

X for kisses

We played kiss-catch in the playground and in the farmer's field but it was just a version of tag or 'tick' and the kisses were perfunctory and rarely landed on the lips as the person being kissed dodged away.

At teenage parties it was all about experimenting so we would have games of 'Spin the Bottle' where we sat in a circle and twirled an empty bottle. When the rotating bottle stopped, whoever the bottle neck pointed to had to go outside (usually in the hallway) with the person who had spun the bottle. In the privacy of the hall you could often negotiate with the other person if you really didn't fancy kissing them. But trading kisses could often ignite a spark and you'd want to know that person a little better.

At Christmas parties, mistletoe was a convenient excuse for catching unsuspecting people in an embrace.

Nowadays kisses are exchanged much more randomly and almost everyone greets strangers with a hug or a kiss on the cheek. In the uptight 1950s and 1960s kisses were a far more intimate exchange.