

Making Sex not Love
An Explanation Behind the Song

by

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I choose to do my creative project as a response to my reading of Jean-Philippe Toussaint's novel Making Love. The book, dealing with the emotional issue of the breaking up of a couple's marriage, I felt would be best portrayed through music. Therefore, I composed the song Making Sex not Love as a representation of the physical attraction that still exists between the husband and wife despite their growing emotionally apart. Over the course of the novel there are several instances where the couple engages in the act of love making, however, throughout these encounters, there really is no love involved. I therefore felt it was more appropriate to give my song the title I did. This can be evidenced with the scene in the book on page 16 where the couple is making love, however, the wife proceeds to leave her sleeping mask over her eyes the whole time symbolizing the very impersonal and purely physical nature of the act.

I wrote the song to deal with these themes and related them to experiences I've had in my life. I find the phenomenon of couples and ex-couples finding comfort falling back into the physical attraction of lovers past fascinating. How is it that people who we have committed ourselves to not having emotional attachments to, can continue to lure us in physically. For an act that has been engrained in our minds as emotional and filled with love, how can we continue to engage in sexual relations after conceding that two people are not right for each other? It is these feelings I attempted to convey throughout the lyrics of the song. In lines such as, "why is there such a disconnect, between our bodies and our minds, how can we hate someone, but need their sex to unwind," I am trying to convey just how odd it is that this separation exists. Overall, I was just hoping to shed some light onto why people can fall into this trap so easily.

To actually record the song, I was able to employ the help of my friend Kyle who works in the recording studio on the University of Arizona campus. Using various microphones for the guitar tracks as well as the vocal tracks I took several takes and proceeded to layer different vocal melodies at different points in the song. I decided the emotions and ideas of the song, I felt, would be best represented acoustically, so I proceeded to just use my acoustic guitar and sang vocals to complete the song. In the end, I don't feel I explained why this phenomenon occurs, I'm sure there are various reasons for each couple's unique case, however, through the song I hope to peak listeners' curiosity to examine their own lives and hopefully allow them to relate to the ideas represented in the lyrics and the feelings which the music stirs.

- *Stephen Johnson*

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