

# Report:



# Abortion Onscreen in 2019

# Abortion Onscreen Report: 2019

In a year defined by an unprecedented hostile policy environment to abortion, Hollywood is depicting abortion onscreen more often and in increasingly complex ways. In 2019, we documented forty-three abortion discussions and disclosures on television, more than we've ever observed in a single year. Hollywood is clearly paying attention to the policy landscape: many plotlines discussed abortion restrictions, featuring characters actively harmed by them (*Chicago Med*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *New Amsterdam*, *The Blacklist*), while others portrayed characters victimized by predatory Crisis Pregnancy Centers (*The Bold Type*, *Happy!*, *13 Reasons Why*).

Unlike in 2018, a majority (65%) of this year's characters who obtained abortions were white. This is a notable misrepresentation given that the majority of real people who have abortions are people of color. When a character of color was featured in an abortion plotline, however, they almost always had or disclosed an abortion. White characters are given more opportunities to engage with abortion as a political issue, a topic of conversation, and as healthcare. Despite the continued trend of underrepresentation of characters of color, we found more characters of color considering or obtaining abortions (13) this year than the last three years combined, including some significant firsts:

- *The Bold Type* portrayed the first conversation about past abortions among two young, queer Black women. This is particularly relevant given the lack of onscreen representation of queer women who obtain abortions.
- Three plotlines depicted anti-abortion Black characters (*Empire*, *New Amsterdam*, *Bull*), two of whom attempt to dissuade others from obtaining abortions. Plotlines often do not specifically discuss abortion in the context of race, and all three of these episodes make distinctions about a character's Blackness as it relates to abortion.
- *Orange is the New Black* portrayed the compounding barriers an undocumented, incarcerated Guatemalan immigrant must overcome to obtain an abortion.
- *Made in Heaven* featured the first South Asian woman to disclose a past abortion.

Other important trends include increasing depictions of attempted but ineffective self-managed abortions. On *Proven Innocent* and *Chicago Med*, the characters ordered abortion pills online, though neither had a complete abortion. *Orange is the New Black* and *Grey's Anatomy* portrayed characters attempting to self-induce an abortion with herbs, with both characters ultimately obtaining abortion pills. Television plotlines have yet to depict a character safely and effectively self-managing an abortion with pills ordered online.

As in prior years, we continue to see more comedies feature abortion plotlines. This year we documented not just abortion jokes (*Silicon Valley*, *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*) but also abortion procedures themselves featured in comedies like *Sex Education*, *Workin' Moms*, *Shrill*, *The Letdown*, and *VEEP*. Six out of twenty five characters obtaining abortions or disclosing past abortions were parents. This is more than we've seen in previous years' depictions, yet remains staggeringly low given that the majority of people who obtain abortions are raising children. Only one mother was a woman of color.

Despite the increase in the acknowledgment of the way anti-abortion laws obstruct abortion access, this year's portrayals still provide an incomplete picture of the safety of abortion, particularly self-managed abortion, and who obtains the majority of abortions in the United States: women of color who are raising children and struggling to make ends meet.



### **Outlander**

Episode: The Deep Heart's Core

Network: Starz

Airdate: 1/6/2019

On this historical time travel show, Brianna considers having an abortion after a pregnancy that resulted from sexual assault. She ultimately decides to carry the pregnancy to term, thinking that the father of the pregnancy might be her boyfriend and not the rapist.



### **Sex Education**

Episode: Two

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 1/11/2019

Maeve has an abortion with the support of her friend Otis, who brings her flowers post-procedure. Maeve has a surgical abortion, shown onscreen in an aseptic hospital-like environment. While this episode depicts thoughtful ways to support someone before and after an abortion, portraying the abortion itself in what looks like an ambulatory surgical center may contribute to unfounded myths about what kinds of facilities can perform abortions.



### **Shameless**

Episode: BOOOOOOOOOOOONE!

Network: Showtime

Airdate: 1/28/2019

Ingrid and Frank visit a fertility specialist to see if their treatment resulted in a pregnancy, and discover that all six embryos successfully implanted in Ingrid's uterus. Ingrid is overjoyed at the possibility of multiples, but both Frank and the clinician encourage her to have a selective reduction to, at most, three embryos. Ingrid initially agrees, and later, changes her mind, worried that this will be her last chance to become a parent. Later in the season, she breaks up with Frank, and, worried that he won't be able to provide for their children, agrees to have a reduction.



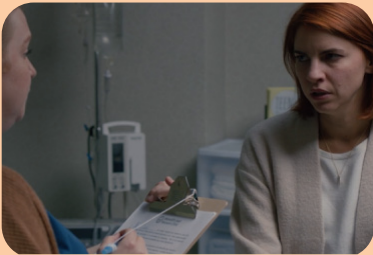
### **Victoria**

Episode: Foreign Bodies

Network: PBS

Airdate: 2/3/2019

Skerrett, Victoria's maid, is pregnant and visits an apothecary. They ask if she's there because she wants to be pregnant or because she does not want to be pregnant. In an episode focused on the tragedy of the cholera epidemic, it's significant that Skerrett is presented with some amount of control over her health.



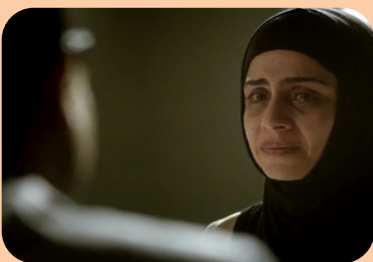
### **Workin' Moms**

Episode: Bare, Bye Bye Kate, Merde

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 2/22/2019

No-nonsense psychiatrist Anne discovers she's pregnant, and compiles a pro and con list about the pregnancy with her husband Lionel. The majority of real-life people who obtain abortions are already parenting, and this episode depicts a familiar scene to many: parents taking stock of whether they have the resources -- emotional, physical, financial -- to care for another child. Ultimately, Ann obtains an abortion with the support of Lionel and her friends.



### **Proven Innocent**

Episode: The Shame Game

Network: Fox

Airdate: 3/8/2019

This episode follows Sarah, a Muslim woman charged with feticide and murder for purchasing mifepristone online, having a stillbirth, and leaving the fetal remains at a construction site. In reality, states are prosecuting real people for buying abortion pills online, for attempted abortion self-management, and for stillbirths. This episode paints a confusing picture of what the legal risks and realities are for any of these actions.



### **Made in Heaven**

Episode: All That Glitters is Gold  
Network: Amazon Prime  
Airdate: 3/8/2019

This show follows Tara and Karan, two wedding planners who book the wedding of the Roshans, a prominent Punjabi family in Delhi. The groom's parents uncover that the bride, Aliya, has had an abortion, yet what upsets them is not the abortion but the news that she is not a virgin. Angad, the groom, lies to his parents, saying he was the father of the pregnancy, and when he shares this with Aliya, she is furious at this betrayal of trust. This depiction is unique in depicting a South Asian woman's abortion disclosure, the first we've seen on TV.



### **The Good Fight**

Episode: The One About the Recent Troubles, The One Inspired by Roy Cohn  
Network: CBS  
Airdate: 3/14/2019 and 3/28/2019

In her quest to do anything to resist President Donald Trump, lawyer Diane Lockhart uncovers a secret: he had a relationship with a sex worker, Tara, and paid for her abortion. Tara pleads with Diane not to disclose the abortion to anyone, but Diane leaks it to the media, later lying to Tara saying that she didn't do it. This classic ripped-from-the-headlines plotline showcases that Diane will do anything, even compromise her own values and later, her marriage, to resist the President.



### **Shrill**

Episode: Annie  
Network: Hulu  
Airdate: 3/15/2019

In this comedy based on Lindy West's memoir of the same name, young journalist Annie becomes pregnant after Plan B fails, later learning that the morning after pill is not as effective for overweight women. Annie's roommate Fran supports her in having a surgical abortion, holding her hand during the procedure. Annie's abortion is a pivotal moment in her personal and professional life – she comments that it's one of the first times she's made a decision just for herself, and she feels powerful. Notably, this is one of the few TV shows to depict an abortion onscreen in the first episode.



## **Grey's Anatomy**

Episode: Silent All These Years

Network: ABC

Airdate: 3/28/2019

Adoptee Dr. Jo Karev finally meets her birth mother, Vicki, and confronts her about the circumstances surrounding her birth and adoption, learning that Vicki was raped. Vicki details the extensive abuse she experienced from Jo's father, and Jo reciprocates, sharing that her ex-husband beat her and cracked her ribs, and when she found out she was pregnant, she had an abortion. This is one of many *Grey's Anatomy* episodes to showcase the connections between abortion, adoption, and parenting.



## **Hannah**

Episode: City

Network: Amazon Prime

Airdate: 3/28/2019

In this thriller set in Romania, a flashback reveals that Hanna's mother, Johanna, considered having an abortion, but didn't after having a conversation with an agent lurking outside the clinic to convince mothers to sign over their babies to the CIA. This scene underscores the depths to which the operatives go to abduct infants for scientific testing and military training.



## **VEEP**

Episode: Iowa, Discovery Weekend, Pledge

Network: HBO

Airdate: 3/31/2019, 4/7/2019, 4/14/19

Before discovering that she's still pregnant, Amy Brookheimer's colleague (and father of the pregnancy) Dan jokes that she should publicly Venmo him for the abortion so people know he's a gentleman. After briefly considering carrying the pregnancy to term, Amy has an abortion with Dan by her side, where he marvels at the quality of the "vadge vac" that the doctor uses. On a show that hasn't shied away from abortion jokes, it's no surprise that this abortion is handled with honesty and humor.



### **Call the Midwife**

Episodes: 1, 4, 7, 8

Network: BBC

Airdate: 3/31/2019, 4/21/2019, 5/12/2019, 5/19/19

In a season-long arc, *Call the Midwife* explores the causes and consequences of illegal abortion provision in East London, telling the stories of three characters who obtain abortions and an illegal abortion provider, a grandmother named Elsie. The season culminates with Elsie's trial, where a patient rendered infertile because of the abortion testifies against her, and Elsie is sentenced to jail. The portrayal of an illegal abortion provider as a loving grandmother is unusual, yet the show still falls into the trope of depicting all illegal abortions as dangerous, only showing the patients Elsie harmed instead of others who she allegedly served, without incident, for years.



### **Chicago Med**

Episode: Tell Me the Truth

Network: NBC

Airdate: 4/3/19

Jenny, a teen visiting Chicago from Indiana with her parents, presents to the ER with severe abdominal pain, and the doctors discover that she ordered mifepristone online to self-induce an abortion, but the products of conception were retained. The doctors provide her with misoprostol, and after Jenny has medical complications, they insist that she inform her religious mother of what's going on. This is one of the first depictions of a partially successful self-managed abortion in which abortion pills are ordered online, although it exaggerates the risks of misoprostol such that it may confuse viewers about the safety of medication abortion.



### **Law & Order: SVU**

Episode: Dearly Beloved

Network: NBC

Airdate: 4/4/19

Detective Olivia Benson cautions a rape survivor, Kitty, from having an abortion, saying her baby is "innocent" and "deserves to be loved." This is another incidence of the detectives of *Law & Order: SVU* providing shaming morality tales to the victims they are tasked with serving.



### **Special**

Episode: Cerebral LOLzy

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 4/12/19

This comedy about Ryan, an aspiring young gay writer with cerebral palsy, opens with a satirical depiction of his unpaid internship at an internet publication, Eggwoke. At his first editorial meeting, his boss Olivia outs a writer for having an orgasm during her abortion, saying, “Now that I’ve freed you from the shame of your secret, can you write about it?”



### **The Bold Type**

Episode: The Deep End

Network: FreeForm

Airdate: 4/30/2019

Ambitious young writer Kat considers running for City Council until she discovers what her opposition might reveal about her: a past abortion. When she shares her concerns with her potential campaign manager Tia, another young Black woman, Tia discloses her own abortion, saying that a Crisis Pregnancy Center (CPC) tried to convince her not to have an abortion. This episode is the first to depict a young queer woman of color talking about their abortions, and is part of a continuing trend of plotlines that address the predatory practices of CPCs.



### **Happy!**

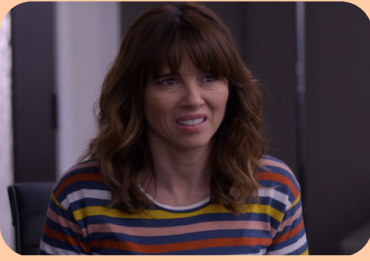
Episode: Pervapalooza

Network: SyFy

Airdate: 5/1/2019

This mixed media show (live action/animation), an adaptation of the graphic novel of the same name, follows the life of a detective who commits crimes in order to maintain his substance use. In this episode, his ex-wife Amanda discovers she’s pregnant and tries to obtain an abortion at a Crisis Pregnancy Center, where a woman tells her that she might become infertile or contract cancer if she has an abortion. Unable to obtain an abortion, later in the season, she gives birth to a pile of eggs and burns them. This plotline follows *The Bold Type* in skewering Crisis Pregnancy Centers, with Amanda going as far as shouting “fuck you” to the CPC staff.





### **Dead to Me**

Episode: Maybe I'm Crazy, Try to Stop Me

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 5/3/2019

When Judy discloses to her new friend Jen that she's had five miscarriages, Jen comforts her by saying, "They were your babies, just don't tell Republicans that." Later in the season, after a one-night-stand with her ex-husband Steve, Judy thinks she might be pregnant and joyously shares the news with him. He flippantly remarks that she should put herself out of her misery, implying that she should obtain an abortion. The first mention shows Jen's compassion for Judy, the second emphasizes Steve's cruelty, a combination that leads Jen to kill him on Judy's behalf in the season finale.



### **She's Gotta Have It**

Episode: #WhenChickensComeHometoRoost

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 5/24/2019

In an argument after sex, Clorinda reveals to her on-again, off-again boyfriend Mars that she was pregnant when he was sleeping with her best friend, that he was the father of the pregnancy, and that she had an abortion. Mars is furious that she kept both the pregnancy and abortion a secret, and storms out. This depiction paints an unflattering picture of Clorinda, suggesting that she isolates herself from her community in order to further her own goals.



### **Spanish Princess**

Episode: Heart Versus Duty

Network: Starz

Airdate: 6/2/2019

Princess Rosa is pregnant and asks Lina, her Lady-in-Waiting, to help her induce an abortion. Lina procures herbs from a local brothel, where they suspect that they're for the Princess. Rosa is afraid of what might happen during the abortion and decides to carry the pregnancy to term despite the political fallout that this may cause.



### **Love and Hip Hop Atlanta**

Episode: Do Not Engage

Network: VH1

Airdate: 7/1/2019

During a tense conversation about whether women without children can make judgments about other women's parenting decisions, Shekinah Jo shares that she's had two abortions because she wasn't ready to parent. While this isn't the first time the reality series has addressed personal experiences with abortion, it's a rare portrayal of Black women discussing their reproductive experiences onscreen and supporting each other through both parenting and abortion.



### **City on a Hill**

Episode: From Injustice Came the Way to Describe Justice, It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City

Network: Showtime

Airdate: 7/14/19, 7/21/19

When corrupt FBI veteran Jackie Rohr's mistress tells him that she's pregnant, he throws money at her saying she should "take care of it," and when she shows up at his house to reveal the pregnancy to Jackie's family, he slams the door in her face. It's unclear if she carries the pregnancy to term or has an abortion.



### **Another Life**

Episode: Hello

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 7/25/2019

In the season finale of the sci fi show, August takes a futuristic pregnancy test (a thermometer in her mouth) and discovers she's pregnant. Zayn, a gender non-binary military doctor, shares that there are simple ways to "restore periods," if she chooses. Science fiction shows often innovate every aspect of medicine except abortion; this dialogue hints that if the show returns for another season, we might finally glimpse a futuristic space abortion.



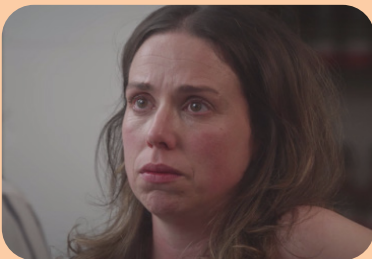
### **Orange is the New Black**

Episode: The Thirteenth, God Bless America

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 7/26/2019

Santos Chaj, an undocumented Guatemalan immigrant detained in PolyCon's detention center, is pregnant and unsuccessfully attempts to induce an abortion using parsley tea. Because she speaks K'iche, an indigenous language, she is not able to communicate with the other inmates or prison staff. After facing an oblivious doctor and cruel prison guard who refuses to transport her to an abortion clinic, Chaj is ultimately able to have an abortion thanks to former warden Natalie Figueroa, who slips her an abortion pill. This portrayal emphasizes the compounding barriers and discrimination people who are incarcerated face when attempting to access an abortion.



### **The Letdown**

Episode: One, The Dilemma, Heavy Heart, Shameless

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 7/31/201

As Audrey struggles to cope with the demands of marriage, work, family obligations, and parenting, she's also hiding her abortion from her friends and family. Throughout this season, she discloses the abortion first to her mother and later, to her friends, and is met with support, love, and respect. Like Anne on *Workin' Moms*, this is one of the few plotlines to depict characters already parenting choosing to have abortions.



### **Dear White People**

Episode: Episode 5, Episode 8, Episode 10

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 8/2/20199

Last season, before ambitious student Coco Connors had an abortion, she imagined dropping out of college and her daughter matriculating at Winchester. In this season, her imagined daughter appears as a figment of her imagination during moments when Coco needs a pep talk to keep pursuing her goals, or in moments when Coco isn't living up to her own expectations, like not obtaining a prestigious scholarship. This isn't meant to convey that Coco has second thoughts about the abortion, but instead that she puts a lot of pressure on herself to succeed.



### **Euphoria**

Episode: The Next Episode, The Trials and Tribulations of Trying to Pee While Depressed, And Salt The Earth Behind You  
Network: HBO  
Airdate: 8/4/2019

Teenage Cassie and her boyfriend McKay decide that they're too young to parent, and Cassie's mom and sister accompany her to an abortion clinic. Cassie listens to music and imagines herself figure skating during the procedure. The abortion represents a moment where Cassie is taking control over her life, emphasized afterwards when she shares with her sister that she's decided to take a break from relationships and focus on herself.



### **13 Reasons Why**

Episode: If You're Breathing, You're a Liar  
Network: Netflix  
Airdate: 8/23/2019

Cheerleader Chloe confides in the new football captain, Zach, that she's pregnant, and that her boyfriend doesn't know about the pregnancy. Chloe goes to a Crisis Pregnancy Center, where she hopes they'll be able to offer her financial support to have an abortion, but instead, they try to convince her not to have one. Later, Zach helps pay for her procedure and accompanies her to a clinic, where she has an aspiration abortion. Like the characters on *Shrill* and *Euphoria*, the abortion is Chloe's opportunity to prioritize her well-being: she breaks up with her boyfriend and transfers to a new school.



### **Peaky Blinders**

Episode: Black Tuesday  
Network: BBC One  
Airdate: 8/25/2019

In this show set in 1920s Britain, Polly and Ada discuss the latter's unintended pregnancy. Polly suggests that Ada pursue an illegal abortion because a biracial baby (Ada is white, the person she had sex with is Black) would cause a scandal. After a brief consideration, they agree that the baby will be beautiful and Ada decides to continue the pregnancy.



### **Styling Hollywood**

Episode: Who's the Boss B\*tch?

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 8/30/2019

As husbands Jason Bolden and Adair Curtis style the houses and wardrobes of the Hollywood elite, their relationship is in turmoil over whether to start a family of their own. In this episode, in an attempt to help the couple understand the challenges of parenting, one of their staff members discloses that shortly after her child was born, she became pregnant again and had an abortion because she and her husband were struggling in their marriage. Jason and Adair thank her for her honesty and vulnerability.



### **The Politician**

Episode: Vienna

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 9/27/2019

In this flash forward episode, New York State Senator Dede Standish enters a meeting with a Texas politician, assuming they are there to argue about their opposing views on abortion. Instead, he shares that he actually is pro-choice and that he wants to run for President, offering her the opportunity to be his Vice President.



### **Grey's Anatomy**

Episode: Back in the Saddle

Network: ABC

Airdate: 10/3/2019

Dr. Amelia Shepard reveals her pregnancy to her casual sex partner Dr. Atticus Lincoln (Link), saying that she hasn't had "good luck" with previous pregnancies, citing her infant son's death. Surprising Amelia, Link says that he will support her no matter what she decides. The episode closes with Amelia confirming that she was leaning towards having an abortion but after hearing his supportive words, she's considering carrying the pregnancy to term. Link's kindness and support provide a welcome model for how real life partners might react to news of an unintended pregnancy.



## **Empire**

Episode: You Broke Love, Tell the Truth

Network: Fox

Airdate: 10/8/2019, 10/15/19

*Empire* music star Tiana takes to Instagram to share what many of her fans interpret as an anti-abortion message, and refuses to apologize, saying that her beliefs are based in her experience of her son's father trying to coerce her into having an abortion. Record executives Becky and Giselle disagree about whether or not to try and poach Tiana from *Empire*; Becky opposes bringing Tiana on board because of her own abortion, and Giselle discloses that she's had an abortion too, and sees this as a business opportunity, not a political statement. Black characters who have abortions are rarely represented onscreen, and it's significant that *Empire* depicts multiple Black women talking about their reproductive experiences, even when disagreeing politically.



## **Insatiable**

Episode: LadyBomb

Network: Netflix

Airdate: 10/11/2019

Coralee is pregnant and because she's in a throuple (a committed sexual relationship with two other people), she's not sure who the father of the pregnancy is. Rudy, also in love with her two partners, kidnaps Coralee after discovering the pregnancy, saying he wants to force her to have an abortion. She ultimately escapes along with another woman, saying she might still have an abortion, but that it's her decision to make.



## **Bull**

Episode: Her Own Two Feet, Billboard Justice, Into the Mystic, Doctor Killer

Network: CBS

Airdate: 10/14/19, 10/21/19, 10/28/19, 11/4/19

Chunk's teenager daughter discloses that she's pregnant and wants to have an abortion, and he repeatedly tries to convince her to carry the pregnancy to term, saying that abortion is a "mortal sin." She refuses to talk to him, and after camping out outside her dorm, he explains that he will not change his mind about abortion, but that he will always be there to support and love her. He picks her up and comforts her after the abortion, and later in the episode, attends church. This may be the first onscreen depictions of a father and daughter discussing abortion, particularly amongst characters of color. Even though Chunk eventually supports his daughter, his reiteration of the wrongness of her decision undermines the sincerity of that support.



### **The Deuce**

Episode: This Trust Thing

Network: HBO

Airdate: 10/14/19

In this show's second abortion plotline, sex worker and aspiring filmmaker Candy rehearses for the part of her film's main character, and it's immediately clear that she's talking about herself. She discloses that she had an illegal abortion as a teenager, and that her Catholic father abandoned her during the procedure, not because of his beliefs, but because he didn't care about her.



### **Law & Order: SVU**

Episode: The Burden of our Choices

Network: NBC

Airdate: 10/17/2019

Teenage Evangeline runs away from her Evangelical home in Ohio to pursue an abortion in New York, and SVU detectives uncover that Evangeline's step-father was sexually assaulting her for years and is the father of the pregnancy. Evangeline's mother refuses to believe her, and requests that the State of Ohio intervene to protect the fetus. Eventually a New York court grants Evangeline permission to have the abortion. This episode provides confusing information about Ohio's abortion laws, suggesting that abortion is inaccessible instead of giving more context that Evangeline could have pursued judicial bypass in her own state.



### **New Amsterdam**

Episodes: Dominator, Karman Line, Righteous Right Hand

Network: Amazon Prime

Airdate: 10/15/19, 10/22/19, 10/29/19

This medical drama had two abortion plotlines this season. In one, Dr. Vijay Kapoor is thrilled to discover that his son's girlfriend, Ella, is pregnant, and doesn't know how to react when she shares that she might have an abortion. His colleague coaches him to tell Ella that he supports her no matter what, and he does, saying that regardless of her decision, they are family. In the other, Shanteé, a teenager with Down Syndrome, finds out she's pregnant and Kaye, her legal guardian, tries to convince her not to have an abortion. In a moving scene, Shanteé asks Kaye if she'll still love her if she has an abortion, and Kaye says yes. Like *Bull*, this drama highlights how someone with anti-abortion beliefs might still show up to support their loved one during an abortion.



### **Modern Love**

Episode: When the Doorman is Your Main Man  
Network: Amazon Prime  
Airdate: 10/18/19

Maggie's Manhattan doorman, Guzmeen, disapproves of every man she brings home, judging their appearance and their behavior. When Maggie discovers she's pregnant, she cries in Guzmeen's arms, and when she says there's a nearby clinic she could go to, he encourages her not to be afraid and that "anything is possible" in New York. Maggie carries the pregnancy to term.



### **Silicon Valley**

Episode: Blood Money  
Network: HBO  
Airdate: 11/3/19

Pied Piper CEO Richard turns to his board member Monica for advice about whether to accept a financial deal with a mobster. She frantically explains that she can't be trusted to make major decisions, saying that when her sister was pregnant, she encouraged her to get an abortion, and now her niece calls her "Aunt Abortion."



### **Grey's Anatomy**

Episode: Papa Don't Preach  
Network: ABC  
Airdate: 11/7/19

The doctors think their new patient Cassidy may have thrown herself down the stairs in order to terminate a pregnancy, but instead she confesses that she purchased herbs online to try and induce an abortion, and they made her dizzy, which caused her to fall. Cassidy explains that she couldn't afford to take time off work or get childcare to obtain an abortion at a clinic. Visibly-pregnant Dr. Amelia Shepard and a nurse administer the abortion pill. Self-managed abortion attempts and medication abortion are rarely depicted on television; this episode is unique in showcasing both of these types of abortions, while also explaining why someone might not be able to access in-clinic care.





### **The Morning Show**

Episode: That Woman

Network: Apple TV+

Airdate: 11/8/2019

In her national television debut, news anchor Bradley Jackson accidentally discloses that she had an abortion. TV executives are furious and think it will negatively affect the show's ratings, but instead, Bradley's honesty endears her to viewers and the controversy increases The Morning Show's ratings. The Show's producers force her to apologize on air not for the abortion, but for sharing her decision so flippantly with viewers.



### **The Blacklist**

Episode: Hannah Hayes

Network: NBC

Airdate: 11/15/2019

Dr. Hannah Hayes runs an illegal medical ring, kidnapping prominent anti-abortion men, transplanting impregnated uteruses in their bodies, and holding them hostage until they are no longer able to obtain an abortion. She impregnates her hostages with the sperm of her rapist, whom she also holds hostage, in her basement. She's eventually caught and confesses that she does this because she was incarcerated after attempting to obtain a "late" abortion after being raped, and her daughter was born while she was in jail. Her last victim, an anti-abortion governor, crosses state lines to obtain an abortion in direct violation of a law he himself wrote.



### **It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia**

Episode: A Woman's Right to Chop

Network: FXX

Airdate: 11/20/2019

After a visit to the vet, Mac and Charlie discover that their beloved dog Poppins is a girl, not a boy, and is pregnant and likely won't survive the delivery. In opposition to his fervent anti-abortion views, Mac searches across Philadelphia to find a vet who will perform a dog abortion, ultimately discovering that he has the wrong dog.

Abortion Onscreen is an innovative research program dedicated to rigorous study of the portrayal of abortion in scripted film and television available in the United States. The research program is housed at Advancing New Standards in Reproductive health (ANSIRH) at the University of California, San Francisco.

For more information, visit [abortiononscreen.org](http://abortiononscreen.org).



