

Another Office Party

This evening, I watched the final three episodes of the premiere season of *The Clinic* (ooopssss.... [The Office](#)). I am now absolutely hooked and need to seek out the second and third seasons before April 10 (although I am sure that I will not be able to watch them all.. unless I have an Office party :0). The first segment found Jim jokingly forming an “Alliance” with Dwight in order to investigate the downsizing rumor surrounding the Scranton, PA branch of Dunder-Mifflin. Dwight ends up being taped inside a shipping box to spy on other employees. Hilarious!!!!

The second episode found Michael and the staff taking on the warehouse workers in a “friendly?” game of basketball. Each side places a small bet on the outcome. Michael chooses the players that he thinks will defeat the other team in typical stereotypical fashion and hilarity ensues.

In the final episode of season one, an attractive new saleswoman (Amy Adams) enters the office to sell purses. Michael, Dwight (something strange about that one), and Jim each try to win her affections. Pam’s fiance Roy (David Denman) also makes it known that he finds the new arrival very fetching.

After the final segment, I found myself wanting more. I was hoping to hear that Pam finally dumped her jerk of a fiance (after a three year engagement) and moved on to Jim. Of course, just watching the first season it seemed like a forgone conclusion. Who would be the victim(s) of downsizing? A few of these questions were answered by those who know, but I do want to catch up eventually.

I just cannot believe that I have not discovered this hilarious comedy full of great characters, a fantastic ensemble, and brilliant creative staff before now. I also like

the references to other series some of which are not part of NBC's lineup of shows (*Survivor* to name one).

Please forgive my allusion to *The Clinic* at the beginning of the post. A wonderful one-act play which I was part of in January 2007).

New Must See TV

Now... I have another show to look forward to on Thursday nights (one of the few evenings on which I actually find enjoyable shows). [*The Office*](#) is a hilarious mockumentary based upon a British series. It concerns the everyday workings of the Dunder-Mifflin Paper company. The ensemble cast is awesome. Steve Carell plays the regional manager, Michael Scott. Rainn Wilson plays Dwight, assistant to the regional manager, . John Krasinski portrays salesman Jim. Jenna Fischer is seen as long suffering receptionist Pam Beasley. Finally, B.J. Novak plays Ryan the temp.

I was lucky enough to become acquainted with the show the other night and tried hard to hold my laughter in as some children were trying to go to sleep so the Easter Bunny would come, but at times it was nearly impossible. I saw the first three episodes of the series in which the characters are introduced.

All three episodes were hilarious, but I would have to say that I enjoyed the health-care segment most. Michael is ordered to choose a new health care package for his staff which will dramatically cut the one already in place. He decides to delegate the responsibility to his assistant. Dwight chooses a plan that is so bad that Michael hides in his office to escape the employee's anger. Michael also attempts

to ease the tension by promising a surprise which turns out to be ice cream sandwiches.

Also memorable was a faux-Punked scene in which Pam believes that she has become the victim of downsizing. I also loved the diversity-integration meeting. So much great stuff in only 3 episodes. Unfortunately, it was getting too late before I was able to see all 6 episodes of season 1. Steve Carell is phenomenal as the jerky but hilarious leader of this fine ensemble. New episodes begin April 10 on NBC. Is Thursday night still known as "Must See TV on NBC?"

The Office and The Anniversary

Our wedding anniversary is coming up – this year marks #9! – and there's a pretty cool gift we get this year: the first new Office episode in months! Steve Carell gave an interview with *TvGuide*, and said that his character Michael Scott is hosting a dinner party, and it goes terribly awry. If you know anything about the show, then you know how hilarious this will be and are looking forward to it as much as we are. So on April 10, check out the first brand new Office episode since the writer's strike saga!

And that reminds me, on April 10, 2009, we are hopefully going to have the time and resources to put together a "second wedding" for our tenth anniversary. We didn't know any of our Ohio friends when we got married way back in '99, so we'd like to renew our vows and "get married" all over again in Ohio, 10 years later! And, luckily for us, April 10, 2009 falls on a Friday! So, this year we will be watching the Office. Next

year, we will be “getting married” again, hopefully!

SPLASH! It's Mr. Woodcock in Real Life

We went kinda crazy with the movies this weekend... We watched the 1984 classic [Splash](#) with the kids, and we also took in [Mr. Woodcock](#) and [Dan in Real Life](#) (for the adults). [Splash](#) is a [Tom Hanks](#) and [Daryl Hannah](#) movie about a mermaid who leaves the ocean to come to New York city and fall in love with Tom Hanks. It sounds dumb, but it's actually pretty well done and a movie with substance and heart. The special effects of her fins aren't bad either, considering they're over 20 years old and most likely made without computer assistance. Since I haven't seen the movie since I was a kid, I was wondering this time around about how many takes it took to film the underwater scenes... mainly the one where Daryl Hannah's character looks on a map in a sunken ship to find where Tom Hanks lives. Also, there's a scene in the movie where they are trying to choose a name for the mermaid, since her name is unpronounceable in English. They're walking down a New York street, and Tom Hanks mutters, “where are we, Madison...” to which Daryl Hannah replies, “Madison, I like Madison.” That was a joke in the movie at the time, that the mermaid was named after a street in New York, but nowadays, the name Madison is almost TOO popular. We had about 4 Madisons or Maddies in a play we directed last year out of 21 kids! Anyway, I would recommend this as a good family movie, especially for little girls. There is actually some nudity (female rear end), and I could have done without a few of the kissing scenes, but overall, it is good family entertainment. I wonder if it would have gotten a PG13 rating if it had come

out a few years later? I know there is a [Splash Too](#), but judging by the lack of returning actors, I haven't bothered to check it out. After a quick lookup on [imdb.com](#), I found that it got a whopping 3.0 rating with only 170 votes. Also interesting is that Madison the mermaid in [Splash Too](#) is played by [Amy Yasbeck](#), who is nowadays best known for being [John Ritter's](#) widow. She was good in her bit part in [Pretty Woman](#), but still... I wonder if I should bother getting it from the library for the kids? Also in the original [Splash](#) is [Eugene Levy](#), who plays the bad guy trying to expose the mermaid – literally, by throwing water on her in public. This must be one of his first movies; I think he was a relatively unknown actor back then... Also, the late, great [John Candy](#) is hilarious as Tom Hanks' party animal brother, and those two have great chemistry in the movie... but on to the adult movies... ahem, I'm talking about the movies we watched without the kids...

Mr. Woodcock is a comedy starring [Billy Bob Thornton](#), who came no where near to reminding me of his character in [Sling Blade](#) – that's probably why he was nominated for an Oscar for that performance. I wasn't expecting much from this movie, but it was actually worse than I thought. It wasn't horrible, and I didn't feel like I wasted my time watching it, but it wasn't very funny, and there wasn't much to get from it. For one thing, I thought they would make the Mr. Woodcock character a little more nasty. As it turned out, he was really only nasty to little kids, which is still pretty bad, but I thought we'd catch him being nasty behind his girlfriend's back. Let me back up for a minute and give a plot synopsis – Mr. Woodcock is a horribly nasty gym teacher who terrorized kids so badly that a former student uses his experiences as fodder for an inspiring self-help book he wrote. This former student returns to his hometown in Nebraska to receive the “corn key to the city” only to find that his mom is happily dating Mr. Woodcock – his childhood nemesis! The successful author is played by [Seann William Scott](#), whose acting I wasn't thrilled

with. His mother was played by [Susan Sarandon](#), and she was pretty good in the movie, given the character she had to play, who didn't have much depth. Like I said, I didn't feel like I wasted my time on this movie, but I don't know that I'd watch it again either. It definitely wasn't one of my favorite comedies.

Dan in Real Life is a touching comedy (just falls short of a dra-medy, I would say, not quite sad enough, thank goodness) about a columnist widower named Dan (the ever-awesome [Steve Carell](#)) who is raising 3 daughters alone. The girls seem to be about 16, 14, and 9. For starters, let's just say that this movie had me dreading my life in about 10 years – the movie depicted teenage girls as frightening challenges for parents! Anyway, Dan takes his girls to visit their extended family for a few days, and when he first arrives, he really falls for the 'perfect woman'. He gets to his mom and dad's house, and wouldn't you know it, the 'perfect woman' turns out to be his brother's girlfriend. After a few days of torture... well, I'll let you watch the movie, I don't want to spoil anything for you. It's a really cute romantic comedy. If you have sons, you will be amused at Dan's daughters' antics. If you have daughters, be afraid, be very afraid! On another note, Steve Carell has beaten out Tom Hanks as my favorite actor – he is just amazing and so fun to watch, whether it's in [the Office](#), [Evan Almighty](#), or Dan in Real Life. His characters never remind me of each other, and it's not like they're mentally impaired like Billy Bob Thornton in Sling Blade or Tom Hanks in [Forrest Gump](#) – sometimes those types of characters are actually easier to play since they have a very specific demeanor about them. Steve Carell plays 'regular' guys, yet he gives them such depth and character that it really helps draw you into the movie and / or show. I never watched the tv show [Get Smart](#), but with Steve Carell playing Maxwell Smart in the big screen version of [Get Smart](#) due this summer, you can bet I plan on checking it out! Dan in Real Life is funny and heartwarming, and it makes me

look forward to having huge family get-together weekends at our house someday with the kids and their spouses and kids... providing we survive the teenage years of course – that remains to be seen!

3's a Crowd?

Announcing a new addition to the family: Beesley! No, we didn't have the baby early – Beesley is of the canine variety. She is named for a character on what is quite possibly the best tv show ever, The Office (Pam Beesley). Now that the writer's strike is over, we can once again look forward to new episodes of this great show. This way, if Pam and Jim get married, there is still a Beesley namesake ☐



She is a cocker spaniel mix about 5 1/2 yrs. old. She is black and white and really cute! She's great with kids, and we've had a bit of a rocky start with our other 2 dogs, but we think 3 dogs will be good company and not a crowd soon. We got her from the humane society, which is always a crap-shoot, but **well worth it** if you do your research. Get to know the breed of dog you're considering (if possible, sometimes they don't always know what a mutt is made of!), and spend a lot of time getting to know the potential pet and vice versa – bring your whole family to test the dog around kids and look at a bunch of dogs to get an idea of what kind of personality and habits you may or may not want in a new family member. Remember, this pet will be living with you and your loved ones

for hopefully a number of years, so it's really important to find a good fit! Giving a pet a home who needs one is so rewarding! It's really easy and fun to go puppy shopping at a pet store because let's face it, puppies are some of the cutest things ever! But remember, they grow out of the cute and teeny phase within MONTHS, sometimes even mere WEEKS! Puppies are not potty-trained, and you will have no idea how easy (or difficult!) your new puppy will be to potty train. Our first dog took **years** to potty-train, whereas our 2nd dog basically potty-trained herself even though she was a young puppy when she came into our home. Beesley is already potty-trained, and she seems to have had a good home in the past. She is used to being let out on a cable in the backyard, knows her way around the house, and basically seems to fit right in so far at least... So, our crap-shoot seems to have paid off thus far! I will keep you posted!