

## Gretchen Sisson, PhD

### Sociologist



Gretchen Sisson is a qualitative sociologist whose research focuses on social constructions of parenthood, specifically examining teen pregnancy and young parenthood, infertility and assisted reproductive technologies, and adoption and birth motherhood. Her current research with ANSIRH focuses on representations of abortion and reproductive decision-making in popular culture, including film and television. Dr. Sisson's past work on reframing models of teen pregnancy prevention has been published in the *Journal of Sexuality Research and Social Policy*. She

received her BA from Amherst College and her PhD from Boston College.

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### Research projects and studies

**Abortion Onscreen.** At ANSIRH, we are interested in not only abortion as a healthcare and policy issue, but also in how it operates in cultural conversations and narratives. American film and television—the screen—is one place where cultural stories about abortion play out. Abortion Onscreen is a research program aimed at investigating these stories and understanding their effects on broader social understandings of abortion.

### Recent publications

- April 2020. *Abortion Providers on Politically Engaging Patients (Women's Health Issues, April 2020)*  
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- July 2019. *Hangers, Potions, and Pills: Abortion Procedures on American Television, 2008 to 2018 (Women's Health Issues, July 2019)*  
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- December 2018. *Abortion Onscreen in 2018 (December 2018)*  
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- December 2017. *From humor to horror: genre and narrative purpose in abortion stories on American television (Feminist Media Studies, December 2017)*  
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- December 2017. *Abortion Onscreen in 2017 (December 2017)*  
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- September 2017. *"The stakes are so high": interviews with progressive journalists reporting on abortion (Contraception, September 2017)*  
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- August 2017. *"The stakes are so high": Journalists Reporting on Abortion (August 2017)*  
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- July 2017. *"I was close to death!": abortion and medical risk on American television, 2005–2016 (Contraception, July 2017)*

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- March 2017. Adoption Decision Making among Women Seeking Abortion (*Women's Health Issues*, March 2017)

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- February 2017. Depicting abortion access on American television, 2005–2015 (*Feminism & Psychology*, February 2017)

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## Media coverage

- How a Crop of New Movies Is Changing the Narrative About Abortion (TIME, 3.13.20)
- It Took Almost 50 Years, But TV Is Finally Getting Abortion Stories (Mostly) Right (Refinery29, 12.6.19)
- How Shondaland Shows Changed the Way We View Abortion on TV (Shondaland, 11.21.19)
- 'Planned Parenthood's Secret Weapon' (Washington Post, 9.23.19)
- How comedy is speaking up about abortion (BBC, 8.22.19)
- As America Debates Abortion, Hollywood Seeks the Realities (The New York Times, 7.18.19)
- TV Has Shifted Our Cultural Perception of Who Has Abortions (Bitch Media, 7.2.19)
- When Abortion Becomes Ordinary (Ms. Magazine, 7.1.19)
- Beyond the Back Alley "Call the Midwife" and TV's Stubborn Abortion Binary (Bitch Media, 5.21.19)
- TV and Film's Most Accurate Depictions of Abortions (Pop Dust, 5.17.19)