

## Mediated Love

Is romance a natural feeling, or is it all just learned performative behavior, something seen in a commercial? Mass media, advertisements, television broadcasts, and pop radio hits reach thousands of people instantaneously, communicating a message in an incredibly succinct time span. In order to connect with such a large audience, these messages largely push universalities, truisms on the public that are widely accepted to the point where they are almost invisible.

For this essay, I would like you to analyze the implied message of a “love song;” be it about new love, a tough break up, staying together, a crush—try to find what message the singer is communicating to an audience. What assumption about love is the song playing off of?

For your thesis, develop a criticism regarding this message; what myth about romance does the message perpetuate? Keep in mind the difference between “love” and “romance” in your discussion. We aren’t saying that love isn’t real, but could we say “romance” is unrealistic at times? Consider the purpose of your analysis; why should a reader care about your reading of an R. Kelly song? A strong thesis should answer that “so what?” question. The message you find in the song should potentially reflect the way the masses feel about romance.

Remember: what literally happens in the song, the story, is less important for discussion than your critique of how romance is presented. Your analysis should apply outside the song, exposing a cultural assumption we as a culture make about love.

If you are more of a visual person, you are welcome to write about a movie, television show, or video game. Pick an onscreen couple and break down the dynamic of their relationship—what message do they convey to an audience regarding love?