper of Best Week Ever praised the episode 's final scene , in which Michael unsuccessfully tries to lie his way through a phone call with Stanley 's wife . Dan Hopper said of the episode , " Season six is off to an appropriately awkward start . " Philadelphia Examiner writer Matt Carter gave the episode an 8 @. @ 9 out of 10 score . Carter said the episode was " proof that there is still a ton of life left in these characters " , and particularly enjoyed the way Jim and Pam stood up for Stanley by revealing the truth about Pam 's pregnancy . Dan Phillips of IGN said the episode included several " amusing asides and laugh @- @ out @- @ loud moments " , particularly from supporting characters Creed , Kevin and Andy . He also praises the episode 's " day in the life " formula , which he said has been successful in other previous Office episodes . Tara Tanzos of The Express @- @ Times said the episode lived up to the series ' standards , particularly praising the Ed Helms subplot and the parkour cold open .

For his work on this episode , Paul Lieberstein was nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for Best Screenplay ? Episodic Comedy , but lost to the pilot episode of Modern Family and the 30 Rock episode " Apollo , Apollo " , which split the prize .