

# “that’s what she said”

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

## The Play’s the Thing

October 08, 2010 - by: [Matt Rita](#)

**Litigation Value: A jug of wine, and thou. Unless the bottle nicked by Michael Scott (and shared with some of his coworkers) contained a vintage beyond the norm for community theater events, we could limit our legal discussion to petty theft. But how instructive — or fun — would that be?**

With the most recent episode of The Office taking place almost exclusively outside the office, one might ask how any employment law lessons can be teased out of it. Yet, if the Bard was right that “[a]ll the world’s a stage,” then surely we can analogize the Sweeney Todd performance of Andy (a/k/a Anthony Hope) and his fellow Scranton thespians to the modern-day workplace. So, here goes:

“[O]ne man [or woman] in his [or her] time plays many parts.” Don’t forget that the person who works next to you may have other roles in addition to the ones assigned to her/him on the job. For example, who knew that Creed was a furtive theater critic on the side? And when did Darryl, in the midst of his warehouse duties, learn to tickle the ivories like that? Probably about the same time his plumber discovered his own pipes (figuratively speaking).

“At first the infant, [m]ewling and puking in the nurse’s arms.” As Jim and Pam learned, finding a reliable caregiver for one’s offspring can be a daunting task. As they watched

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Erin holding their firstborn in the back of a theater after bedtime, it's safe to say that they won't be calling on her babysitting services again.

"And then the lover, [s]ighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad." If the "contract" between Dwight and Angela is ever consummated, then surely the sighing will become rejoicing. But for now, take note of how one party (Schrute) is focused on the letter of the agreement, while the other (Martin) embraces its spirit. Such disconnects are the stuff of which legal disputes are often made.

"Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel." How better to describe Michael? Envious that the lead role was given to someone else — despite his epic Law and Order audition — he booed during the audience's standing ovation. Is that not the same insecure mindset with which some managers evaluate their up-and-coming subordinates?

"Full of wise saws and modern instances." The modern instance on display while Andy performed on stage was the interruption created by his mobile device. Who among us has not attended a meeting during which the clarion call of an incoming e-mail or text has transported a fellow participant to a different (if not more important) setting?

"[S]econd childishness and mere oblivion." How can it be avoided? At least in part, and for a time, by the type of collegiality on display while Andy struggled with the post-show blues. Although the fellow employee (Erin) for whom he yearned most was elsewhere (with Gabe?), Sabre's best vocalist and banjo player clearly benefited from the collective "attaboy" offered up by his colleagues. Even the somnolent Stanley was upright during that important moment.

"[In]side the gilded cage." What does this have to do with Shakespeare, or As You Like It? To be honest, not much. But, the quote refers indirectly to some of this blogger's past references, as well as to where he looks forward to spending some time later this month. More on that in a future post. . . .