

“that’s what she said”

a ford & harrison blog about the popular television series “the office”

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Gags

October 15, 2010 - by: [Kristin Starnes Gray](#)

Kidnapping day laborers = possible jail time for Dwight; giving Oscar another paid vacation and use of a company car= \$15,000; settling claims related to Andy’s sex-ed course = more than just some free pizza; watching Michael try to convince an elderly stranger that they were once lovers = priceless.

Between Michael tracking down his former girlfriends over an STD scare and Andy using a sex-ed course to find out if Erin is practicing abstinence, last night’s shenanigans certainly made for an expensive and unproductive day for Sabre. One of the many lessons from last night’s episode is that romantic relationships between employees can lead to serious awkwardness and even potential liability. For example, after noticing a cold sore, Michael began a mission to notify his past girlfriends that they might have herpes. This list of old flames included his former supervisor, a human resources manager, and even Oscar (which we’ll get to shortly). I must admit, though, that I enjoyed Michael interrupting Jan’s ridiculous sing-a-long by abruptly stating , “I have herpes.”

<http://blogs.hrhero.com/thatswhatsheaid/>

Andy's lingering feelings for Erin drove him to lure his coworkers to a pizza party only to surprise them with personal questions about their sex lives. While Andy's concerns about how coworkers treated Meredith after she admitted to having herpes were admirable, an impromptu sex-ed course with graphic photographs of genitalia (both with and without "some herpes on it") was a big mistake. Sabre may be able to argue that at least some of the conduct wasn't unwelcome, given that several employees happily participated in Andy's class by shouting out various "pros" of sex.

It was clear from everyone's reaction, however, that no one welcomed Andy's photographs of genitalia. It also was clear that Andy's main reason for the class was to find out if Erin and Gabe have consummated their relationship. Rule #1 — It generally isn't appropriate to ask your coworkers about their sex lives. Furthermore, it's never wise to ask coworkers to admit that their children were little mistakes, and it is certainly never appropriate to comment on your sexual arousal (or lack thereof) to a room full of your colleagues. Big mistake. Huge!

Speaking of mistakes, that brings me to Michael's decision to accuse Oscar of giving him "herpes duplex" before interrogating Oscar about his sexual partners. Looks like Oscar might soon be enjoying another three-month paid vacation to Europe and the use of a company Lexus, especially after Sabre learns Michael and Dwight accused him of having sexual relations on carriage rides, at the Democratic primaries, in public restrooms, and even at a fence with a hole in it. Sabre will just need to be sure that Oscar signs a release before packing his bags to enjoy a much-needed break from Scranton's antics.

Although currently no federal statute prohibits [sexual orientation or gender identity discrimination](#) in private (non-governmental) employment, the [Employment Non-Discrimination Act \(ENDA\)](#) has been considered several times by Congress. ENDA would prohibit employers, labor organizations, and employment agencies from discriminating against workers based on homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

President Obama has indicated that he believes the federal antidiscrimination laws should prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. It's important to keep in mind that [a number of states and localities have already enacted laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity](#). In addition, although [Title VII](#) doesn't prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, some courts have permitted plaintiffs to proceed on claims that they were harassed or discriminated against because of sexual stereotyping.

In conclusion, here are just a few additional lessons to take away from last night's episode. First, be your best self. Second, do not kidnap day-laborers, drop them off in an unfamiliar place, and tell them they're in Canada. Finally, never ever hire someone to fight a do-or-die battle against a swarming nest of hornets as the entire office watches.

<http://blogs.hrhero.com/thatswhatsheaid/>