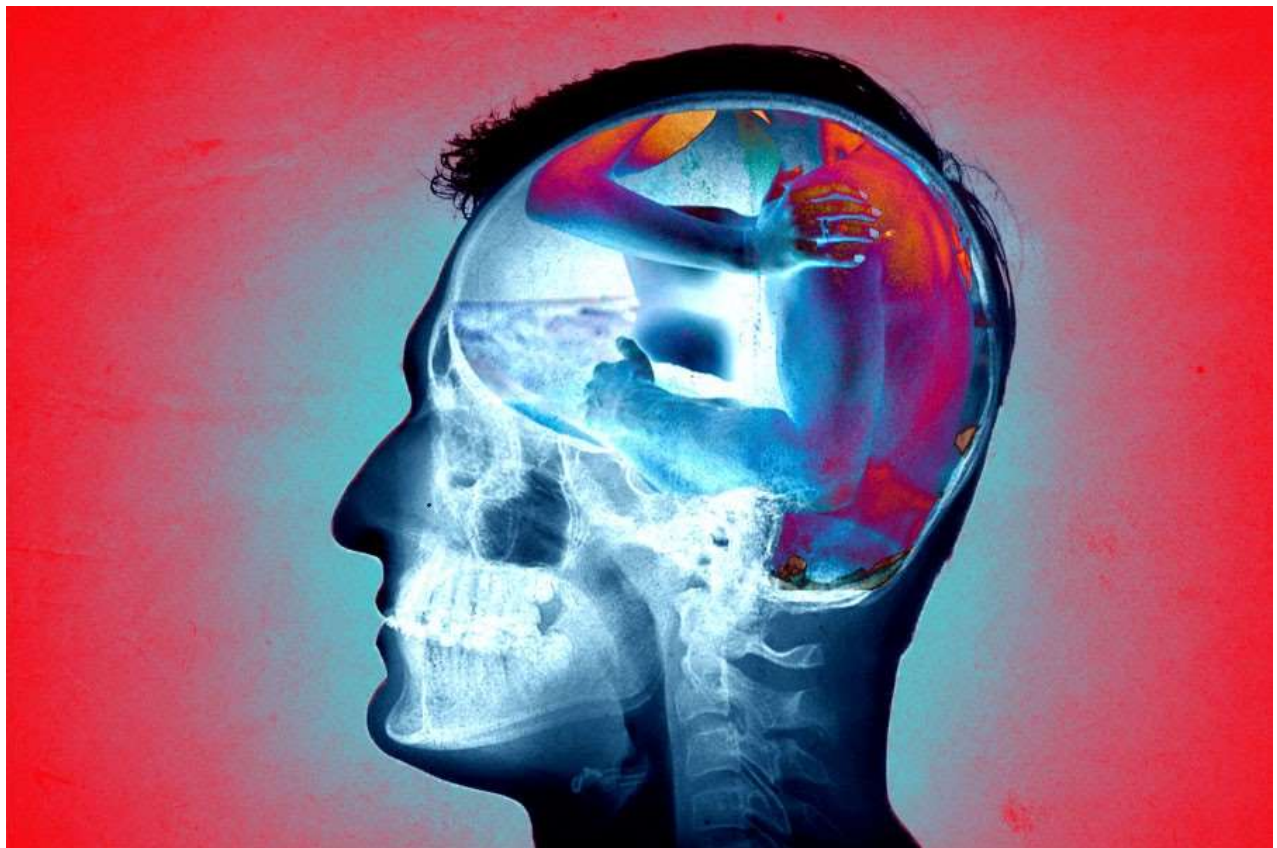




The Psychology of Every Different Type of Sex

From make-up sex to grief sex, there's a lot more going on than just humping

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Sex, like [dick pics](#), can come in various forms: There's make-up sex; breakup sex; drunk sex; stoned sex; affair sex; sad sex; and angry sex at the very least. Basically, whatever happens in those moments leading up to humans humping will likely affect the type of humping that's about to manifest.

While there's little scientific evidence to support the theory that these are technically different *types* of intercourse, anecdotally, most people would say that the sex they had while listening to Enya after attending a funeral was different from the sex they had right after their shrieking deathmatch about [whose turn it was to do the dishes](#).

So what's really going on with all these different types of boning? Let's find out.

Make-up Sex

If you believe [Elite Daily](#), make-up sex is the best part of every relationship:

“Like cocaine, it makes you high. A momentary bliss, it brings you up from the low of an argument to a type of ecstasy that can only come from an orgasm. Much like a drug addict, couples yearn for that momentary high that comes from escaping that tense and electrically-charged fight.”

That's a bit like saying that cough syrup is the best part about being susceptible to aggressive viruses: Sure, it can feel nice to be restored somewhat, but you're still sick.

In fact, according to Seth Meyers ([not that one](#)), writing for [Psychology Today](#), that momentary bliss is the result of a massive mood swing, and while it can seem visceral, it's actually not so great. “Make-up sex often reflects the [unconscious](#) fantasy to be able to make everything better with sex. Sadly, it's often after couples have this heated sexual moment that they feel sadder and more lonely when the old feelings come back,” he writes.

Aaron Ben Z'eev, a professor of philosophy at the University of Haifa in Israel, thinks that the excitement of make-up sex is caused by a transfer from one arousal state to another, citing an experiment by Donald Dutton and Arthur Aron in 1974 as evidence. “In this experiment, male passersby were contacted either on a [fear](#)-arousing suspension bridge or a non-fear-arousing bridge by an attractive woman who asked them to fill out questionnaires,” he also writes in [Psychology Today](#). “Sexual arousal toward the woman was greater in subjects on the fear-arousing bridge. Their fear arousal was transferred to sexual arousal generated by the presence of an attractive woman.”

Sex and relationship coaches [Danielle Harel and Celeste Hirschman](#), meanwhile, tell me that make-up sex is a way to, er, “bridge” the distance during a fight. “The intensity

comes from the distance, and the sex then bridges this distance, re-consolidating closeness and connection,” they suggest.

But Ben Ze’ev argues that make-up sex, while incredibly intense, is also a superficial remedy for fights. “The remedy is beneficial when the relationship is basically positive, and the fights are typically local and limited—they do not express a fundamentally hostile split. However, when more profound problems underlie the relationship, make-up sex is of little value and may even invoke negative emotions by not treating the problem seriously,” he explains in *Psychology Today*.

In other words, the second that afterglow fades, you’re headed for a breakup anyway. On the plus side, that might lead you to...

Breakup Sex

The concept of breakup sex—which, let’s face it, only exists in a romcom style utopia in which Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone break into song upon climax—is that you get to enjoy one last hump before you part ways with your fellow humper. “They may simply want to have the last experience with a person be one of pleasure and connection in order to have loving, positive closure,” Harel and Hirschman tell me.

To their point, Ben Ze’ev writes that the finality of breakup sex is what makes couples feel like they have less to worry about (and therefore, enjoy it more), because the future is already decided. “They often take the attitude of ‘Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.’ Nothing is meaningful except for the present sexual togetherness,” writes Ben Ze’ev.

Certified sex therapist [Kat Van Kirk](#), as per [this Women’s Health article](#), believes that breakup sex can actually be very tender. “Breakup sex can help you process emotions and give you the time and connection to separate from your ex in a more compassionate way,” she says.

The problem, of course, is that for most people, a breakup just means that the make-up sex wasn’t good enough to keep things going anymore.

Kinda makes you angry, huh?

Angry Sex

Angry sex is similar to make-up sex where, like a pendulum, your emotions from one event can be reused if swung in a different direction—according to Ben Ze’ev, at least. He

claims that the same emotional transfer that causes a person's anger toward a villain turn into a state of happiness upon seeing the villain punished, can be used to describe how anger can become romantic passion and arousal. "Here the arousal underlying anger and even [revenge](#) is transferred into sexual arousal. A more subtle manner of increasing sexual arousal is teasing, which involves a gentle and humorous argument (simulating a 'fight') that increases sexual arousal," writes Ben Ze'ev in the same [Psychology Today](#) article.

Harel and Hirschman tell me that angry sex is like yelling or punching a wall, in that it can help release anger. "If it's consensual, it can be a wonderful way a couple can act as a team to help lessen tensions that are disrupting connection in a relationship," they say. Hey, whatever keeps your relationship alive.

Which reminds me...

Grief Sex

Take your mind off death with a little post-funeral coitus. At least so says Diana Kirschner, a psychologist and author of [Love in 90 Days: The Essential Guide to Finding Your Own True Love](#). Kirschner told [The Observer](#) in 2015 that sex can be used as a diversion from death, adding that sadness can actually be well suited for being more "emotionally open." "There's more potential for a true emotional connection. ... Funerals cut down on small talk," explained Kirschner.

Harel and Hirschman tell me that because an orgasm can feel like letting go, it can help release deep grief within the body, too. "Many people cry during sex anyway, because of the intensity of love or feelings involved," they tell me.

[Biological anthropologist Helen Fisher](#), a fellow at The Kinsey Institute and author of [Why Him, Why Her?: How to Find and Keep Lasting Love](#), suggests that the unusual nature of death can actually make people hornier. "Real novelty drives up dopamine in the brain and nothing is more unusual than death. ... Dopamine then triggers testosterone, the hormone of sexual desire in men and women," Kirschner said in the same [Observer](#) article.

This isn't too different from how drunk sex works, so...

Sex Under the Influence

[Scientifically speaking](#), having sex while under the influence of alcohol doesn't make your hornier. In other words, [tequila shots — no matter how much the commercials want you to believe — is not an aphrodisiac](#). Alcohol does do things to your brain, though —

specifically, it releases a high amount of dopamine, which helps lessen your anxiety and insecurity, helping you to feel less reserved, and again, enjoy it more.

Strangely enough, the science says that [sex on weed](#) is actually better. That's according to [a 2016 study](#) led by New York University medical professor Joseph Palamar, the reasoning being that you're less likely to regret it than drunk sex. "Alcohol was more likely than marijuana to lead to atypical partner choice or post-sex regret," claims to [the study](#), which also notes that alcohol use was "often associated with hasty decisions; for example, not using a condom," [reported Mic](#).

Speaking of hasty decisions, per [Ashley Madison's tagline](#): "Life is Short. Have an Affair."

Affair Sex

According to one article in [The Atlantic](#), the reason why many people have an affair is because it's easier than dealing with the problems in their marriage. This also could be one reason why the sex is better, because in the moment, that too is easier. Writing in [Psychology Today](#), Douglas LaBier—who suggests that there are six different types of affair—claims that, "The 'It's Only-Lust Affair,' which is the most common type, usually consists of really intense sex that quickly burns out."

"The liberating and compelling feeling from this kind of affair, though, can mask hidden emotional conflicts," he continues. "An example is the person who's able to feel sexually alive and free only in a secret relationship, hidden from the imagined hovering, inhibiting eye of one's parent—which the person may experience unconsciously with his or her spouse."

Harel and Hirschman agree, adding that the intensity of affair sex stems from the fact that it's devoid of responsibilities. "You can keep the person as an idealized partner because you never have to experience all the stuff that makes relationships challenging or boring, like negotiating around child rearing or paying the bills," they tell me.

Sadly, that doesn't usually last long either—as we are all well aware, especially on a Monday morning before a long week, life isn't *that* short.