

“YOU DON’T WANT TO DRINK? WHAT ARE YOU, PREGNANT?!”: PORTRAYALS OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE DURING PREGNANCY ON TELEVISION

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ABSTRACT

Background and objective

Pregnant women, women of childbearing age, and their partners frequently report obtaining information about alcohol use during pregnancy from the mass media. Relying on mainstream media sources, such as television, can be problematic when the information presented is inaccurate, contributing to inconsistent messaging about the ‘safety’ of alcohol use during pregnancy. In the current study, we aimed to explore the portrayal of alcohol (and substance) use (e.g., tobacco, opioids) during pregnancy in North American, English speaking mainstream prime time and streaming television shows ($N = 25$). To the authors’ knowledge, no previous study has explored the representations of alcohol (and/or substance use) during pregnancy in this context.

Materials and methods

The following inclusion criteria guided the show selection: (1) top 100 shows on cable/streaming services targeting women aged 18 to 49 years, and (2) shows suggested by targeted social media posts. Using ethnographic content analysis (ECA), the content and role of television media narratives in the social construction of alcohol meanings concerning the safety of alcohol use during pregnancy were explored.

Results and conclusion

In line with ECA, the results and conclusion are discussed together. The results and discussion are presented under an overarching narrative, *the dichotomy of women’s alcohol and substance use*, which illustrates the sociocultural construction of alcohol and substance use during pregnancy. Within this overarching narrative, we focus on two sub-narratives: (1) *women’s acceptable use* and (2) *women’s villainous use*. Our analysis indicates misrepresentations regarding the safety of alcohol use during conception (e.g., *Friends from College*) and pregnancy (e.g., *How I Met Your Mother*, *The Mindy Project*). In addition, a narrative was identified relating to the difficulty of keeping a pregnancy private when not drinking socially (e.g., *Friends*, *The Office*). These narratives reinforced a dichotomy between the types of women who drink during pregnancy, including some for whom it was okay to have ‘just a little bit’ (e.g., *How I Met Your Mother*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *Black Mirror*) in contrast to others who were portrayed as villains who engaged in binge drinking behaviour and/or other comorbid substance use (e.g., *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Private Practice*, *Chicago Med*, *Law & Order*). These results demonstrate the need to provide a clear, consistent

messaging about the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy, as mixed messages from television can contribute to misinformation. The recommendations for messaging, as well as changing our approaches to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder prevention in the light of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: alcohol; media; pregnancy; television; women

INTRODUCTION

As early as 1981, scholars began to draw attention to alcohol consumption on television and its potential consequences, identifying that prime time television shows had three drinking incidents per hour, with hard liquor often as the drink of choice.¹ More recently, researchers have highlighted the ubiquitous nature of alcohol use on television, including newer view-on-demand and streaming platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime. In a study exploring tobacco and alcohol use portrayals on television among male adolescents' favourite shows, the authors identified a total of 756 alcohol use portrayals across 180 episodes with an average of 20.9 instances per hour for shows rated as TV-14, and 7.2 instances per hour for shows rated TV-MA.² In another study, including a sample of 50 episodes from the five highest rated shows on Netflix and Amazon Prime, the appearance of any alcohol content appeared in 94% of episodes sampled by the authors.³ Researchers have suggested that depictions of alcohol use on entertainment television can act as an 'alcohol educator'.⁴⁻⁶ The role of television as a socialization agent has been well established, as portrayals of alcohol use on television can provide vivid insights into the lifestyles of influential and often aspirational characters.⁷ The influence of depictions of alcohol use on television has been investigated primarily among youth,⁸⁻¹⁰ suggesting that the exposure to alcohol-related cues can be an important motivator for alcohol use¹¹ and that exposure to images of alcohol in movies and commercials may lead to acute alcohol consumption.¹² Additionally, the settings for alcohol use (i.e., in the workplace⁴ and show type¹³) have been explored

in relation to portrayals of alcohol use, but there is limited research on these portrayals in the specific context of women's alcohol use.

In relation to women's health issues, television portrayals have been explored in relation to representations of breastfeeding¹⁴ and childbirth.¹⁵ In a study focused on the representation of childbirth on television, the authors identified that television portrayals of birth, particularly on reality television shows, influence the decisions made by women (and their families) regarding delivery method, their expectations of the birth, and the best place of birth.¹⁵ Discourses regarding women's alcohol use and alcohol use during pregnancy have been investigated in other forms of media, including print news,¹⁶⁻²¹ broadcast television news,^{22,23} and magazines.²⁴⁻²⁶ However, to the authors' knowledge, no previous work has bridged these two areas to investigate the portrayals of alcohol use during pregnancy on television.

The exploration of how alcohol use during pregnancy is portrayed on television is warranted, given the culturally specific contexts (e.g., English-speaking, North American contexts) in which alcohol and its consumption is given meaning. As a society, we remain ambivalent to the harms associated with alcohol use as a result of alcohol's romanticized and normalized presence,²⁷ despite growing evidence of the increasingly serious and rising health and social risks associated with alcohol use in Canada and worldwide.²⁸ Rates of heavy drinking among women, and women of childbearing age, continue to remain high.²⁹ Given that many women are unaware that they are pregnant in the early weeks of pregnancy, some may continue their

usual pattern of alcohol consumption.³⁰ Worldwide, the estimated rate of unintended pregnancies is around 44%, with rates in Canada and the United States at around 51%.³¹ Additionally, 1 in 10 pregnant women in Canada consume alcohol during pregnancy.^{32,33} Recent findings in the United States also demonstrate that among women who reported drinking during pregnancy, nearly 40% also reported current use of one or more substance, such as tobacco, cannabis, or opioids.³⁴ Despite an increased attention to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) prevention efforts, the number of women who consume alcohol during pregnancy has not declined.³⁵ FASD is one possible outcome of women's alcohol use during pregnancy, and is a diagnostic term that describes the impacts on the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol.³⁶ Individuals with FASD may experience difficulties in many aspects of life, including their day to day lives, and need support in a diversity of areas and settings (e.g., motor skills, physical health, learning, memory, attention, communication, emotional regulation, social skills).

Several reasons have been suggested as to why women may drink during pregnancy, including misinformation or lack of access to credible information, and the cultural norms about the role of alcohol in society.^{37,38} Women have previously reported utilizing sources such as television, print media, and social media to obtain information about health behaviours, including alcohol use during pregnancy.^{39–41} Further, women have noted that conflicting advice and uncertainty in media about whether or not it is safe to consume alcohol during pregnancy can lead to mixed messages for women.⁴² As television is one way that women learn about the safety of alcohol use during pregnancy, there is a critical need to understand what messages women are receiving from television shows about alcohol use during pregnancy. Therefore, the current study aimed to explore television portrayals of alcohol use during pregnancy in mainstream prime time and streaming television shows ($N = 25$).

METHODS

Data collection

The inclusion criteria for the television media data in the current study included (1) top 100 shows on cable and/or streaming services for women aged 18–49, and (2) shows suggested by targeted social media posts.^{43,44} The list of shows was then reduced based on the frequency of their appearance on digital media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, BuzzFeed, Metacritic, Rotten Tomatoes, etc.), viewership trends (e.g., Nielson ratings, most streamed shows, etc.), and informed discussions amongst the research team about the most appropriate show choices for the final selection. The portrayals of alcohol use during pregnancy on 25 North American* television shows across a range of show types, genres, and structures (see Table 1 for a detailed overview of the included shows) were explored. All episodes of each show were viewed by at least two of the authors between 2017 and 2021. The original air dates of the shows varied, ranging from a start date in 1994 (*Friends*) to 2017 (*Friends from College*, *The Handmaid's Tale*). Of the 25 shows included, 20 have ended (with 9 ending recently in 2019 – 2021) and 5 are currently still airing, with *Grace and Frankie* and *This Is Us* set to end in 2022.

Ethnographic content analysis

Ethnographic content analysis (ECA)^{45,46} is a form of qualitative media analysis used to explore how meanings are created and communicated within media. One of the main goals of ECA is to discover relevant meanings and nuances via a reflexive approach to constant discovery and comparison of meanings and nuances.⁴⁶ Therefore, ECA follows an iterative and reflexive movement between concept development, sampling, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation. It is systematic and analytical in that pre-determined categories are used to guide the initial coding of data, while the researchers remain open to new categories and themes throughout the process of constant discovery and comparison.^{45,47}

*Black Mirror is a British series that first aired on Channel 4 of the British Network prior to its transition to Netflix in 2016. Black Mirror was available on Netflix from Series 3 onwards, where it picked up substantial popularity. Therefore, while originally a British show, it was included in the current study given its significant popularity in North America.

TABLE 1 List of Television Shows (N = 25)

Name of Show	Genre(s)*	Air Dates (MM/DD/YYYY)	Episode Run Time (Avg.)	Number of Seasons or Series	Number of Episodes
The Big Bang Theory	Comedy Romance	09/24/2007 – 05/16/2019	22 min.	12	280
Black Mirror ^a	Drama Sci-Fi Thriller	12/04/2011 – 06/05/2019	60 min.	5	22 ^a
Breaking Bad	Crime Drama Thriller	01/20/2008 – 09/29/2013	49 min.	5	62
Brooklyn Nine-Nine	Comedy Crime	09/17/2013 – 09/16/2021	22 min.	8	153
Chicago Med	Drama	11/17/2015 – Present	43 min.	6	119
Friends	Comedy Romance	09/22/1994 – 05/06/2004	22 min.	10	235
Friends from College	Comedy Drama	07/14/2017 – 01/11/2019	30 min.	2	16
Gilmore Girls ^b	Comedy Drama	10/05/2000 – 05/15/2007	44 min.	8	158 ^b
The Good Wife	Crime Drama Mystery	09/22/2009 – 05/08/2016	43 min.	7	156
Grace and Frankie	Comedy	05/08-2015 – Present	30 min.	7	94
Grey's Anatomy	Drama Romance	03/27/2005 – Present	41 min.	17	380
The Handmaid's Tale	Drama Sci-Fi Thriller	04/26/2017 – Present	60 min.	4	47
How I Met Your Mother	Comedy Romance	09/19/2005 – 03/31/2014	22 min.	9	208
How to Get Away with Murder	Crime Drama Mystery	09/25/2014 – 05/14/2020	43 min.	6	90
Jane the Virgin	Comedy	10/13/2014 – 07/31/2019	60 min.	5	100
Law & Order ^c	Crime Drama Mystery	09/13/1990 – 05/24/2010	45 min.	20	457 ^c
Mad Men	Drama	07/19/2007 – 05/17/2015	47 min.	7	92
The Mindy Project	Comedy	09/25/2012 – 11/14/2017	30 min.	6	117

Modern Family	Comedy Drama Romance	09/23/2009 – 04/08/2020	22 min.	11	250
The Office (U.S.)	Comedy	03/24/2005 – 05/16/2013	22 min.	9	188
Private Practice	Comedy Drama Romance	09/26/2007 – 01/22/2013	60 min.	6	112
The Ranch	Comedy Drama Western	04/01/2016 – 01/24/2020	30 min.	4	80
Scandal	Drama Thriller	04/05/2012 – 04/19/2018	43 min.	7	124
Shameless (U.S.)	Comedy Drama	01/09/2011 – 04/11/2021	46 min.	11	134
This Is Us	Comedy Drama Romance	09/20/2016 – Present	45 min.	5	89

*Genres are classified here using *imdb.com* categories

^aFocus on two specific episodes, *Be Right Back* (Series 2; Episode 1) and *Striking Vipers* (Series 5; Episode 1)

^bIncludes *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*

^cFocus on two specific episodes, *Choice* (Season 5, Episode 7) and *Wednesday's Child* (Season 15, Episode 14)

To meet the criteria for ECA, we followed Altheide and Schneider's⁴⁶ recommendations for qualitative media analysis. Our first step of analysis involved organizing television shows and episodes using a protocol sheet (see the Appendix) which included categories based on the themes prevalent in alcohol use during pregnancy and women's health literatures^{48,49} about alcohol use during pregnancy and FASD prevention (e.g., pregnancy, alcohol use, social drinking, binge drinking, alcohol use during pregnancy, healthcare provider recommendations, friend/family recommendations, abstinence, myths, special occasions, addiction, mental health, healthy pregnancies, etc.). An "other" category was also included to remain open to new themes. As suggested by other researchers,⁴⁷ a report summary and reflective segment was also utilized to accommodate each researcher's comments on how particular categories were similar to, or different from, each other and how categories had particular implications for our understandings of the alcohol meanings in each episode.⁴⁵ These protocol sheets in which the key

categories of interest were outlined, including space for new categories and researcher notes, also guided our readings and analysis of each television show and episode, with data consisting of detailed notes, overall episode summary notes, direct quotations, and narrative segments from the show. Each protocol sheet was maintained electronically in Google Docs or Microsoft Word to facilitate incorporation into a larger shared team database for eventual in-depth coding and interpretive data analysis.

Researchers watched shows both independently (KH, AD, EH) and together (KH and EH). We met both in-person and virtually to discuss the episodes viewed alone or in pairs, and our evolving understanding of the themes in each show. In doing so, we engaged in collaborative data analysis that allowed for 'critical friend discussions'.⁵⁰ Critical friend discussions are a process of dialogue between researchers, giving voice to their interpretations in relation to others who listen and offer critical feedback.⁵⁰ The purpose of these discussions is not to 'agree' or achieve consensus, but rather to encourage reflexive

practice and challenge one another's constructions of the data. Therefore, these discussions were important for challenging one another's observations and interpretations of the shows' content, meanings, and narratives. These conversations ensured that we were able to explore and construct multiple interpretations of the data, with consideration to each researcher's experiences and areas of expertise, as well as our attitudes and biases about the shows. All levels of analysis were done by all authors under the primary supervision of the first author as analysis proceeded and was refined.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Consistent with ECA, the results and discussion sections are presented together. They are presented under the generated overarching narrative of *the dichotomy of women's alcohol and substance use*, which illustrates the sociocultural constructions of alcohol and substance use during pregnancy. Although alcohol was the primary substance targeted for this study, it became clear that other substances (e.g., tobacco, opioids) were also a larger part of the constructed narratives surrounding women and pregnancy. Specifically, we discuss two sub-narratives: (1) *women's acceptable use* and (2) *women's villainous use*. Following the discussion of the overarching narrative, each sub-narrative is outlined and examined in terms of how it fed into the primary meanings around the dichotomy of women's alcohol and substance use to create meanings regarding the safety of prenatal alcohol and substance exposure with implications for women's health, awareness raising regarding the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy, and the prevention of FASD.

The dichotomy of women's alcohol and substance use

Whether explicitly or implicitly, every single one of the 25 shows included in the current study addressed alcohol and/or substance use during pregnancy in some capacity over the show's run. Alcohol

use in general on all shows was widespread, demonstrating the entrenched and ingrained social norms regarding alcohol use. Bars were a central staple in many television shows, such as Joe's Bar on *Grey's Anatomy* or MacLaren's Pub on *How I Met Your Mother*. Alcohol was often integral to the overall plot and narrative in at least some episodes of each show.

The association between alcohol use and sexual interaction was also common, and alcohol was frequently represented as a key motivator or influencer in decision making regarding sex. An abundance of scenes paired alcohol directly with sex, including half consumed wine glasses on bedside tables or discarded empty alcohol bottles on the bedroom floor. Many shows featured storylines regarding unplanned pregnancies that were linked to sex that occurred while the characters were consuming alcohol (e.g., *Grey's Anatomy*, *Gilmore Girls*; see Table 2). This extensive pairing of alcohol and sex is problematic in light of recent evidence that heavier exposure to television, particularly reality television, perceived to have strong and concurrent sex and alcohol themes, is associated with more harmful drinking patterns and more frequent sexual behaviour while intoxicated among young adults.⁵¹

As has been noted by other researchers investigating comedic television shows, alcohol use portrayals were often directly tied to having a fun time,¹³ and alcohol was positioned as the 'go to' substance for all of life's trials, tribulations, failures, and successes (e.g., celebrating an accomplishment, binge drinking to cope with a breakup, drinking wine at a girls' night, drinking for self-care, etc.; see Table 2). The negative aspects of women's alcohol consumption were rarely exhibited, and when the consequences were presented they were often trivialized or played off for laughs (e.g., crippling hangovers experienced by characters such as Haley Dunphy on *Modern Family*, Rosa Diaz on *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, etc.).

The portrayals of alcohol on television have attracted the attention of popular culture outlets that have noted the increased presence of alcohol

on television, even going so far as to note alcohol as a ‘co-star’,⁵² elevating alcohol to the same status as human characters. Other writers have identified how characters in scripted shows can have as much alcohol as they want, position drinking alcohol often to excessive amounts as ‘cool’, and establish the idea that women are more sophisticated than men in their alcohol (often wine) consumption.⁵² At the same time, women are also judged for their alcohol use (e.g., Olivia Pope on *Scandal*, Alicia Florrick on *The Good Wife*),^{53,54} and others have sounded the alarm about the ‘dangerous message’ portrayals of alcohol in media have for women.^{55–57} Researchers have also drawn attention to “strap-on shows”⁵⁸ that feature female leads who are viewed as strong for their performance of masculinity. Both Olivia Pope and Alicia Florrick fit this post-feminist representation in that their hard drinking and hardworking professional behaviours mimic a traditional masculine role that emphasizes strength over weakness.⁵⁸

When it came to portrayals of alcohol use during pregnancy specifically, storylines existed across the preconception, pregnancy, and postnatal periods. In line with the framing of alcohol use as a comedic device, many story arcs that explored the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy in a ‘positive’ light (see Table 2 for examples) emphasized the perceived low risk nature of ‘light’ drinking during pregnancy, and presented frequent portrayals of alcohol consumption while trying to conceive, and/or made jokes about alcohol use and/or substance use during pregnancy that were based on misinformation or an outright disagreement with suggested guidelines that it is safest to refrain from alcohol during pregnancy. Characters who had storylines addressing alcohol use during pregnancy were commonly presented as white, educated (e.g., held professions as physicians, teachers, lawyers), and capable of making informed decisions about their health behaviours.

In contrast, with the exception of Amelia Shepherd on *Private Practice* and *Grey’s Anatomy*, whose character arc evolves from ‘addiction’ to ‘sobriety’ over time across the two shows, women

who consumed ‘too much’ alcohol were presented as villains who purposefully and willfully harmed their children. The central protagonists of the shows were never presented as ‘addicts’, whereas minor characters or one-off episodic characters were framed as ‘villains’ or women who were deserving of other characters’ stigma and prejudice. This framing is deeply troubling, given the internalized, interpersonal, institutional, and population-level stigmas experienced by mothers.⁵⁹ The ongoing media portrayals of women who use alcohol and other substances during pregnancy may perpetuate the narratives of victimhood or shame, where mothers are viewed as irresponsible, immoral, or villainous.^{20,21} Public stigma towards women who consume alcohol during pregnancy is high,⁶⁰ and even among individuals impacted by FASD (i.e., individuals with FASD, biological mothers, other relatives, and healthcare providers), biological mothers of individuals with FASD are often viewed as child abusers, in denial, secretive, and/or ignorant.⁶¹

Collectively, these narratives serve to reinforce the existing discourses about the perceived ‘type’ of women who drink during pregnancy and suggest that it is okay for some women to drink during pregnancy, but not for others. As has been frequently established in the FASD prevention literature, the reasons why women drink during pregnancy are complex and there are a multitude of conflicting predictors or influences on women’s alcohol use during pregnancy.⁶² Perhaps most concerning is that these narratives play into the stereotyped portrayals of who can be casual drinkers or binge drinkers, and have significant implications regarding the systemic sexism, racism, and classism in the prevention of FASD and the screening and brief intervention of all women.^{62–65} Each of these sub-narratives are discussed below. Table 2 provides detailed examples of each sub-narrative.

Women’s acceptable use

Representations regarding women’s acceptable alcohol use during and around pregnancy included: drinking when planning a pregnancy or when trying

TABLE 2 Examples of central and sub-narratives pertaining to the dichotomy of women’s alcohol and substance use

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
Dichotomy of Women’s Alcohol and Substance Use: Women’s Acceptable Use	Drinking when planning a pregnancy or when trying to conceive	<p>Two of the main protagonists of the show, Lisa and Ethan, have been trying to have a baby for a year and “haven’t used protection in 8 years”. As a couple, they make the decision to start IVF to try to have children. While Lisa is initially shown to be drinking water (Episode 1), she is shortly thereafter shown to be drinking wine (Episode 1), scotch (Episode 2), etc. In Episode 3, Lisa goes out for a “girl’s night” with her friends. Her friend, Sam, tells her that they could all use a drink, especially Lisa, given her issues with her new job.</p> <p>Sam: “You know what? I’m getting us drinks. We could all use some, especially you.”</p> <p>Lisa: “What? I’m fine.”</p> <p>Sam: “Um, I think you might have some issues with your new job.”</p> <p>Later in the evening, Sam and Lisa sit outside and chat.</p> <p>Lisa: “Hey I’m glad that we had this last night together.”</p> <p>Sam: “Last night?”</p> <p>Lisa: “Yeah. Well, last night drinking, anyway. I start IVF tomorrow so if that takes, you know, everything changes.”</p> <p>Sam: “What?”</p> <p>Lisa: “Yeah!”</p> <p>Sam: “Tomorrow? That... Why didn’t you mention that?”</p> <p>Lisa: “It was a fun night. I did not want to talk of real life. So...”</p> <p>Sam: “Jesus. You guys pulled that together faster than anyone I’ve ever heard of.”</p> <p>Lisa: “Well, there’s no point in moving slowly. We know what we want. We’ve wanted it for a while. So...”</p> <p>Sam: “Whoa.”</p> <p>Lisa: “Yeah.”</p> <p>Sam: “So... at the end of the month, you could be pregnant.”</p> <p>Lisa: “When you put it like that, it sounds really soon. Hey, can I get a drag of that [reaching for Sam’s lit cigarette]?”</p> <p>Sam: “Yeah.”</p> <p>Lisa: “I gotta live it up while I can, right?”</p>	Friends from College, Season 1, Episode 3: <i>All-Nighter</i>

<p>Grey's Anatomy, Season 3, Episode 22: <i>The Other Side of This Life (Part 1 of 2)</i></p>	<p>Addison wants to have a baby and goes to see a fertility specialist who is a friend from medical school, practicing at Oceanside Wellness Group in Los Angeles. This episode is a set up for the spin-off sister show, <i>Private Practice</i>.</p> <p>Naomi: "So... why are you really here?"</p> <p>Addison: "You're a fertility specialist. One of the best."</p> <p>Naomi: "You want to have a baby?"</p> <p>Addison: "I want to have a baby."</p> <p>Later in the episode, the camera pans to Addison's hand flipping through a book of potential sperm donors, while a glass of mostly consumed red wine sits on the counter beside the book. Addison is discussing potential sperm donor options with her friend, Naomi.</p> <p>Addison: "Okay, this guy is 6'2, dark hair, green eyes, totally healthy. He plays the violin, and he's a physicist. That is good sperm..."</p> <p>[The camera pans up to show Addison's smiling face, with her glass of red wine held prominently beside her head]</p> <p>Addison: "Oooh. What about this guy? He's a marine biologist. Good hair."</p> <p>Naomi: "Are you sure you want to do this? Have a baby? Your life is really gonna change."</p> <p>Addison: "That's <i>why</i> I'm doing this. I <i>want</i> my life to change. I <i>need</i> ... my life to change." [Addison pours another glass of wine]</p>	
<p>Grey's Anatomy, Season 10, Episode 9: <i>Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word</i></p>	<p>In a flashback that takes place at Meredith's baby shower, Arizona tells Callie that they should have a baby, and Arizona offers to carry the baby this time.</p> <p>In another flashback, viewers see Callie and Arizona discussing potential sperm donors while they drink wine together. As they discuss pregnancy, Callie lists off things to Arizona that she will not be able to enjoy while pregnant.</p> <p>[Overlapping laughter]</p> <p>Callie: "Are you kidding me?"</p> <p>Arizona: "No more ridiculous than vetoing every guy under 6'3."</p> <p>Callie: "We are not choosing our sperm donor based on his taste in music."</p> <p>Arizona: "Well... Oh, look, oh, this one's cute."</p> <p>Callie: "Oh, that's a super cute baby. He would make super cute babies."</p> <p>...</p> <p>Callie: "Oh. He's a college dropout."</p> <p>Callie and Arizona: "Pass."</p> <p>Callie: "Okay. Uh... ooh, I'm empty [gesturing to her glass of wine]."</p>	

TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>[Arizona pours Callie another glass of white wine from the bottle that has been sitting beside them on the coffee table] Callie: “Now this one says he’s a mathematician with a graduate degree. And... he runs marathons.” ... [Arizona looks at Callie while she takes a drink from her glass of wine] Arizona: “Do you think I’ll like being pregnant?” Callie: “Oh, yeah. It’s the best. Oh, except for the nausea. Oh, and the stretch marks. And the peeing. And the lack of sleep, the exhaustion.” [Arizona takes a drink from her glass of wine] Callie: [looking at Arizona taking a drink] “Oh, and then the — the no booze.” Arizona: [looks sadly at Callie] “No booze.” Callie: “Mmm-hmm.” Arizona: “Ohh. [Looks longingly at her glass of wine] Oh I will miss you, most of all.”</p>	
	<p>Drinking when knowing you are pregnant or suspecting you are pregnant</p>	<p>Eve visits Annalise in her hotel room. Annalise orders room service for the two of them, adding on a bottle of Riesling at the end of her order. Eve smiles. The two converse briefly, and then Annalise reveals to Eve that she is pregnant. Annalise: “Eve...” Eve: “What?” [Annalise stands up revealing her pregnant belly] Eve: “Please tell me you just got fat.”</p> <p>The two are seen eating their room service. Eve is standing at the food cart, pouring a glass of white wine. Eve: “Want one? Right... Just the first item on a long list of things you can’t do now.” Annalise: “I should have told you.”</p> <p>Later, we cut back to Eve and Annalise in the hotel room as Eve pours another glass of wine where Eve, for a second time, tries to encourage Annalise to drink. Eve: “You need to catch up. You know you want to.” [Eve pours two glasses of white wine] [Eve walks over and prominently holds out the glass of wine to Annalise to take] Annalise: “This is why I didn’t want to tell you. I knew you’d do this.” Eve: “Do what?” Annalise: “Judge me.”</p>	<p>How to Get Away with Murder, Season 2, Episode 13: <i>Something Bad Happened</i></p>

<p>Grace & Frankie, Season 4, Episode 8: <i>The Lockdown</i></p>	<p>Grace is sitting on the stairs, eavesdropping on Sol and Frankie’s conversation in the kitchen. The two walk over and find Grace sitting on the stairs. Sol: “Why can’t you make it up the stairs?” Frankie: “Because she’s having knee replacement surgery in two days, and her doctor wants her to do a full detox. No booze and no pain pills.” Grace: “My angels.”</p> <p>Sol and Frankie convince Grace to come to Sol and Robert’s house. Sol: “And Grace can’t drink either.” Robert: “[scoffs] Ha, can you imagine?” Sol: “No, seriously. She has to detox before her surgery. Doctor’s orders. Robert?” Robert: “Sol... you fool! Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.” Sol: “You’re scaring me.” Robert: “Oh, be afraid. A afraid indeed. I have only seen Grace not drink twice in my life. Once when we were stranded on a ship in the Indian Ocean and once when she was pregnant with Mallory.” Sol: “What about when she was pregnant with Brianna?” Robert: “No. Friends, let me tell you what is about to happen here: the three phases of Sober Grace. Phase one, irritability. A complete loss of all politeness and all social courtesies... Phase two, euphoria. Now this is a tricky one, because she is so lovely, and you’ll think the worst is over, but you’ll be wrong. It’s just the calm before phase three, rage. Pure unfiltered rage. And you don’t want to be close when it hits.”</p>	<p>Jane the Virgin, Season 1, Episode 5: <i>Chapter Five</i></p>
	<p>Jane is having dinner with her father, Rogelio. The waiter walks over with a bottle of wine and makes a move to pour some in a glass for Jane. Jane: “No, thank you.” Rogelio: “Please, have some.” Jane: “I’m pregnant, so...” Rogelio: “Right, yeah, of course. I’m sorry. I will have some, Nick.” Narrator: “It should be noted that Rogelio always liked a glass of wine when he was nervous.” Rogelio: “More. Nice.” Narrator: “And he was very nervous.”</p>	

TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>Picking up from the end of the finale of the previous season where Heather reveals her pregnancy to Colt, Heather and Colt are standing outside in the snow on Christmas, discussing her pregnancy.</p> <p>[Colt and Heather stand quietly facing one another]</p> <p>Colt: “Wow. Pregnant. Okay.”</p> <p>Heather: “I’m sorry. I know this isn’t the best time, but... I had to tell you. So... Merry Christmas, Colt.”</p> <p>Colt: “Is it... is it just... you got morning sickness? ‘Cause I’ve thrown up every day this week.” [laugh track plays over top]</p> <p>Heather: “I bought every pregnancy test Walgreens had. Which was only four ‘cause Winter Formal was last week.” [laugh track plays over top]</p> <p>Colt: “You know those things aren’t always accurate. Did you see a doctor?”</p> <p>Heather: “Yeah... He said I was pregnant.”</p> <p>Colt: “You okay?”</p> <p>Heather: “I mean, I’m all right. A little overwhelmed. You’re the first person I’ve told.”</p> <p>Colt: “Yeah, I’m glad you did. You know, I’m gonna need a drink. Do you want something to drink?”</p> <p>Heather: “I don’t know. I’m driving and the roads are kinda icy and, you know, I’m pregnant.” [laugh track plays over top]</p> <p>Colt: “Shit.”</p>	<p>The Ranch, Season 2, Episode 1: <i>My Next Thirty Years</i></p>
	<p>Misrepresentations regarding the safety of alcohol use during pregnancy or inaccurate information about alcohol and pregnancy</p>	<p>The camera cuts to Jane’s lips as she applies lipstick, fixes her hair, and drinks from a glass of white wine.</p> <p>Narrator: “Ah, yes, Jane. Plied by a room full of romance writers and a half a glass of wine her OB assured her was fine, Jane’s decided on her own romantic gesture, if you will.”</p> <p>[Jane sniffs the glass of white wine, smiles, and takes a sip]</p> <p>Cristina and Meredith are walking down the hall towards one another when they stop and stare at each other.</p> <p>Cristina: “You want to get a drink?”</p> <p>Meredith: “Yeah, I do.”</p> <p>[The two turn and walk away together side by side]</p> <p>Meredith: “Maybe not a real drink actually because I’m trying to get pregnant and supposedly alcohol will make my baby have three heads and sixteen toes.”</p> <p>Cristina: “Ahh. Want to get some crack cocaine? [laughs]”</p>	<p>Jane the Virgin, Season 1, Episode 16: <i>Chapter Sixteen</i></p> <p>Grey’s Anatomy, Season 7, Episode 11: <i>Disarm</i></p>

<p>Gilmore Girls, Season 7, Episode 12: <i>To Whom It May Concern</i></p>	<p>Sookie comes over to Lorelai's house early in the morning. Sookie expresses how excited she was to go on a ski/reading trip with her husband, Jackson, but their babysitter had to cancel. Sookie asks Lorelai to babysit as a favour. Later, Lorelai arrives at Sookie and Jackson's house to babysit and notices that Sookie is behaving strangely and emotionally. When Jackson and Sookie arrive back home, Lorelai asks them about their day.</p> <p>Lorelai: "So how was the skiing/reading?"</p> <p>Sookie: "Oh, uh, terrible."</p> <p>Jackson: "Oh, come on. You had fun all morning."</p> <p>Sookie: "I could've had fun all day. We meet up for lunch, he spills my hot toddy all over the table and he won't let me order another one."</p> <p>Lorelai: "Let you?"</p> <p>Sookie: "Yeah, let me. He said if I ordered another one he'd just do it again."</p> <p>Jackson: "I just don't think drinking is appropriate at lunch."</p> <p>Sookie: "Uh, it was one drink."</p> <p>Jackson: "Sometimes that's all it takes."</p> <p>Sookie: "And he wouldn't let me ski."</p> <p>Lorelai: "You mean read?"</p> <p>Sookie: "No, ski. S is for Silent sucked, so I thought why don't I strap on some skis and you know, try a little downhill? This one wouldn't let me."</p> <p>Sookie leaves the room and Lorelai and Jackson chat. Lorelai asks Jackson why she wouldn't let Sookie drink or ski. Jackson suspects that Sookie might be pregnant, given that he never had a vasectomy and Sookie stopped taking her birth control pills about a month ago.</p> <p>Lorelai: "What's going on with you two?"</p> <p>Jackson: "Nothing."</p> <p>Lorelai: "You're acting strange."</p> <p>Jackson: "No, I'm not."</p> <p>Lorelai: "So is Sookie. She's all over the place. She's all weird and moody. Last time she was like that, she was pregnant."</p> <p>Jackson: "What?"</p> <p>Lorelai: "What?"</p> <p>Jackson: "What?"</p> <p>Lorelai: "No!"</p> <p>Jackson: "No."</p> <p>Lorelai: "No?"</p> <p>Jackson: "Maybe."</p> <p>Lorelai: "[shocked] Jackson, I thought you got a vasectomy."</p> <p>Jackson: "Oh, so she says, go get a vasectomy and I'm just supposed to go get a vasectomy?"</p>
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TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>Lorelai: “Well, no, you shouldn’t do it if you didn’t wanna do it but if you didn’t wanna do it, you should’ve told her you didn’t wanna do it.”</p> <p>Jackson: “I didn’t see the point. Now I see the point.”</p> <p>Lorelai: “Jackson.”</p> <p>Jackson: “She said she was staying on the pill. She said it gave her skin a healthy glow.”</p> <p>Lorelai: “Yeah, she went off it last month.”</p> <p>Jackson: “I know that now. You think that’s the kind of thing a wife would tell her husband.”</p> <p>Lorelai: “[Not when she thinks the husband had a vasectomy Jackson, you have to tell her. She’s pregnant.”</p> <p>Jackson: “I was going to today. After we had a great time and she was in a great mood. But then she wanted to ski and drink.”</p> <p>Lorelai: “Well, you wouldn’t let her.”</p> <p>Jackson: “She’s pregnant.”</p>	<p>Black Mirror, Series 2, Episode 11: <i>Be Right Back</i></p>
	<p>Ignoring recommended guidelines</p>	<p>After the loss of Ash, Martha begins to drink heavily and becomes very depressed. At this point, we see a depiction of Martha drinking heavily before she knows she is pregnant. We begin to see her feel the effects of morning sickness, and shortly after Martha takes a pregnancy test that comes back positive.</p> <p>After knowing about her pregnancy, Martha decides to have some wine to cope with her feelings of nervousness and stress.</p> <p>Martha: “Fuck the official advice, it’s one night.”</p> <p>Martha: “I know I am not supposed to, but it won’t kill us.”</p>	<p>Grey’s Anatomy, Season 12, Episode 11: <i>Unbreak My Heart</i></p>
	<p>Being ‘outed’ about a pregnancy because of not drinking/ or drinking/ pretending to drink to hide a pregnancy</p>	<p>Arizona visits April after she has signed her divorce papers and offers April alcohol to cope. As Arizona comes into April’s home carrying several bags, April sits on the couch with her hands clasped together and an anxious/scared look on her face.</p> <p>Arizona: “Hey! Ooh. I wasn’t sure what you would be in the mood for so I kind of got everything. Champagne, tequila, pinot noir. Pick your poison.”</p> <p>April: “No thanks.”</p> <p>Arizona: “Huh? What’s happening? Did you already start drinking? Are you already drunk?”</p> <p>April: “What? I’m ... [shakes head] hungry maybe.”</p> <p>Arizona: “What? [holding a bottle of wine in one hand and a bottle of champagne in the other] You just signed divorce papers and you don’t want to drink? What are you – what are you, pregnant?!”</p> <p>[April looks at Arizona knowingly]</p> <p>Arizona: “What? Oh, April.”</p> <p>April: “According to the test I took this morning, yeah actually, I think I am.”</p>	<p>Grey’s Anatomy, Season 12, Episode 11: <i>Unbreak My Heart</i></p>

<p>Scandal, Season 3, Episode 7: <i>Everything's Coming Up Mellie</i></p>	<p>The camera zooms in on the untouched champagne glass as she carefully places the untouched champagne glass down on the table. Fitz: "You're not drinking?" Mellie: "No." Fitz looks surprised and excited as he realizes his wife is pregnant. Mellie: "Fitz, don't, no. It's early yet!"</p>	
<p>Brooklyn Nine-Nine, Season 4, Episode 21: <i>The Bank Job</i></p>	<p>Gina leaves the precinct, telling Terry that she will be back in about an hour. Amy inquires where Gina is going, noting that she has left the precinct three times already this week. Terry tells Amy that Gina is going to a doctor's appointment. The squad chats together and suspects that Gina might be pregnant. Amy: "So what's really going on with Gina?" Charles: "Wait. You don't think —" Terry: "That she hates work and doesn't wanna be here? Yeah I do." Charles: "No, that she's pregnant. It all makes sense now. Last week, I brought in unpasteurized boar's milk and she refused to drink any." Terry: "Not a real convincing argument, Boyle." Amy: "No, I think Charles might be right. Yesterday I asked her to go for a drink and she said 'That sounds like a nightmare.'" Terry: "Oh, Amy." Amy: "Just give me this, please. I'd feel so much better about myself if it was because she was pregnant." Terry: "Oh, my God, look what Gina was working on [gesturing to her desk and computer screen]." Charles: "Volcano, Tibia, JerHonor, Concretius, The Enigma. Oh, she's lost her mind." Terry: "No, look at what the file is called." Charles: "BabyNames.doc. You guys, Gina's gonna have a baby."</p>	
<p>The Big Bang Theory, Season 11, Episode 2: <i>The Retraction Reaction</i></p>	<p>As part of the episode's cold open, the group is sitting in the living room, eating take out. Sheldon notes that there is one dumpling left, asking who wants it. Amy: "Maybe you should offer it to the pregnant lady." Sheldon: "[Quizzically] And that would be?" Bernadette: "Me, Sheldon, I'm obviously pregnant." Sheldon: "Well, you never said it to my face. And the last time I assumed a woman was pregnant, it did not go over well." Penny: "Yeah, I'm still mad at you." Sheldon: "You were drinking water instead of wine. What was I supposed to think?"</p>	

TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>Jim stands up to give a speech at his wedding rehearsal dinner. Jim: "So, I would like to propose a toast. So, if you'd all raise your glasses, not Pam for obvious reasons. [Camera cuts to Pam looking panicked] But everyone else if you would raise your glasses." Nema, Pam's Grandmother: "What's obvious? Why can't Pam drink?" Jim: "Pam can't drink? Who? ... I didn't ... I shouldn't have said that. I don't know why I did. She can do whatever she wants. Though she shouldn't, she shouldn't because she's an alcoholic. Pam is an alcoholic. That's not true. I don't... No. What we wanted – The real reason...the real reason is that um... that...that Pam's pregnant." [Nema looks shocked] Michael Scott: "[clears throat] Ok, ok, ok. Hey! What I think Jim is trying to say is that... they had an accident. And you know what. These two people, they're living together. They are having lots of consensual sex." Nema: "They were living together?"</p>	<p>The Office, Season 6, Episode 4: <i>Niagara: Part 1</i></p>
	<p>Drinking in the postnatal period</p>	<p>Annalise is sitting on the chair at the hairdresser's having her hair braided. Ivonne: "Miss Annalise, can I get you some champagne?" Hairdresser: "Ivonne asked if you wanted something to drink." Ivonne: "You look like you need it." Hairdresser: "We got champagne." Hairdresser: "Cheap champagne. I do not recommend it." Annalise: "Trying to cut back." Ivonne: "Why? You pregnant?"</p> <p>Haley arrives at her uncles' house with her husband Dylan and their twins, ready for Christmas dinner with the family. As soon as Haley walks in the door, she asks her uncles, Mitchell and Cameron, for a drink. Haley: "Merry Christmas! ... So, who's going to get me a drink. Momma's done breastfeeding! These babies are all mine again and I'm ready to fill 'em up with wine!" Mitchell: "Oh, well, not how the human body works, but I'm very happy for you. Ah, I've missed old Haley." Haley: "Oh, me too."</p>	<p>How To Get Away With Murder, Season 3, Episode 5: <i>It's About Frank</i></p> <p>Modern Family, Season 11, Episode 9: <i>Last Christmas</i></p>

<p>How I Met Your Mother, Season 7, Episode 24: <i>The Magician's Code Part 2</i></p>	<p>Lily, who is holding newborn baby Marvin in a sling on her chest, Marshall, and Robin join Ted at MacLaren's Pub because he is in crisis; Victoria, his old girlfriend from Season 1 is sitting at a booth in a wedding dress. Ted to the bartender: "Four shots of tequila." Lily: "Ted calm down!"</p> <p>After some discussion regarding Victoria, Marshall hands out the shots of Tequila to the group of four and everyone consumes the alcohol, including Lily. Robin takes a photograph of Lily, Marshall, and Marvin as they are in the act of taking the shots. Lily to Robin: "Wha-what was that?" Robin: "What? You said you wanted a picture of baby Marvin's first outing." [Lily gasps in horror as Marshall's face drops] Marshall, in disbelief: "Our baby's first outing was to a bar." Lily, still somewhat horrified: "I dribbled <i>Cuervo</i> on Marvin's soft spot!" Lily, Marvin, Marshall, and Robin exit the bar in haste as Victoria enters the scene. The laugh track was used throughout this scene.</p>	
<p>Private Practice, Season 3, Episode 2: <i>The Way We Were</i></p>	<p>Charlotte arrives at Violet's house to check up on her. Charlotte: "Sorry, I didn't knock in case you were sleeping. I just came to get Cooper's clothes." Violet: "Yeah, and to check up on me. Make sure I'm not crazy. I know the drill." ... Charlotte: "Are you breastfeeding? ... What you do with your boobs is your business. I only ask because you look like you need a martini. And if you're not breastfeeding you can have a martini. Want a martini?" Violet: "Yeah! Please." ... Charlotte and Violet drink martinis together. The camera centres a gin martini with a lemon peel, then pans back to show the two women enjoying their drinks. Charlotte: "I like gin. Gin is good." Violet: "Gin is good."</p>	
<p>Private Practice, Season 5, Episode 3: <i>Deal With It</i></p>	<p>Violet joins a mommy playgroup. The toddlers are playing on the floor, while one of the moms has a glass of wine in her hand. Woman at a playgroup to Violet: "What are you drinking, red or white?" Another woman at the playgroup: "Don't mind Lynne. She's just stopped breastfeeding and so she's making up for lost time."</p>	

TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>Marshall tells his mother on the phone that he and Marvin, his son, will come visit her for a week in Minnesota.</p> <p>Lily to Marshall: “You are gonna take my infant son away from me for a whole week?” [The image shifts to Lily finishing drinking a beer at the bar with Ted]</p> <p>Lily: “WOOOOOOOOO! So, what do you want to do tonight? Drink ourselves blind? Set a car on fire. Ooh, watch a movie that doesn’t start with a desk lamp jumping on top of a capital I. I’m all yours Teddy Westside.”</p>	<p>How I Met Your Mother, Season 8, Episode 24: <i>Something New</i></p>
<p>Dichotomy of Women’s Alcohol and Substance Use: Women’s Villainous Use</p>	<p>Villainous use in the preconception period</p>	<p>Pete, Addison, and Violet are discussing their patient, Emily’s, care as they leave the hospital.</p> <p>Addison: “People can change, Violet. I know you believe that. Why not Emily?”</p> <p>Pete: “We have tried, Addison. Again and again. But it won’t take because she doesn’t want it to. Ten minutes after I get her clean, she goes out to score.”</p> <p>Violet: “I beg a shelter to find a bed for her but she never shows up.”</p> <p>Pete: “The best thing would be if she stopped having babies altogether. We should tie her tubes. You’re doing her C-section tomorrow, you could do it then.”</p> <p>Addison: “I am not gonna sterilize a woman without her knowledge. I need her consent.”</p> <p>Pete: “Well, it’s the only way to keep her from coming back pregnant in a year.”</p> <p>Violet: “Okay, okay, look, Emily is a disaster. No one wants to see her coming back pregnant, but Addison is right. She has to sign off on the sterilization.”</p> <p>Addison: “Just because Emily’s made bad decisions doesn’t mean we take away her right to have children.”</p> <p>Pete: “Why are we only discussing her rights?”</p> <p>Overall, this episode centres around Amelia’s withdrawal from OxyContin and the intervention the practice holds for her to encourage her to get sober. Amelia and Addison have an exchange about their respective alcohol and substance use.</p> <p>Addison: “You’re an addict, Amelia.”</p> <p>Amelia: “You down a bottle of wine with every meal. You drink when you’re happy and when you’re sad and when it’s Tuesday. Should we do an intervention about your alcoholism?”</p> <p>Addison: “I don’t have a problem, that’s the difference here. I don’t need to drink. I haven’t had a drink in months.”</p> <p>Amelia: “Yeah, because the only thing you’re more addicted to than booze is having a baby.”</p>	<p>Private Practice, Season 4, Episode 10: <i>Just Lose It</i></p> <p>Private Practice, Season 5, Episode 8: <i>Who We Are</i></p>

		<p>Later in the episode, Amelia's boyfriend Ryan is speaking to her: "If we were sober, we could have kids... We have to be clean." Both characters decide to get sober together but to have "one last time" with the rest of their OxyCotin. Amelia wakes up and Ryan is dead beside her, having died from an accidental overdose. Amelia says she is ready to go to rehab.</p>	<p>Grey's Anatomy, Season 11, Episode 1: <i>I Must Have Lost It On The Wind</i></p>
<p>Villainous use in the pregnancy period</p>		<p>Callie and Arizona discuss the potential use of surrogacy to have a baby. At this point, Callie is concerned about their potential, hypothetical surrogate and putting trust in someone they do not know.</p> <p>Callie: "What if – what – what if she runs off with our baby? I mean, what if – what if she does drugs? What – what if – what if she doesn't eat right? W-what if she forgets her prenatal?... I just, I was brushing my teeth this morning, I saw my scar in the mirror. I was pregnant with Sofia when that accident happened. Me. Even I couldn't protect our unborn child. How can we put that kind of trust in someone we don't even know?"</p> <p>Later in the episode, as the two leave a patient's room, they discuss how the situation of the workday applies to their current situation. Callie reflects that they cannot control the risks, and suggests to Arizona that they move forward to surrogacy.</p> <p>Callie: "You know what? Dave's mom's right. Even – even if you play it safe, you aren't safe, not really, so we might as well take a few risks, right?"</p> <p>Arizona: "I'm so happy to hear you say that."</p> <p>Callie: "You are?"</p> <p>Arizona: "Yeah. 'Cause I – I, well, I have something to talk about."</p> <p>Callie: "Me too."</p> <p>Both: "About this morning [both laugh]."</p> <p>Callie: "You were right. I was overreacting. You know what? We can't control everything. So we should do it. Let's get a surrogate and have another baby."</p> <p>Luke's sister, Liz, arrives at Luke's Diner and are happy to be reconnected. The two hug and then move to the main counter to chat and catch up.</p> <p>Liz: "Hey, let me tell you my big, exciting news!"</p> <p>Luke: "Uh-oh."</p> <p>Liz: "It's not an uh-oh. It's good, unless you don't like babies in which case it's not so good."</p> <p>[Luke looks shocked]</p> <p>Luke: "You're pregnant?!"</p>	<p>Gilmore Girls, Season 6, Episode 21: <i>Driving Miss Gilmore</i></p>

TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>Liz: “Oh, it was supposed to be a surprise. Who told you?” Luke: “You just did.” Liz: “Wow, I blew my own surprise.” Luke: “That’s great, Liz. It’s great, right?” Liz: “Amazing. I am over the moon.” Luke: “Well, sit, sit. You’re in a delicate state.” Liz: “I am gonna take care of myself this time, big brother. I am gonna do all the healthy things for me I did not do last time I was pregnant, like not binge drink.”</p>	
	<p>Villainous use in the postnatal period</p>	<p>Heather, Dell’s partner and mother to his daughter, Betsey, shows up at Dell’s workplace. She is visibly shown to be using drugs (e.g., is thin, sweaty, and agitated) and is high upon her arrival. Heather asks Dell for \$10,000 for drugs. She tells Dell that if he gives her the money, she will give him Betsey. Later in the episode, Heather arrives at the clinic with Betsey to exchange her for the money. Heather: “You said you’d give me the money. I need the money. You’re not gonna see her again!” Dell: “Look, I have the money, but I’m not going to give it to you, okay. And she’s not going anywhere.” Heather: “You don’t have custody. I do!” Dell: “You’re strung out, Heather! So I can pick up the phone and I can call DCFS or I can pick up the phone and I can call the police and we can have them come down here. You tell me. Look, I’m not giving you this money to let you kill yourself because I may hate you right now, but I love her, [Betsey] and you’re her mother and I am not letting go of my daughter. So come say goodbye to your daughter, come say goodbye to Betsey. Come say goodbye.” Ethan runs out to his car to grab his hospital badge. While he is retrieving it, he hears a man calling for help. A man comes forward carrying a young girl covered in blood. Ethan brings her into the emergency room. April: “That’s not an intestine.” Natalie: “It’s an umbilical cord. This kid just delivered a baby.” Ethan: “What do you mean ‘just’?” Natalie: “Maybe five minutes ago.”</p>	<p>Private Practice, Season 2, Episode 22: <i>Yours, Mine & Ours</i></p> <p>Chicago Med, Season 1, Episode 2: <i>iNO</i></p>

	<p>The team is unable to get a response from the child. Connor runs outside, finds the man who originally brought the girl to the emergency room, and goes looking for the baby. The baby was abandoned in a backpack in an alleyway two blocks away from the hospital. It is revealed throughout the episode that the child, Erika, who is 14 years old, is a runaway child from the foster care system and it is noted that she has been arrested more than once for solicitation. The doctors have differing opinions on Erika's actions.</p> <p>Natalie: "She's 14 years old, a kid. She's scared, alone." Connor: "What about the family?" Natalie: "Her mother's in prison. Father's long gone. She does have an older sister living in Champaign, though. I left a message. Here's the thing: She was two blocks away. Two blocks. Maybe she was trying to make it here." Connor: "[skeptical] Is that what she said?" Natalie: "She clamped the umbilical cord. She did not mean to harm that baby." Ethan: "Right. Put him in a backpack. Leave him in an alley. That'll keep him safe." Natalie: "It's not that cut and dry. She was delirious." Ethan: "She left her baby to die. It's exactly that cut and dry." Natalie: "She's a child. She wasn't ready for any of this, right?" Connor: "People come here for help. I try to leave my feelings out of it." Natalie: "Well, that's convenient. Look, you don't understand because you're not a woman." Ethan: "Don't give me that. People need to be held accountable, regardless of sex." Connor: "This is a safe haven. She could've dropped the baby off, no questions asked." Natalie: "So now you do have feelings? She's got to live with this for the rest of her life. Do we really want to punish her as well?" Ethan: "You're talking as if there's a happy ending where that baby survives." Natalie: "That baby is going to survive." Ethan: "And if he doesn't, then what the girl did is murder. How you gonna feel then?"</p> <p>A social worker later in the episode remarks to Sharon Goodwin, the Head of Patient and Medical Services at the hospital that "Erika Dougherty's been in the system for years. In and out of foster care since her mom was sent to Logan. Runs away when the families don't kick her out. Suspected substance abuse, at least alcohol, maybe worse." Sharon asks about the baby's father, to which the social worker scoffs and laughs and says "Who knows? Erika's been arrested more than once for solicitation."</p>	
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TABLE 2 Continued

Central Narrative	Sub-Narrative	Examples	Episode
		<p>Jesse is having sex with a new girl he meets at Narcotics Anonymous. While they are in bed together, she asks Jesse if he would like to do some blue methamphetamine. Jesse wonders if it is a good idea and gets defensive when he finds out she wants to get high two hours before her child comes home.</p> <p>Woman from Narcotics Anonymous: “Thought maybe if you’re holding, we can do something.”</p> <p>Jesse: “What?”</p> <p>Woman: “You know, that blue stuff you were talking about. Maybe you had a line on some?”</p> <p>Jesse: “Wait. What? Thought you said the kid is coming home.”</p> <p>Woman: “Yeah, in a few hours.”</p> <p>Jesse: “And you seriously want to get high?”</p> <p>Woman: “I don’t know what you’re getting so pissed about. You’re the one who brought it up the other day.”</p> <p>Jesse: “Yeah, that was before I found out you got a kid. What kind of mother are you?”</p> <p>Woman: “What? [offended]”</p> <p>Jesse: “You heard me. What kind of mom gets wasted with a little kid to take care of?”</p>	<p>Breaking Bad, Season 3, Episode 11: <i>Abiquiu</i></p>
		<p>The episode opens with a cold open of the gang sitting around their regular table at MacLaren’s Pub. Marvin is sitting on Lily’s lap as the gang has beers and food.</p> <p>Lily: “Well, it’s come to this, we’re drinking with our baby in a bar.”</p> <p>Marshall: “It’s not a bar. It’s a restaurant that happens to have a bar. Ergo, we are good parents. Unrelated, I’m gettin’ faced right now. Papa needs a grease coat.”</p>	<p>How I Met Your Mother, Season 8, Episode 9: <i>Lobster Crawl</i></p>
		<p>Mindy, feeling frustrated by her overbearing husband, remarks that she would like to go out for a drink.</p> <p>Mindy: “You know what, Morgan? It’s actually not a problem, because I’ve been cooped up in this apartment all day and I think it’d be kinda fun to sneak out to get a drink.”</p> <p>Danny: “What?”</p> <p>Mindy: “If that’s okay with you, Master?”</p> <p>Danny: “A drink?!”</p> <p>Mindy: “He controls where I go and when I go.”</p> <p>Danny: “No, no, no. No! A drink?! A drink! Oh’ madonn’! [Danny punches the wall].”</p>	<p>The Mindy Project, Season 4, Episode 3: <i>Leo Castellano Is My Son</i></p>

to conceive (e.g., *Grey's Anatomy*, *Private Practice*, *This Is Us*, *Friends from College*), drinking when knowing or suspecting you are pregnant (e.g., *Grey's Anatomy*, *Mad Men*, *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, *Grace and Frankie*, *Jane the Virgin*), drinking prior to pregnancy recognition (e.g., *Greys Anatomy*, *Gilmore Girls*, *Scandal*, *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *The Mindy Project*, *The Office*), misrepresentations regarding the safety of alcohol use during pregnancy or inaccurate information about alcohol and pregnancy (e.g., *How I Met Your Mother*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *Black Mirror*, *Gilmore Girls*), ignoring recommended guidelines (e.g., *Black Mirror*), and being 'outed' about your pregnancy because of not drinking or drinking/pretending to drink to hide a pregnancy (e.g., *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *The Mindy Project*, *The Office*).

Beyond prenatal and pregnancy health, additional portrayals of "acceptable" alcohol use during pregnancy also extended to the postnatal period where emphasis was placed on women's desire and passion to get back to drinking and positioned as alleviating women's suffering for their time spent not drinking during pregnancy (e.g., *Modern Family*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Private Practice*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Grace and Frankie*, *Gilmore Girls*). In many ways, these postnatal representations reinforced 'wine mom' discourses^{66–68} wherein women view alcohol (and particularly wine) consumption as an integral and central part of coping with motherhood.

Portrayals of each of these narratives were extensive (see Table 2), but the most notable and clear example regarding misrepresentation was evident on Season 7 of *How I Met Your Mother* that features the first pregnancy of character Lily Aldrin, one of the show's five main protagonists. *How I Met Your Mother* centers alcohol as a tie between a best friend group as they come of age in their young adult lives. Given that alcohol is central to the show, and that the characters drink in almost every episode, particular attention is paid to the multi-season story arc

regarding Lily and her husband Marshall Eriksen's journey to parenthood. Even within the season(s) related to Lily's first pregnancy, competing discourses and storytelling are evident. For example, early on in Season 6, Lily notes that she is cutting out alcohol (among other things) as part of her pre-conception health, but Lily then continues to drink throughout the entirety of Season 6, including while reading *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, and is revealed to be pregnant in the season finale. In Season 7, Episode 4, Lily's health behaviours during pregnancy are directly addressed when Lily tells the gang that her "doctor says it's okay to have a sip of wine every now and then." When Lily's friend Ted questions the advice of her doctor, Lily notes that Dr. Sonya is great as she tells her she can consume "just a little bit" of many things pregnant women are generally advised to avoid, including alcohol, sushi, and 'Cheetos'. Some fans of the show were critical of this storyline, and this episode in particular, and expressed their disappointment in the show for their representations of alcohol use during pregnancy.⁶⁹ Fans have continued to debate Lily's alcohol use during pregnancy across multiple seasons, particularly in Season 9, regarding her second pregnancy.^{70,71}

Although many representations of alcohol use during pregnancy were problematic, it is also important to note that some shows included supportive examples. For example, in one episode of Season 3 of *This Is Us*, Kate Pearson's friend, Madison, emphasizes "Cocktails for everyone. Mocktails for you two." when speaking with Kate (who is currently pregnant) and Kevin Pearson (Kate's sibling who is in recovery, though unknown to the other characters has relapsed) at a celebratory event set up for Kate's graduation. Another example is on Season 2 of *Breaking Bad* where Skyler White states that she would "like to make a toast with my non-alcoholic beverage!" Although examples like these are limited, they do draw attention to the importance of supporting healthy pregnancies, and provide the audience with tangible examples using potentially influential characters choosing non-alcoholic

drink options that are outwardly, and purposefully, addressed as part of the pregnancy story.

Women's villainous use

In contrast to the multitude of portrayals that favourably represented alcohol and inadvertently seemed to condone alcohol use prior to, or during, pregnancy, women who were presented as consuming 'too much' alcohol or those who used other substances were presented as villains. These narratives centred around women who would sell their children in exchange for money, with the implication that they would use the money to buy drugs (e.g., *Private Practice*). Other narratives included episodic story arcs that addressed addiction, including a storyline about parents who were running a methamphetamine lab out of their home which contributed to their child being "strung out" (i.e., *Grey's Anatomy*) or women who were admitted to the emergency room while high on substances, such as heroin (i.e., *Chicago Med*). These characters were frequently met with outward disdain and judgement from the main characters, especially on the medical dramas included in this study. For example, on *Chicago Med*, remarks were made by doctors that indicated a limited understanding of the issue of addiction, which included minimizing the impact of addictions and a failure to recognize the social and structural factors associated with addiction. Doctors noted that one woman "just want[ed] to get out and get her next fix" and that the mother had "nine months to do right by her baby." Interestingly, in contrast to other episodes of *Chicago Med* that featured women who consumed "occasional" alcohol during their pregnancies and who were reassured that their babies were "completely healthy", women who used other substances were stigmatized.

Two shows featured episodes directly focused on alcohol use during pregnancy and FASD (i.e., *Private Practice* and *Law & Order*). On *Private Practice*, the doctors exhibit significant disdain for Emily, a "frequent flyer" in their medical clinic for whom they remark: "give her 50 bucks, she gives up her baby." As Pete Wilder goes on to tell Addison

Montgomery, all of Emily's children, who have been apprehended from her, have issues directly related to her alcohol and substance "abuse". Her first son, David, was 8 weeks premature, blind, lived in 7 homes in 6 years, and has autism; Brad is "severely disabled due to fetal alcohol syndrome"; April is living in foster care because "who wants a crack baby?"; and Daniel died after 16 "excruciating days ... from short bowel syndrome". It is clear that the characters are disgusted by Emily's perceived unwillingness to abstain from alcohol and substance use during pregnancy as another doctor in the practice, Violet Turner, remarks that Emily makes her "believe in hell". On *Law & Order*, Elliot Stabler and Olivia Benson work on a case in which a pregnant woman is attacked by her husband who subsequently seeks to have his wife charged with neglect for drinking during pregnancy. The arc of the episode explores intimate partner violence, alcohol use during pregnancy, and "alcohol addiction", FASD, and child welfare (e.g., it is revealed that Jennifer, the pregnant mother, previously gave up another daughter for adoption who has FASD). While *Law & Order* attempts to address the complexity of women's alcohol use during pregnancy, many lines on the show are inadvertently stigmatizing, and patronizingly centres the baby over the mother, including Elliot telling Jennifer that "alcohol's not good for the baby" and later asking Olivia what she "would call a mother who drinks when she's pregnant, even though she knows it can hurt her baby", alluding to his assumption that Jennifer is a 'bad mother.'

Problematically, representations of women who used alcohol and other substances during pregnancy included stigmatizing language, referring to women as "alcoholics", "addicts", "junkies", "druggies", "criminals", and substance "abusers". One of the most stigmatizing lines was present on Season 4 of *The Mindy Project*. When Mindy Lahiri is speaking to her partner, Danny Castellano, who is offering her a glass of wine in an attempt to induce labour, Mindy asks "Alcohol? I tried to have a sip of your beer last month, you called me Casey Anthony" in

reference to the Florida mother who was charged with (but never convicted of) first-degree murder in the death of her 2-year-old daughter. These stigmatizing discourses are aligned with previous research that has tied moralistic ideas to alcohol use during pregnancy, asserting that women are expected to do anything to avoid harm to their children¹⁶ and that women should intentionally act to prevent risk associated with the hazards of alcohol consumption during pregnancy.¹⁸

Another interesting example of the villainous portrayal of substance use during pregnancy is Skyler White on *Breaking Bad*. Early in her pregnancy, Skyler is repeatedly shown to avoid using alcohol despite other characters (e.g., family members and friends) drinking around her, particularly at social events. As Skyler's stress increases as a result of tumultuous times in her personal life and marriage at the beginning of Season 2, which includes intimate partner violence and the stress of her husband, Walt, being missing, Skyler begins to smoke. In early Season 2, Skyler purchases cigarettes and smokes in the car. Walt is later furious with her when he finds out about her smoking, though Skyler claims that "three and a half cigarettes is not going to do a thing to the baby." Throughout Season 2 Skyler continues to avoid alcohol, but not cigarettes. Notably, fan discourse around Skyler's substance use vilified her for smoking, claiming that her behaviour was "bad" and suggesting that smoking was significantly worse than drinking during pregnancy.⁷²

Although some shows made attempts to explore the complexities of women's alcohol and substance use as related to factors such as experiences of trauma, intimate partner violence, physical and sexual abuse, involvement with the criminal justice system, and homelessness (e.g., *Law & Order*), there is clearly still room for improvement in understanding the social determinants of health, reasons why women may drink or use substances during pregnancy, and the importance of trauma-informed and harm-reduction oriented approaches to supporting women and their children.^{37,38,64,73,74}

Implications

The results of this study have significant implications for pregnant women, women of childbearing age, their partners and extended family members, and television show writers and showrunners. Given women's previous reporting that they may learn about health issues from prime time television and then take action on these issues,⁴¹ there is an urgent need for clear, consistent messaging about the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy in television media. Mixed and inaccurate representations regarding the "safety" of alcohol and substance use during pregnancy on television may contribute to misinformation among pregnant women, their partners and larger support networks (e.g., family members, friends, etc.), and women of childbearing age. Notably, there is also a temporal component to the data collected as part of this study, with the shows spanning from a start date of 1990 to 2017. Portrayals of alcohol use and substance use during pregnancy in many ways have changed and remained the same over the last three decades. While women's alcohol use (both in general and during pregnancy) has become more celebrated and condoned, women's substance use and heavy alcohol use (i.e., binge drinking, opioid use) have become increasingly vilified, particularly in medical drama television shows. Many shows across multiple decades portrayed similar tropes about women's alcohol use, such as characters' pregnancies being outed to their friends or colleagues because they were not drinking. Additionally, the rising acceptance and popularity of women's drinking coincides with the alcohol industry's shift to target women as consumers and the explosive growth of women's alcohol related social media communities (e.g., wine mom culture).^{66,75,76}

Popular culture television shows may provide a unique platform for Level 1 FASD prevention strategies to reach the general public and women of childbearing age.^{62,77} Level 1 prevention is focused on broad awareness raising and health promotion, including community development.^{77,78} One component of Level 1 prevention that has received significant attention in the literature is prevention

education and messaging, including educational materials and general FASD awareness messaging.⁶² More recently, attention has been paid to technology as an important form of disseminating information to women (e.g., social media, websites, text messaging). Therefore, television shows may be a particularly unique method of disseminating information to women about the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy and FASD. The shows included in this study were English-speaking, North American television shows. It is important to consider how Level 1 prevention approaches may differ depending on the sociocultural differences globally. While many of these shows are streamed or available in many countries around the world, considerations for women's alcohol consumption literacy worldwide may differ depending on local attitudes and beliefs surrounding alcohol use among women, and pregnant women.

This approach to prevention also warrants support and adoption from television show writers and showrunners. The results of this study raise interesting questions about the ethical responsibilities of those in the television industry around storylines that address alcohol use or alcohol use during pregnancy. Many of the portrayals explored in this study highlight the excessive glorification of alcohol and substance use in general, which may inadvertently provide audiences with potentially harmful messages about the safety of varying levels of alcohol use and alcohol use during pregnancy. More representations are needed in television media that explore the nuanced circumstances of women's alcohol and substance use. Additionally, further work is needed to resist negative gendered stereotypes about women's alcohol and substance use in general, as well as stereotyped portrayals of women who use alcohol and other substances during pregnancy as bad or unfit mothers, juxtaposed with representations of mothers who stop their alcohol use as "uncool".³⁸

Strengths, considerations, and future directions

To date, most media analyses of narratives in the media regarding alcohol use during pregnancy

have focused on news media as the primary source of data. Although some researchers have focused on the representations of alcohol use on television more broadly,^{4,5,13,79} to our knowledge, this is the first study to explore representations specific to gendered understandings of women's alcohol use during pregnancy. While the aim of our study was initially to explore the representations of women's alcohol use during pregnancy, storylines regarding women's substance use during pregnancy were so pervasive and problematic that they warranted exploration in this study as a sub-theme within the larger context of women's substance use. It was impossible to explore the portrayals of women's alcohol use during pregnancy without the consideration of the sociocultural contexts in which these characters consumed alcohol, particularly for those women whose polysubstance use was framed as villainous. Future research exploring the media representations of women's substance use during pregnancy explicitly, including polysubstance use, is warranted.

A significant strength of this research is the very large sample size which includes 3,288 episodes from 25 shows, and more than 1900 hours of viewing. While we chose to focus on the breadth rather than the depth, the large amount of data collected for this study, triangulated across multiple researchers, demonstrates the ubiquity of women's alcohol and substance use during pregnancy across a multitude of shows, show types, and forms, ranging from dramas to sitcoms to sci-fi thrillers. Future research including a nuanced exploration of specific shows and/or genres would be warranted to obtain a deeper understanding of the depth of media narratives on television regarding alcohol use during pregnancy. As well, the research team was inundated with recommendations from friends and colleagues while engaged in this work, which speaks to the opportunity to explore other shows beyond those included in the present study. For example, other types of shows that include portrayals of alcohol use during pregnancy, such as historical dramas like *Call the Midwife* or *Outlander*, would offer an

opportunity to explore media narratives of alcohol use during pregnancy among contemporary shows that are situated in historical contexts.

Although several shows included in this study were relatively older, many continue to remain relevant today in the larger cultural milieu, given the dominance of streaming platforms and continued viewing. For example, *Gilmore Girls* had a soft reboot in November 2016 with the miniseries *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life* which was met with relative success on Netflix with an estimated 5 million viewers in the 18 – 49 demographic.⁸⁰ Additionally, *Friends* recently aired their *Friends: The Reunion* special in May 2021 and spiritual *Friends* successor, *How I Met Your Mother*, has been recently greenlit for a reboot entitled *How I Met Your Father*. As recently as 2019, *The Office U.S.*, *Friends*, and *Grey's Anatomy* remained the three most watched licensed shows on Netflix,^{81,82} indicating their continued popularity for viewing and re-viewing. Streaming platforms have enabled a massive increase in the popularity of re-viewing one's favourite show again and again.

It is important to note that the data collected for this study is specific to North American television content, and therefore limited in the potential diversity of perspectives. Future research would benefit from the inclusion of international shows and content popular in a diversity of regions internationally to understand how narratives regarding alcohol use during pregnancy are constructed across geographic regions, and how alcohol use during pregnancy is understood based on a diversity of factors including age, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. Our research team was culturally homogenous, and therefore our interpretations are based on our lived experiences and positioning within North American society, our readings, and constructed understandings of the selected shows. Future research would benefit from the inclusion of other cultural perspectives to inform more diverse, non-heteronormative understandings of socially constructed media narratives regarding alcohol use during pregnancy.

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I could be reading too much into this and she was lying to keep away suspicions that she was pregnant But if it did, she would do something that could seriously harm her child Just another thing that annoys me about Lily’s character - considering she acts like such a Samaritan: *Reddit*; 2020. https://www.reddit.com/r/HIMYM/comments/ietart/something_that_really_annoys_me_on_my_rewatch/
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APPENDIX

Research Team Protocol:

Portrayals of Alcohol and Substance Use During Pregnancy on Television

1. Television Show Title
2. Season, Episode Number, and Episode Title
3. Original Air Date
4. Initial Time Point in Episode
5. Length of Narrative Discussion or On-Screen Time
6. Speaker(s) (e.g., character) or Contextual Item (e.g., FASD awareness poster)
7. Historical Context and Time-Period (e.g., decade)
8. Topic
9. Use of Keywords or Addressing of Key Topics/Content
 - Pregnancy
 - Alcohol use
 - Social drinking
 - Binge drinking
 - Culture of drinking
 - Alcohol messaging
 - Alcohol use prior to/during conception
 - Alcohol use prior to pregnancy recognition
 - Alcohol use during pregnancy
 - Health care provider recommendations
 - Friend/family recommendations
 - Abstinence
 - Prevention
 - Stigma
 - Stereotypes
 - Myths
 - Special occasions
 - Substance use (other/co-morbid)
 - Addiction
 - Abortion
 - Mental health
 - Women's health
 - Healthy pregnancies
 - Violence/Trauma
 - Partners
 - Social determinants of health
 - Other
10. Miscellaneous (Other, please specify)
11. Report Summary