

= Buy , Buy Baby =

" Buy , Buy Baby " is the eighteenth episode of the American television series Will & Grace 's eighth season . It was written by Kirk J. Rudell and directed by series producer James Burrows . The episode originally aired on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in the United States on March 30 , 2006 . Guest stars in " Buy , Buy Baby " include Britney Spears , Wanda Sykes , and George Takei .

In the episode , Jack 's (Sean Hayes) talk show Jack Talk is completely revamped , after right @-@ wing conservatives take over the gay network , OutTV . The new owners hire the ultra @-@ conservative Amber @-@ Louise (Spears) as Jack Talk 's new co @-@ host , infuriating Jack . While Jack is deciding whether or not he will stand up to his new bosses , Karen (Megan Mullally) desires a baby of her own . After seeing Grace (Debra Messing) so happy about her pregnancy , Karen decides she wants a baby and offers to pay a surrogate (Sykes) to carry one for her .

Before the airing of " Buy , Buy Baby " , a press release from NBC revealed that the episode would include a scene in which Spears hosted a Christian cooking segment called " Cruci @-@ fixins " . The name of the segment was met with protest from Christian groups , who accused it of mocking Jesus ' crucifixion . The network canceled the segment after criticism from the American Family Association . " Buy , Buy Baby " received generally mixed reviews and , according to Nielsen ratings , was watched by 3 @. @ 7 million households during its original broadcast .

= = Plot = =

Jack (Sean Hayes) learns that OutTV , the gay television network where he is employed , has been bought by a " large corporation " and that his talk show Jack Talk will have a co @-@ host " to widen the audience . " Not in favor of the idea , Jack agrees and meets his co @-@ host , Amber @-@ Louise (Britney Spears) . During an episode of Jack Talk , Jack is stunned to realize that OutTV , which has been bought by right @-@ wing conservatives , have made changes to the show , including it being renamed Talk Time USA . Not thrilled at the idea , Jack is told to compromise ; Amber @-@ Louise admits to Jack that she is a lesbian , and is merely pretending to be an ultra @-@ conservative Christian to get by in the TV world . She asks him to go along with it , so that he can keep his job . Jack gets on board and informs his guest , actor George Takei , that the network asked that he not reveal he is gay on the show . Will tells Jack not to be let himself be pushed around , and to stand up for who he is . Jack takes Will 's advice and does not compromise , which ultimately costs him his job .

Grace 's (Debra Messing) pregnancy prompts Karen (Megan Mullally) to have a baby of her own . She pays a surrogate , Cricket (Wanda Sykes) , to carry her child . Grace , who is bewildered at the idea of Karen having a baby , suspects that the only reason is that she is having one . Karen , however , dismisses the idea . Meanwhile , Cricket begins to have second thoughts on becoming Karen 's surrogate , following Karen 's strange behavior towards her and Karen 's admission on how she and her husband , Stanley , will raise the child . This prompts Cricket to quit and Karen revealing to Grace that the only reason she wanted a baby was to help her marriage . She also admits that she has thought about leaving her husband .

= = Production = =

" Buy , Buy Baby " was written by Kirk J. Rudell and directed by series producer James Burrows . In February 2006 , it was confirmed that singer Britney Spears would guest star on the show . She rehearsed with the cast on February 11 , 2006 , and recorded her lines in front of a live audience on February 13 and February 15 , 2006 . Spears ' appearance on Will & Grace was her first acting performance on prime @-@ time television , and her first television appearance since giving birth to a child in September 2005 . The show 's creators , David Kohan and Max Mutchnick , thought she did a " surprisingly good job " . On March 28 , 2006 , the Human Rights Campaign announced that actor George Takei would also appear in the episode , in support of Gay , Lesbian , Bisexual , and

Transgender (GLBT) issues since coming out as gay . In addition , actress Wanda Sykes appears as Cricket .

The episode first aired on NBC in the United States on March 30 , 2006 . According to a press release for " Buy , Buy Baby " released by NBC in February 2006 , the episode was to air on April 13 , 2006 (Maundy Thursday) , the day before Good Friday and the crucifixion of Jesus . In the press release , NBC said the episode would include a scene in which Spears hosted a Christian cooking segment called " Cruci @-@ fixins " . The name of the segment was met with controversy from Christian groups , who called it a " mockery " of Jesus ' crucifixion . According to the American Family Association (AFA) , pressure from themselves and NBC 's affiliates , caused NBC to cancel the segment and move the episode 's air date . NBC , however , stated that the " Cruci @-@ fixins " segment was " erroneous information " mistakenly included in the press release and that it was an idea for another episode that had yet to be written . An NBC spokesperson stated : " The reference to ' Cruci @-@ fixins ' will not be in the show and the storyline will not contain a Christian characterization at all . We value our viewers and sincerely regret if this misinformation has offended them . " AFA responded by claiming that the network was " lying " in its claim that the segment had never been a part of the episode . A statement on AFA 's website read :

In an attempt to confuse the public , the network issued an intentionally misleading statement that left the impression that AFA had lied to our supporters . When NBC said that the script ' has yet to be written , ' what they didn 't tell you is that the ' story board ' had been completed and the offensive material was scheduled to be a part of the episode . The story board contains the outline of the program . That is the reason for the detailed description of the episode issued by NBC in their initial press release . The bottom line is that the actions taken by AFA online supporters like you caused them to rewrite the episode and remove the offensive segment .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Buy , Buy Baby " was watched by approximately 3 @.@ 7 million households , according to Nielsen ratings . The episode achieved an 11 % in the key 18 ? 49 demographics among adults . It was the eighth highest @-@ rated show on the NBC network that week . Since airing , the episode has received mixed reviews from television critics . R.D. Heldenfels of the Akron Beacon Journal said Spears ' appearance on the show was " uninspired " . Lenny Ann Low of The Sydney Morning Herald commented that Spears as a right @-@ wing co @-@ host was a miss . " It proves she can talk and avoid the furniture but her flitting , one @-@ dimensional character feels like a stunt . " In Low 's opinion , the only thing that saved the episode from a " thumbs down " , was " its message about finding the courage to be yourself in a sea of conservatism , saccharine though that sounds . " Maureen Ryan of the Chicago Tribune thought Spears " bombed " in the episode , and Jeff Hidek of Star @-@ News disliked the Southern accent she used in her performance . The Plain Dealer 's Mark Dawidziak commented : " Granted , the episode wasn 't very well written , but Spears seemed more out of place on the show than Megan Mullally 's Karen at a sensitivity seminar . "

A Herald Sun reviewer , however , thought she gave the final season of Will & Grace the " send @-@ off it deserved . " Rachel Browne of The Sun Herald said the problem with Spears ' performance is that " it 's impossible to accept her in any role other than her own headline @-@ hugging self . " Browne , however , thought her appearance was " fun to watch " . The Sunday Mail was also positive about Spears ' performance , commenting that she " does well , especially when you remember the dismal Crossroads . " Trent Vanegas of Pink is the New Blog said that doing the show was a " great move " for Spears . Television researcher Tim Brooks , the co @-@ author of the 1979 book The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network and Cable TV Shows , commented that Spears ' role was a " very good way to get her chops into comedy " , in part because it is " very out of type . She 's not just playing herself as a celebrity . "