

Is romantic kissing a universal human behavior?

Scholars from a wide range of human social and behavioral sciences have become interested in the romantic–sexual kiss. This research, and its public dissemination, often includes statements about the ubiquity of kissing, particularly romantic–sexual kissing, across cultures.

Yet, to date there is no evidence to support or reject this claim. Employing standard cross-cultural methods, this research report is the first attempt to use a large sample set (eHRAF World Cultures, SCCS, and a selective ethnographer survey) to document the presence or absence of the romantic–sexual kiss. We defined romantic–sexual kissing as lip-to-lip contact that may or may not be prolonged.

Despite frequent depictions of kissing in a wide range of material culture, we found no evidence that the romantic–sexual kiss is a human universal or even a near universal. The romantic–sexual kiss was present in a minority of cultures sampled (46 percent). Moreover, there is a strong correlation between the frequency of the romantic–sexual kiss and a society's relative social complexity: the more socially complex the culture, the higher frequency of romantic–sexual kissing.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Is the Romantic-Sexual Kiss a Near Human Universal?](#)