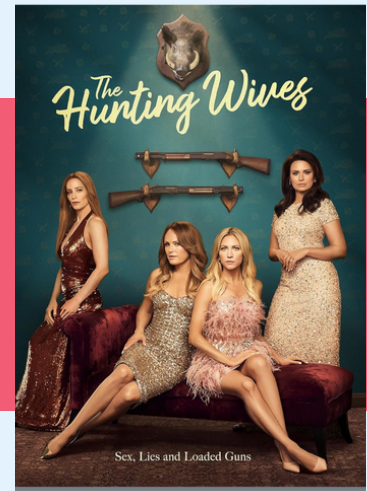


# Abortion Onscreen

## in 2025



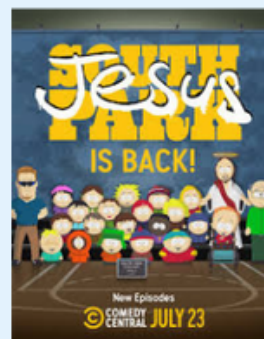
This year, we tracked 65 abortion plotlines or significant abortion mentions across cable, broadcast and streaming channels. Notably, of all the abortion plotlines this year, only 37% featured a character who actually obtained an abortion—considerably lower than the last few years (42% in 2024, and 51% in 2023). In addition to documenting some familiar and emerging patterns, we observed a disturbing return to old tropes that render abortion invisible onscreen and reinforce stigmatizing myths and misinformation.

**Last year was the first time we tracked that characters of color appeared more frequently in abortion plotlines compared to white characters, and this year's data continue that pattern, with characters of color making up 46% and white characters at 38%.** They also had the same chances of having an abortion; 50% of white characters and 50% of characters of color appeared in plotlines where they actually obtained abortions. These trends are particularly important to track, as the [majority](#) of people who have abortions in real life are people of color. While the majority of abortion patients are struggling to make ends meet, on television, characters seeking abortions are most likely to be middle class or wealthy (80%). This obscures the role that poverty plays in obstructing access to abortion, and perhaps explains why we so rarely see plotlines in which characters wrestle with financial barriers to abortion access. As in previous years, shockingly few characters are parenting at the time of their abortions (8%), a striking departure from reality in which the majority of people who have abortions are parents.

**Mirroring trends from the last two years, one-third of this year's plotlines depict barriers to abortion access, with historical and contemporary illegality as the most commonly depicted barriers.** Nearly all of the plotlines depicting historical illegality were set outside the United States (i.e., *Call the Midwife*, *The Dead Girls*, *House of Guinness*, *The Lady's Companion*), while plotlines depicting modern barriers to abortion access were set both abroad and in the U.S. Of the shows tackling contemporary barriers, two addressed parental consent (*Days of Our Lives*, *The Pitt*), while several portrayed gestational bans (*W.A.G.s to Riches*, *Unmasked*, *Love You to Death*), travel considerations (*Family Guy*, *Adults*, *Will Trent*, *The Pitt*), and total abortion bans (*The Hunting Wives*, *South Park*). Though several shows depicted compounding barriers (*Days of Our Lives*, *The Pitt*, and *W.A.G.s to Riches*)—particularly related to travel—the majority of these plotlines did not show the complex reality of debilitating abortion restrictions across the United States, which include but are not limited to pregnancy criminalization, attempted bans on medication abortion generally and bans on specific types of medication abortion provision, and criminal indictments of abortion providers, in addition to the interpersonal challenges of raising money towards the cost of the abortion and seeking time off of work and childcare for the abortion appointment itself.

This is a missed opportunity to provide contextual depth to the onerous experience of accessing an abortion in the U.S. in 2025. Though the show *Sistas* did not depict a character having an abortion, it did show the impact of anti-abortion policy; a character wanted to discard her embryos, but was unable to do so due to a Georgia law that recognizes them as human life. Though this is not an accurate representation of current Georgia law, still, it is one of the only shows to depict the impact of abortion restrictions on fertility care.

**This year, we noted the return of several troubling themes, notably the association of abortion with shame and death.** Several shows portrayed religious opposition to abortion, focusing on characters who were unable to reconcile their Christianity with the possibility of an abortion, even in dire health circumstances. On one *Chicago Med* episode, a religious patient presents at the hospital, and discovers that she has an ectopic pregnancy as a result of rape. After having an abortion, she worries that her fiancé will never forgive her, and he admits that he will, “eventually.” On *1923*, *The Secret We Keep*, and *Breathless*, religious convictions kept characters from pursuing what could have been life-saving abortions. These depictions both obscure the **diversity of religious observance** among people having abortions, portraying religious patients as exclusively Christian, and also only associating religion with prohibiting abortion, instead of being a meaningful or supportive part of someone’s abortion decision-making and experience. Though not religiously themed, other shows linked abortion and shame by having characters describe past abortions as unforgivable (*Her Majesty*, *All’s Fair*), call people who have abortions “killers” (*Happy Face*), and otherwise ridicule people who have abortions (*The Real Housewives of ATL*, *W.A.G.s to Riches*).



This year’s plotlines linked abortion and death in new ways; characters did not, as in past years, die as a result of unsafe abortions. Instead, they themselves killed or wounded others, either to keep the abortion from becoming public (*The Hunting Wives*) or as a punishment for partners attempting to coerce an abortion (*The Couple Next Door*). Other plotlines revealed a past abortion or consideration of an abortion as a clue to a character’s untimely death (*Graveyard*, *The Snow Girl 2: Soul Game*, *The Secrets We Keep*, *The Dead Girls*, *The New Force*), linking abortion with danger, even if a character’s death is not directly caused by abortion.

More subtly, **some shows reinforced the perceived unacceptability of abortion by depicting characters having false pregnancies and convenient miscarriages.** On *Doctor Odyssey* and *Beyond the Gates*, both Avery and Naomi, respectively, are devoted to their careers and do not want to parent, and both plotlines avoid the potential ramifications of either character seeking an abortion by having them both discover that they were never really pregnant after all. On other shows (*Nobody Saw Us Leave*, *The Witcher*, *Love You to Death*), characters consider abortions and ultimately decide to carry to term, yet have miscarriages, allowing them to achieve the same outcome as having an abortion without any of the attendant stigma or shame. Five plotlines (*Harlem*, *Mythic Quest*, *And Just Like That*, *Matlock*, and *Will Trent*) show characters who consider abortions and ultimately decide to carry their pregnancies to term, surprising themselves and their partners. Though these plotlines might be unremarkable on their own, placed in the context of overall abortion depictions, these storylines suggest that abortion is an outcome to be considered, perhaps, but never willingly chosen.

Slightly less than a quarter (18%) of this year’s characters received emotional support before, during, or after their abortions, down from about one-third in 2024. These included plotlines from some of this year’s most-watched television shows, such as *The Pitt* and *Ginny & Georgia*, both of which depicted family members supporting teenagers through their abortions. *Adults* portrayed friends who support an out-of-town teen traveling to New York for an abortion, and *Harlem* depicted a mom disclosing her abortion to her daughter, Camille, after Camille shares that she’s pregnant. At least three plotlines (*Mythic Quest*, *Will Trent*, *Doctor Odyssey*) portrayed partners who stated that they’d support the pregnant character regardless of her decision, and those characters each ultimately continued their pregnancies.

Though the majority of plotlines had no context related to support (53%), about one-third of plotlines showcased a lack of support for the pregnant character. This was most commonly portrayed as a character experiencing an abortion alone; plotlines on *Too Much*, *Just Alice*, and *The Snow Girl 2: Soul Game* all portrayed abortion as a solitary, isolating experience, reinforcing stigmatizing narratives of abortion as something that a character must suffer through without the care or guidance of loved ones.

**Finally, this year's plotlines continue particular trends of invisibility.** Only three plotlines included depictions of medication abortions; one of those portrayed a character ordering abortion pills online as a result of not being able to afford in-person care, though this character is later killed, unrelated to her abortion. This small proportion of medication abortion onscreen is particularly important given that the [vast majority of abortions](#) in the U.S. today are medication abortions delivered in-clinic, via telehealth, and self-managed by patients. Another notable absence relates to the reasons characters seek abortions: more than half of this year's plotlines (60%) provided no context for a character's abortion decision-making. The abortion is briefly mentioned and not brought up again, a missed opportunity to provide rich context and background for the character. When characters did share their reasons for seeking abortions, the most frequently noted are age (8%), usually in the context of a character deciding she is too young to parent, or partner-related reasons (6%), often related to infidelity. While these are reminiscent of some of the reasons real life people seek abortion care, they are not representative of the most [commonly reported reasons](#), which include financial concerns, mistimed pregnancies, and the need to care for existing children.



Below is a table of all of the television plotlines we tracked over the course of 2025 in which a character obtains an abortion, discloses a past abortion, or discusses abortion as a political or cultural issue. All of these television shows are available to U.S. audiences on streaming, broadcast, or cable networks. Given the sheer volume of television content, it is highly likely that we missed several abortion plotlines. Please let us know if we missed one, and share your feedback on any of these themes and trends. Visit the [Abortion Onscreen page](#) to browse our complete database of abortion plotlines on television and film, and to see past years' abortion plotlines.

## Learn more about #AbortionOnscreen

 [ansirh.org/AbortionOnscreen](https://ansirh.org/AbortionOnscreen)



# Abortion on Scripted and Reality Television, 2025

Show and Network	Episode	Airdate	Type of Content
<i>Days of Our Lives</i> (Peacock)	Ep. #15027, Ep. #15028	1/8/25, 1/9/25	Consideration
<i>The Pitt</i> (Max)	7:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:00AM, 12:00 PM, 1:00 PM, 5:00 PM	1/8/2025, 1/22/25, 1/29/25, 2/6/25, 3/13/2025	Abortion
<i>Alpha Males</i> (Netflix)	She's Definitely a Lesbian	1/10/25	Joke
<i>Harlem</i> (Prime)	Fallopian Blues	1/23/25	Abortion
<i>W.A.G.s to Riches</i> (Netflix)	Like Us	1/25/25	Abortion
<i>Married to Medicine</i> (Bravo)	Key West	1/26/25	Discussion
<i>Unmasked</i> (Hulu)	Inertia	1/29/25	Consideration
<i>The Snow Girl 2: Soul Game</i> (Netflix)	Episode 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1/31/25	Abortion
<i>Love You to Death</i> (Apple+)	Advertising	2/5/25	Consideration
<i>Chicago Med</i> (Peacock)	Take a Look in the Mirror	2/19/25	Abortion
<i>The Couple Next Door</i> (Starz)	The Ultimatum	2/14/25	Consideration
<i>I am Married...But!</i> (Netflix)	Episode 9	2/14/25	Discussion
<i>Love is Blind</i> (Netflix)	Hunger Games of Love, Oh Spare Me, Reunion	2/14/25, 2/28/25, 3/9/25	Discussion
<i>Best Interests</i> (AcornTV)	Episode 2	2/17/25	Discussion
<i>Mythic Quest</i> (Apple+)	Second Skeleton	2/19/25	Consideration
<i>Graveyard</i> (Netflix)	Silent Devil: Part 1	2/27/25	Consideration



# Abortion on Scripted and Reality Television, 2025

Show	Episode	Airdate	Type of Content
<i>Su Majestad</i> (Prime)	Queen	2/27/25	Abortion
<i>Dabba Cartel</i> (Netflix)	Episode 2	2/28/25	Consideration
<i>Family Guy</i> (Hulu)	Drunk With Power	3/2/25	Joke
<i>Doctor Odyssey</i> (Hulu)	Shark Attack!, Shark Attack! Part 2: Orca!, Casino Week, Hot Tub Week	3/6/2025, 3/13/25, 3/20/25, 4/10/25	Consideration
<i>Power Book III: Raising Kanan</i> (Starz)	Gangstas Don't Die, It's All Love	3/7/25, 3/14/25	Abortion
<i>Happy Face</i> (Paramount+)	Was it Worth It?, Controlled Burn, Don't Dream	3/7/25, 4/2/25, 4/9/25	Abortion
<i>The Lady's Companion</i> (Netflix)	Your Desires Come Second	3/8/25	Consideration
<i>Beyond the Gates</i> (CBS)	Episode 23, Episode 29, Episode 33, Episode 46, Episode 47, Episode 48	3/28/25, 4/7/25, 4/11/25, 5/2/25, 5/5/25, 5/8/25	Consideration
<i>Grey's Anatomy</i> (ABC)	Don't You (Forget About Me)	4/3/25	Discussion
<i>1923</i> (Paramount+)	A Dream and a Memory	4/6/25	Consideration
<i>Black Mirror</i> (Netflix)	Eulogy	4/10/25	Consideration
<i>Call the Midwife</i> (Netflix)	Episode 4	4/20/25	Consideration
<i>Family Guy</i> (Fox)	China Doll	5/4/25	Joke
<i>Will Trent</i> (ABC)	Why Hello, Sherrif, Listening to a Heartbeat	5/6/25, 5/13/25	Consideration

# Abortion on Scripted and Reality Television, 2025

Show	Episode	Airdate	Type of Content
<i>The Secrets We Keep</i> (Netflix)	Episode 4	5/15/25	Consideration
<i>Adults</i> (FX)	Annabelle	5/28/25	Abortion
<i>Ginny &amp; Georgia</i> (Netflix)	At Least It Can't Get Worse, That's Wild, Is That a Packed Lunch	6/5/25	Abortion
<i>The Real Housewives of Atlanta</i> (Bravo)	Chicken and Waffles	6/22/25	Abortion
<i>Family Guy</i> (Hulu)	Row v. Wade	7/3/25	Consideration
<i>Too Much</i> (Netflix)	Pink Valentine	7/10/25	Abortion
<i>Delirium</i> (Netflix)	The Final Spell	7/18/25	Abortion
<i>The Hunting Wives</i> (Netflix)	Sunrise Tells the Story, Cheat Day, Not Her First Rodeo, Deep in the Heart of Texas, Shooting Star, Sophie's Choice	7/21/25	Abortion
<i>Unspeakable Sins</i> (Netflix)	The Call, Heavy Blow	7/30/25	Consideration
<i>And Just Like That</i> (HBO)	Better Than Sex	7/31/25	Joke
<i>Outlander</i> (STARZ)	School of the Moon	8/15/25	Consideration
<i>The Dead Girls</i> (Netflix)	Bianca's Teeth	9/10/25	Abortion
<i>The Bold &amp; The Beautiful</i> (CBS)	Episode 9614, 9615	9/18/25	Consideration
<i>Billionaire's Bunker</i> (Netflix)	Return from Hell	9/19/25	Consideration
<i>South Park</i> (Paramount+)	Conflict of Interest, Twisted Christian, Unholy Birth	9/24/25	Consideration
<i>House of Guinness</i> (Netflix)	Episode 7, Episode 8	9/25/25	Abortion

# Abortion on Scripted and Reality Television, 2025

Show	Episode	Airdate	Type of Content
<i>The New Force</i> (Netflix)	Is This How It Works?	10/3/25	Abortion
<i>Law &amp; Order: SVU</i> (NBC)	The Vicious Circle	10/9/25	Abortion
<i>Beyond the Gates</i> (CBS)	Episode 148, Episode152, Episode155, Episode 156	10/10/25, 10/16/25	Consideration
<i>Matlock</i> (Paramount+)	The Before Times	10/12/25	Consideration
<i>Nobody Saw Us Leave</i> (Netflix)	Shut Up and Dance	10/15/25	Consideration
<i>The Witcher</i> (Netflix)	What I Love I Do Not Carry	10/30/25	Consideration
<i>Breathless</i> (Netflix)	Critical Phase	10/31/25	Consideration
<i>Just Alice</i> (Netflix)	Pablo	11/5/25	Abortion
<i>The Morning Show</i> (Apple+)	The Parent Trap	11/5/25	Discussion
<i>Grey's Anatomy</i> (ABC)	Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child	11/6/25	Discussion
<i>Maxton Hall</i> (Prime)	Devastated	11/7/25	Consideration
<i>All's Fair</i> (Hulu)	Everybody Dance Now	11/11/25	Abortion
<i>Law &amp; Order: SVU</i> (NBC)	False Idols	11/13/25	Abortion
<i>The Beast in Me</i> (Netflix)	The Beast and Me	11/13/25	Consideration
<i>I Love LA</i> (HBO)	Girl's Girl	11/16/25	Abortion
<i>Sistas</i> (BET)	Diamonds Are Forever	11/19/25	Discussion
<i>The Seduction</i> (HBO)	The Hell of High Society	11/21/25	Abortion