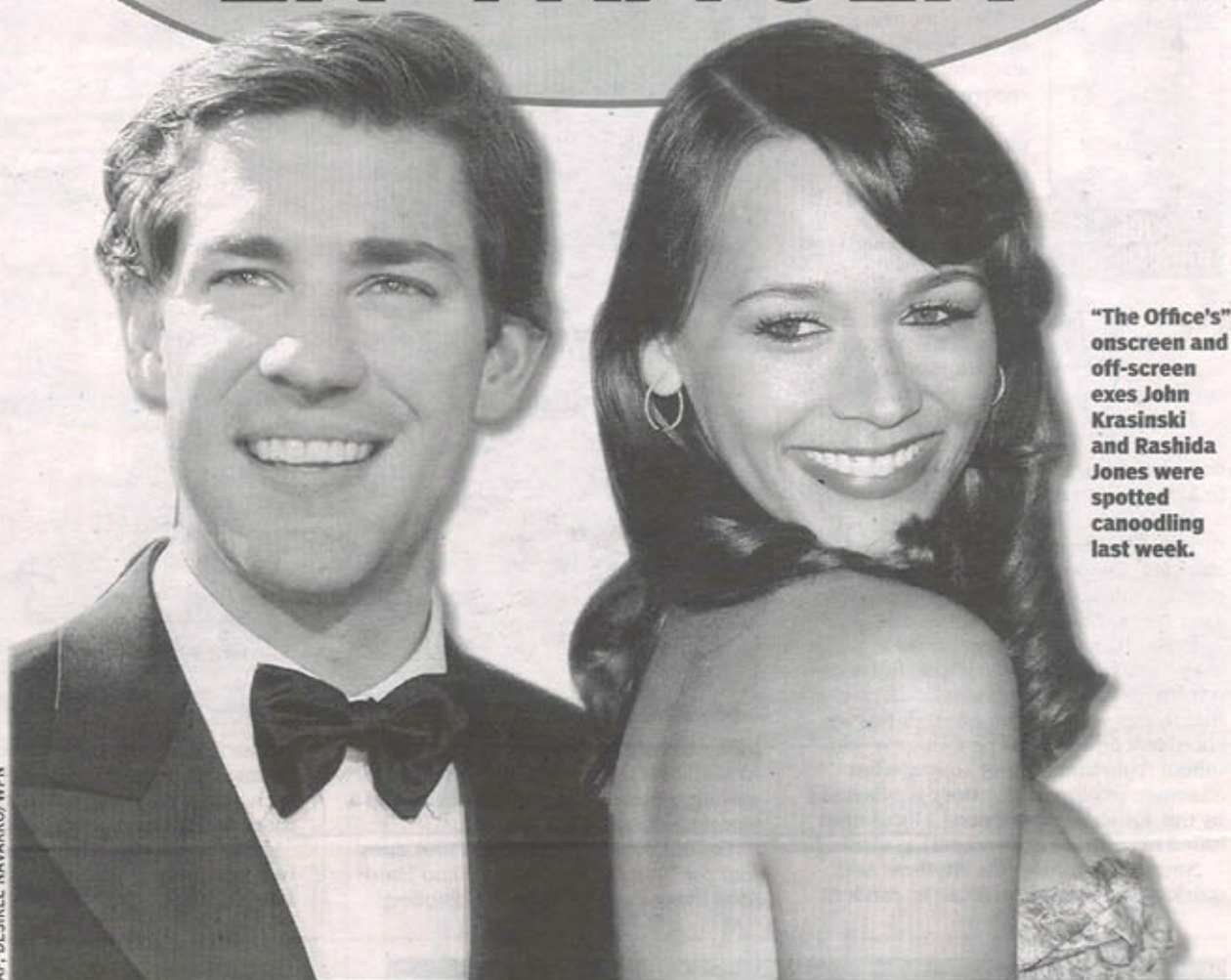




SUSAN BLOND INC.



BACK FOR EX-TRA SEX



"The Office's" onscreen and off-screen exes John Krasinski and Rashida Jones were spotted canoodling last week.

AP, DESIREE NAVARRO/WPN

Former couples find that when the thrill is gone, it can be fun to pretend it's back — but also risky

BY JO PIAZZA

It's the comfort of the familiar, hopping in bed with a former boyfriend or girlfriend. Who among us hasn't tripped down the slippery slope of ex sex?

Last weekend, "The Office's" John Krasinski was spotted getting cozy with his onscreen and off-screen ex-girlfriend Rashida Jones, whom he dated in 2005. Jones, the daughter of legendary music mogul Quincy Jones, said of her ex, "If you go out with somebody and it doesn't work out, there's always a reason why you liked the person to begin with."

She's not the only star to have a romantic flashback. Christina Applegate was spotted publicly smooching her ex-husband, Johnathon Schaech, at Hollywood hot spot Les Deux — two years after the couple split and three months after their divorce became final.

But getting back together for a quickie with an ex has its perils.

"It complicates things and makes them weird," says 28-year-old New Yorker Sarah Chatwick, who slept with her ex-boyfriend earlier this summer, years after they broke up, when he already had been seeing someone else for nine months. "It was intriguing to sleep with him again, but the memories were better than the reality. It's never without strings or just 'comfortable,' which was what I was hoping for. Plus I just felt guilty."

There are dangers of re-sparking a fire with a former flame, says relationship expert Cooper Lawrence. First,

you could easily end up falling back in love. You're probably just doing it to get some kind of revenge or heal still-open wounds. Also, when you focus so intently on one person with whom it didn't work out, "You are putting the energy out into the world that you really aren't ready for the right person."

But in a city where dating can be such a chore, knowing what's to come when you hop between the sheets can be a real turnon.

Randi, a New York woman who didn't want to give her real name for fear of jeopardizing future ex sex, says she almost exclusively hooks up with ex-boyfriends.

"I keep going back to my ex for sex because it's convenient and comfortable, and I know exactly what I am getting into. There are no new emotions involved," says the 32-year-old. "There are so many expectations for dating with New York, but there are no expectations with your ex. You order a burger, you know you are getting a burger."

Plus, Randi adds, sometimes it seems important to keep the number of men you have slept with to what you believe is a respectable level.

But to avoid postcoital buyer's remorse, Lawrence advises setting ground rules from the outset.

"Tell them exactly what you are looking for and be open and honest all the way through. If you are starting to fall for him, you need to let him know. You don't want to be surprised when he shows up with someone else."

Ex sex is probably a way to get revenge or heal open wounds, says one expert.