

Opiate Use During Pregnancy and Neonatal Abstinence: What's the Media Narrative?

TARA FOTI

MAKING LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

4/12/2018

Background



Prenatal opioid exposure is growing, driven largely by higher prescription rates.

- Also related to street availability and increased access to medication-assisted treatment.

Many opioid-exposed pregnancies result in Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome.

- Withdrawal symptoms.
- Longer hospitalizations.
- Higher costs.

Women face stigmatization, child welfare involvement, and custody/criminal justice repercussions, impacting relationships with providers.

Study Objectives

1

Analyze major national newspaper stories of opiate use during pregnancy.

2

Identify common themes.

3

Explore characterization of mother, infant, and possible conflicts.

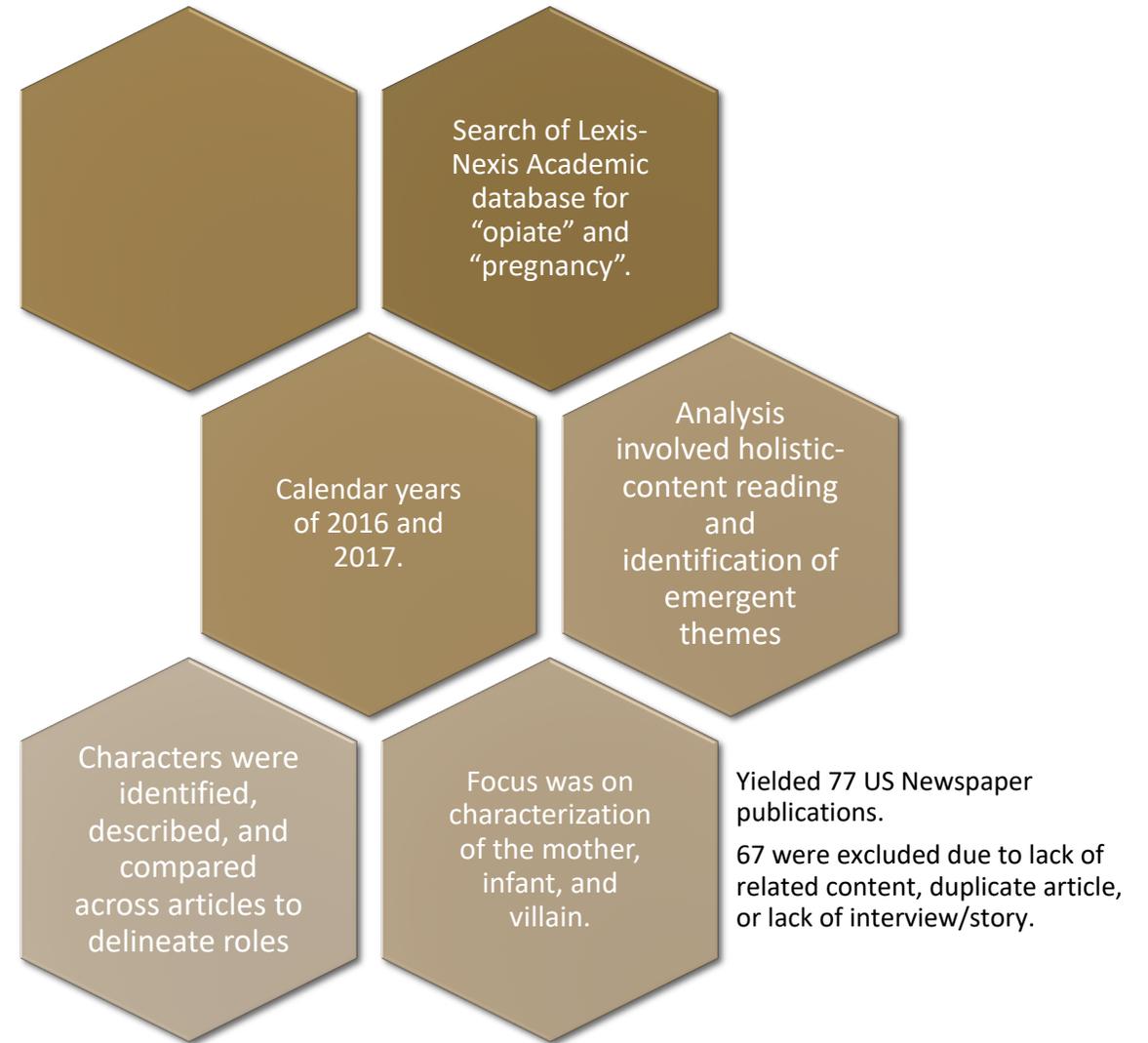
4

Explore construction of the narrative villain.

5

Discuss narrative implications.

Methods



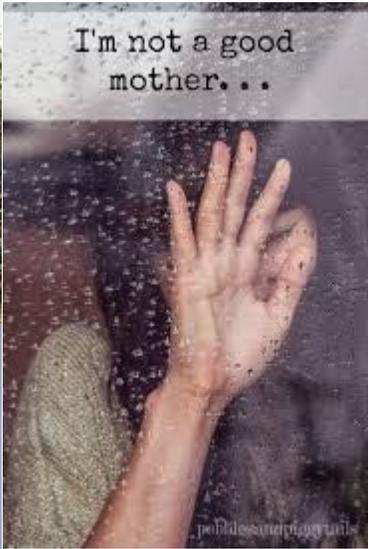
Maternal Roles

GOOD MOTHER

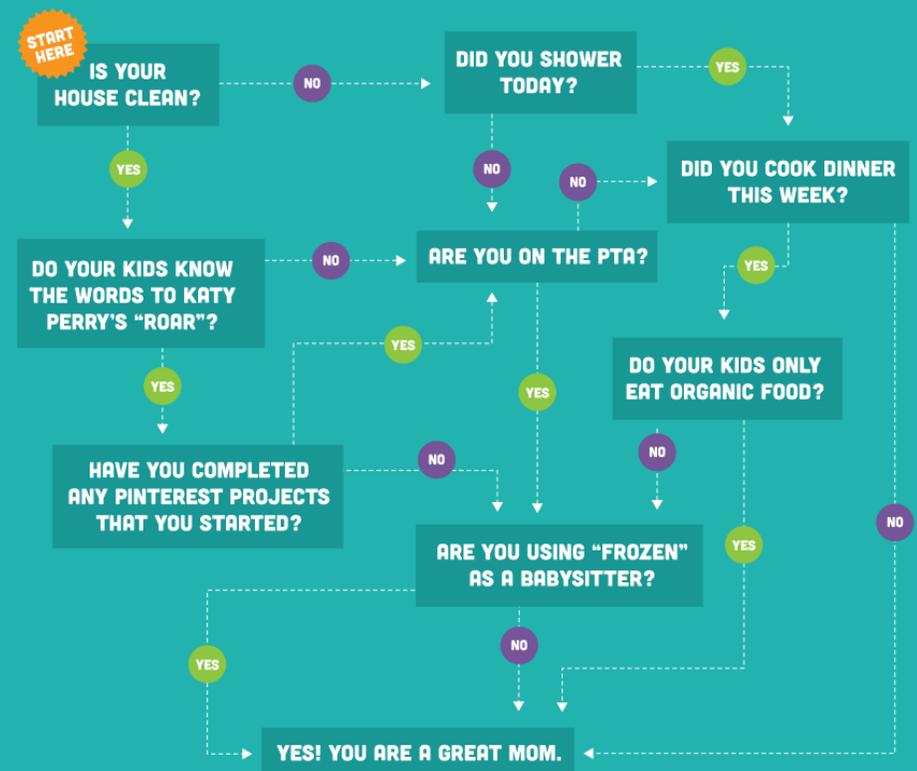
Anyone can have a child and call themselves "a parent". A real parent is someone who puts that child above their own selfish needs and wants.



ADDICT



ARE YOU A GOOD MOM?



Conflicts in Characterization

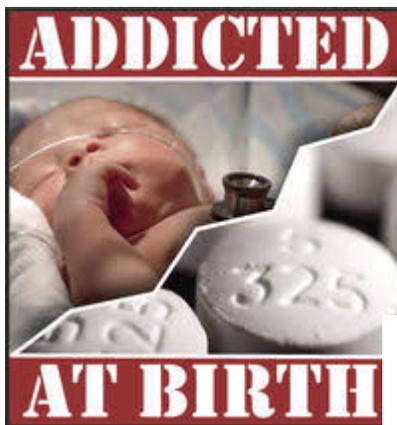
PREGNANCY WANTEDNESS



SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS



Infant Role



**EVERY 25 MINUTES,
A BABY IS BORN SUFFERING
FROM OPIOID WITHDRAWAL.**



HEROIN

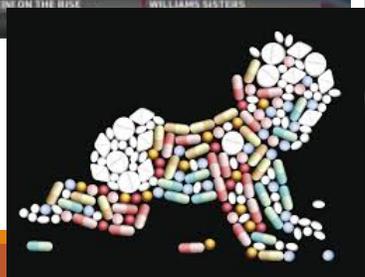
Every 19 minutes,
an opioid addicted
baby is born in the
United States.



**Surge
in babies
addicted
to drugs**

Prescription abuse
on rise across USA

By Dana Leinwand Lopez
USA TODAY
Medical authorities are warning explosive growth in the number of newborn babies hooked on prescription painkillers, innocent victims of their mothers' addictions. The central culprits have already entered a class of powerful narcotics such as OxyContin and Vicodin has become. Prescription-drug abuse is the nation's fastest-growing drug problem, classified as an epidemic by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Narrative

Jayda Jewel Hill was born at 1:32 p.m. April 20. She was born with fluid in her lungs, requiring her to be monitored for much of the evening in the neonatal intensive care unit.

Amanda Ashley's daughter trembled uncontrollably. Her scream rang through the intensive care unit — high-pitched and shrill. She was so agitated, no amount of rocking or cuddling could soothe her.



Narrative Implications



Cultural beliefs

Public and social-service policies

Patient-provider trust, communication, and relationships

