

= Paper Airplane (The Office) =

" Paper Airplane " is the twentieth episode of the ninth season of the American comedy television series The Office . It originally aired on NBC on April 25 , 2013 . The episode features guest appearances from Roseanne Barr as Andy 's agent Carla Fern . In addition , it was also the final half @-@ hour episode of the series , being the fourth @-@ to @-@ last episode aired .

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 , the office staff compete against each other in a paper airplane contest . Meanwhile , Andy Bernard (Ed Helms) prepares for a potential acting job , and Jim (John Krasinski) and Pam Halpert (Jenna Fischer) utilize new skills that they learned in couples ' counseling .

The episode received mostly mixed reviews from critics ; some felt that the episode was humorous , whereas others were critical of the main plot involving Pam and Jim . The episode was viewed by 3 @.@ 25 million viewers and received a 1 @.@ 7 / 5 rating among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 , giving it the lowest viewership rating of any episode of The Office . " Paper Airplane " ranked fourth in its timeslot , but was nevertheless the highest @-@ rated NBC series of the night .

= = Plot = =

A paper airplane contest is being hosted at Dunder Mifflin by a new paper supplier . All of the office workers compete against each other for a \$ 2 @,@ 000 prize . Erin Hannon in particular is fiercely competitive , and even as she realizes that she is showing an ugly side of herself to her boyfriend Pete Miller , she cannot hold back from smashing a box of packing peanuts when she loses in the semi @-@ finals . After several intense rounds , it comes down to Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) and Angela Lipton (Angela Kinsey) . Dwight , who is dating Esther (Nora Kirkpatrick) , tries to throw the contest . Angela is flattered by the gesture . However , when Esther expresses her condolences to Angela about her financial situation since her husband separated from her , she realizes that Dwight is letting her win out of pity , not love . Angered , she rebuffs Dwight 's pity and lets him win the contest .

Meanwhile , Andy Bernard (Ed Helms) prepares for an acting job in a laboratory safety video that was arranged by his talent agent , Carla Fern (Roseanne Barr) . The directors continuously have to talk him out of overacting , and he backs down from shooting a scene using an eye wash , since he has an aversion towards anything being shot into his eye . However , Carla threatens to have him blacklisted if he doesn 't go through with the scene . Darryl Philbin (Craig Robinson) , who came along as friendly support , gives Andy the confidence to shoot the scene , and in the end Andy even insists on doing two takes .

In couples ' counseling , Jim (John Krasinski) and Pam Halpert (Jenna Fischer) have been told to express appreciation for the things their spouse does for them , be frank about things that make them unhappy , and refer to anything they don 't want to do but must as an opportunity . Their exercising of these three habits is stiff and formal to begin with , and becomes increasingly snarky as the day goes on . Despite this , as Jim leaves the office to return to his business , he confesses to Pam that he thinks the three habits are helping and that they should keep them up . After he leaves , Pam runs after him to give him an umbrella . Jim takes the umbrella , and then embraces his wife , who finds that she lacks the emotional conviction to hug him back . However , she remembers that by marrying Jim she promised to love him in spite of any hardships , and she lovingly embraces him and kisses him .

= = Production = =

" Paper Airplane " was written by co @-@ executive producers Halsted Sullivan and Warren Lieberstein , marking their first writing credit for the season , as well as their first writing credit since season eight 's " Turf War " . It was directed by first @-@ time Office director , Jesse Peretz . Comedian Roseanne Barr guest stars in this episode . It was announced on January 31 , 2013 that

she would be doing a two episode arc and would play a talent agent named Carla Fern . Barr began filming her scenes the week following January 31 . She first appeared in the previous episode , " Stairmageddon " .

The episode features both archival footage ? as well as new footage ? of Pam and Jim 's wedding from the sixth season episode " Niagara " . In order to get a shot of Pam and Jim looking into the camera , Greg Daniels restaged the scene four years after " Niagara " had been filmed . Daniels noted , " To get Jim and Pam 's eye line right for the camera , I stepped in as the minister [when the camera was facing them] so they were both looking at me with the full actor @-@ power of all the emotions they were supposed to be feeling at their own wedding , just blasting in my face . I got chills and a fever . "

= = Cultural references = =

Dwight refers to the new paper as the " Cadillac of paper " . Andy notes that if he is successful in his industrial film , he could potentially land a role in the movie Moneyballs 2 , a sequel to the 2011 film Moneyball starring Brad Pitt . When told to act like he is doing a newscast , Andy does a Tom Brokaw impersonation . Andy also says that if necessary he will go all @-@ nude for the role in a " full @-@ on Lena Dunham " , a reference to her skit at the 64th Primetime Emmy Awards . Darryl tells Andy that he was in a production of The Wiz in high school . Kevin mistakes Orville and Wilbur Wright ? the credited inventors of the airplane ? for " Wilbur and Orville Redenbacher " ? a brand of popcorn . In the last scene , when Jim and Pam resolve their differences , the cut @-@ scene shows the minister reading 1 Corinthians 13 : 7 ? 13 from the Bible .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Paper Airplane " originally aired on April 25 , 2013 on NBC . In its original American broadcast , the episode was viewed by an estimated 3 @. @ 25 million viewers and received a 1 @. @ 7 rating / 5 percent share . At 3 @. @ 25 million viewers , it is the lowest rated episode of the series to ever air . This means that it was seen by 1 @. @ 7 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 5 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This marked a decrease in the ratings from the previous episode , " Stairmageddon " . The Office ranked fourth in its timeslot , being beaten by an episode of the ABC series Grey 's Anatomy which scored a 2 @. @ 7 / 7 rating , an entry of the CBS series Person of Interest which garnered a 2 @. @ 4 / 7 rating , and installment of the Fox series Glee which received a 1 @. @ 8 / 5 rating . When DVR numbers were included , the episode was watched by 4 @. @ 956 million viewers and increased its ratings up 65 percent to a 2 @. @ 8 , meaning it was seen by , in total , 2 @. @ 8 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds .

= = = Reviews = = =

Roth Cornet of IGN awarded the episode an 8 @. @ 5 out of 10 , denoting a " great " episode . She praised the final scene , and said that Pam 's decision was " a gorgeously simple emotional shift " . She was complimentary towards the balance between characters and felt that " the rest of the episode was entertaining and well constructed , if not earth shatteringly hilarious . " Dan Forcella of TV Fanatic awarded the episode four out of five stars , summarizing that " An otherwise funny episode of The Office , highlighted by Toby 's awkwardness , Dwight 's craziness and Kevin 's pride , was held back by yet another trip down Pam and Jim 's boring avenue of problems . "

Nick Campbell of TV.com gave the episode a more moderate review , writing that " The Jam story was probably the only bright spot for me in an episode generally devoid of chuckles " , and that it was " not a terrible episode , but basic and a little boring . " He was complimentary towards the

conclusion of the Jim @-@ Pam plot , noting that the final scene was " a warm moment " , although he was surprised by the scene 's placement in the season as a whole . Alan Sepinwall of HitFix wrote positively of the finale scene , noting that " it really worked " , and that Krasinski and Fischer were " terrific " during the sequence . However , he said that the " comedy parts of ' Paper Airplane ' were so dire I 'm not going to dwell on them at all " .

Erik Adams of The A.V. Club awarded the episode a " C + " and felt that the finale scene , while set up to be emotional , was " hollow " . He argued that the tension does not feel as threatening as it should ; he compared it to the second season episode " Casino Night " , which had invoked real fears about the future of Jim and Pam . He summed up : " I wish the final scene of ? Paper Airplane ? made me feel something deeper . " Adams also was not impressed with the Dwight @-@ Angela storyline , but was " enjoying Andy ? s day on the industrial @-@ safety film ? much more so than [he] anticipated " due to the " unintentional hilarity " that ensued .

Roseanne Barr 's performance was later submitted by the producers of The Office for an " Outstanding Guest Actor in Comedy Series " Emmy consideration .