

Two Boys Kissing

David Levithan

4.08

46,643 ratings 5,154 reviews

Goodreads Choice Award

Nominee for Best Young Adult Fiction (2013)

New York Times bestselling author David Levithan tells the based-on-true-events story of Harry and Craig, two 17-year-olds who are about to take part in a 32-hour marathon of kissing to set a new Guinness World Record—all of which is narrated by a Greek Chorus of the generation of gay men lost to AIDS.

While the two increasingly dehydrated and sleep-deprived boys are locking lips, they become a focal point in the lives of other teen boys dealing with languishing long-term relationships, coming out, navigating gender identity, and falling deeper into the digital rabbit hole of gay hookup sites—all while the kissing former couple tries to figure out their own feelings for each other.

Genres **Young Adult** **LGBT** **Romance** **Contemporary Fiction** **Queer** **Gay**
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TWO BOYS KISSING

BY DAVID LEVITHAN • RELEASE DATE: AUG. 27, 2013

It's well-intentioned and inspiring, but it doesn't push any boundaries.

Gay past and gay present collide.

Right from the start readers will know something weird is going on with Levithan's latest. The narrator(s) refers to themselves as "us," and readers will soon deduce that it's the Kushner-esque collective voice of a gay generation from decades before, one that was ravaged by AIDS, anger, politics and more. It's through their lens that this story of seven boys from the present is told. The first two—whose activities are imparted in the work's title—are Craig and Harry. They're out to break the world's kissing record (32 hours, 12 minutes and 9 seconds) to protest a hate crime enacted upon their friend. They're not a couple anymore, and Craig still smarts from the breakup. A second pair—Peter and Neil—have been a couple for a while, but that doesn't mean their relationship is perfect. Pink-haired trans Avery and blue-haired Ryan meet at an alternative LGBT prom, and sparks fly. All the while, Cooper, kicked out of his parents' house and obsessed with gay-hookup apps, suffers alone. The story drifts back and forth and among these seven youth under the watchful, occasionally curmudgeonly voice of the past, which weighs down the narrative too much at times. The novel has genuine moments of insight and wisdom, but it feels calculated and lacks the spontaneity that made Levithan's first two novels so magical. Still, fans of his earlier works will appreciate the familiar tone, characters and themes they've come to love over the years.

It's well-intentioned and inspiring, but it doesn't push any boundaries. (Fiction. 14 & up)

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