

P R O P O S A L

GLOW IN THE DARK

A photograph of Kanye West crouching in the center of a dark stage, illuminated by a bright, circular spotlight. He is wearing a dark jacket, blue jeans, and black sneakers with white soles. His right hand is resting on his head, and he is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The spotlight creates a strong contrast between the illuminated subject and the surrounding darkness.

Uncensored Reflections
by **KANYE WEST**

CONTENTS

<i>Proposal: GLOW IN THE DARK</i>	3
Book Design & Structure	6
About The Author & Collaborator	9
Marketing and Demographics	12
Chapter Excerpts	14
Magazine Covers	37

*c/o
Mel Berger
William Morris Agency
1325 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10019
212-903-1147*

GLOW IN THE DARK

Uncensored Reflections

By KANYE WEST

In *GLOW IN THE DARK*, international rap superstar *KANYE WEST* makes his literary debut, offering a compelling, no-holds-barred book of personal reflections. Both poetic and practical in its distinctive perspectives on life, this first book captures the same wit, playful irony, and biting insight abundant in West's inimitable lyrics.

The enigmatic 29-year-old--who has appeared on the cover of *TIME*, was featured among Barbara Walters' 10 Most Fascinating People of 2005, and sold seven million albums in three years--here shares his most intimate feelings about everything from money, sex, fame, family, and friendship to adversity, mortality, racism, addiction, and the power of his unique "*Thank You/You're Welcome*" philosophy--one based on *using* and *being used* for a productive purpose.

West's 150-page book, whose title mirrors the star's upcoming 2008 *Glow In The Dark* world tour, is thus a dramatically-narrated, entertaining volume of "**Kanyeisms**"--a creative, fun, insightful, edgy collection of improvisational philosophies, musings, and anecdotes.

No less provocative than his beats or uninhibited public statements, *Glow In The Dark* delivers its message uncensored, "without any five-second delay," West says, free of editing or media distortion.

Whether speaking out about the AIDS pandemic in African communities, or standing up against homophobia--or discussing pornography, Gucci, or the

magic of “creating product”--West is a trailblazer, expressing his thoughts and personal style with self-possessed confidence: “Who benefits from your humble moment?” he asks. “Nobody.”

The six-time Grammy-winner (nominated *eighteen* times in two years) who made headlines in 2005 after lambasting George Bush’s response to Hurricane Katrina, wants to “tear down clichés and expand people’s consciousness,” inspiring readers to direct their own destiny and unapologetically proclaim what matters most to them.

“This book,” West explains, **“is all about *celebrating your moments--in the moment*, living life as a dream with the ability to make any change you want. Forget limitation. I want to blast open the door of *possibility*--blow it open. So instead of people thinking in little boxes--their minds filled with that *itty, bitty, shitty committee* that tells you can’t do it--I say think big.”**

That committee, West believes, keeps us hostage to thinking small: “You’re too old, or too young, too fat or too skinny. Your nose is too long. If only x, y, and z were right, THEN you could succeed. I always say: ‘**Don’t waste time explaining what you *don’t* have or *can’t* do to justify your failure.**’ The ‘content’ of your words can’t mask the true ‘intent’--which is to guarantee inaction.”

The goal here is to open up possibilities by example. “If I expand, you expand--and we inspire each other.”

It all begins with the central theme of the book: “When you glow in the dark,” West explains, “you give off light. You radiate energy. You illuminate the ‘room’ of your life. You become an inspiration to others.”

And the power for that “light,” he believes, comes from within. “You are *projecting*, not *reflecting*. You become the *source* of all energy.”

So even in the “dark,” he observes, when life gets tough, when you encounter setbacks or negativity, “when there are all ‘no’s’ in the room,” when skepticism, doubt, or even tragedy invade (such as West’s near-fatal car accident in 2002), you have an inner source to rely upon and support you.

“It’s when you face that dark room of life,” he emphasizes, “that you most have to focus on your vision.

“That’s when you really get the chance to grow--and to glow.”

* * * * *

Note: Throughout *Glow In The Dark*, each topic will transition smoothly into another, some sections featuring only a dramatic sentence or two—a “pearl” to ponder--while others offer an extended free-flowing narrative. Whether biting, thought-provoking, or whimsical, each and every page is designed to inspire, not lecture, to motivate, not preach—all of it written to make people T H I N K about their lives and how to live them. In the tradition of the Paul Arden bestseller *It’s Not How Good You Are, It’s How Good You Want To Be*, West will likewise challenge and defy reader expectation, offering the same element of surprise demonstrated in his Grammy-winning lyrics.

BOOK DESIGN

A fastidious perfectionist in the recording studio, and a trained artist, West will approach the production of *Glow In The Dark* just as scrupulously, determined to make it inspirational not only in its content but also in design. In its physical presentation, the book is envisioned as a uniquely-formatted volume that reflects the expressive and artistic style of its author.

The narrative will be accompanied by a collection of assorted illustrations, drawings, and possibly photographs. The size, color, and placement of words on a page will reinforce the content of the text. The cover of the book will feature a title line that literally glows in the dark. In this way, the graphics and content will combine synergistically to produce a package that conveys in the most visually dynamic way possible the actual reflections. In this sense, the book will be not only a deeply personal message from the star, but a collector's item that goes beyond the usual parameters of self-help books, fulfilling West's mission to "help others glow in the dark," and become the beacon of their own lives.

* * * * *

BOOK STRUCTURE

Glow In The Dark is organized into four major sections—

THE FOUR PILLARS of KANYEISM



[*=Samples Included In Book Excerpts]

PILLAR I: Live An Award-Worthy Life (Nothing Half-Way)

Topics Including

- Impulse Control: My “Come To Jesus” Moment*
- Impatience and Arrogance: Call Them Flaws*
- Obsession: As Good As It Gets*
- Fame*
- The Big M*





- Body & Breath: Work It

Pillar II: Practice “THANK YOU/YOU’RE WELCOME” (It’s All Reciprocal)

- Be Leery Of The Free Gift Bag*
- Lifestyle Changer: Thank You/ You’re Welcome*
- Get Used To Being Used (Because It’s Good For You)*
- Please Don’t Please*
- Relationship Chess



Pillar III: Create Your Moments (It’s Up To You)

- Change Your Stars*
- Just Next To Stupid: Not Shyness*
- Be You*
- Roller Coaster Life*
- Cultivate Spontaneity: Remember “Fun?”
- Exist In the Moment
- Your Choice: Life= 5% what happens, 95% How You React
- Fearless You: Finding The Right Path
- Scrapbook Moments: The Humble-Growth-Breathrough-Hurtful, Formative-Pivotal-Funny, Decision-making>MOMENTS



Pillar IV: Move It To The Side (Blottin’ Out Resistance)

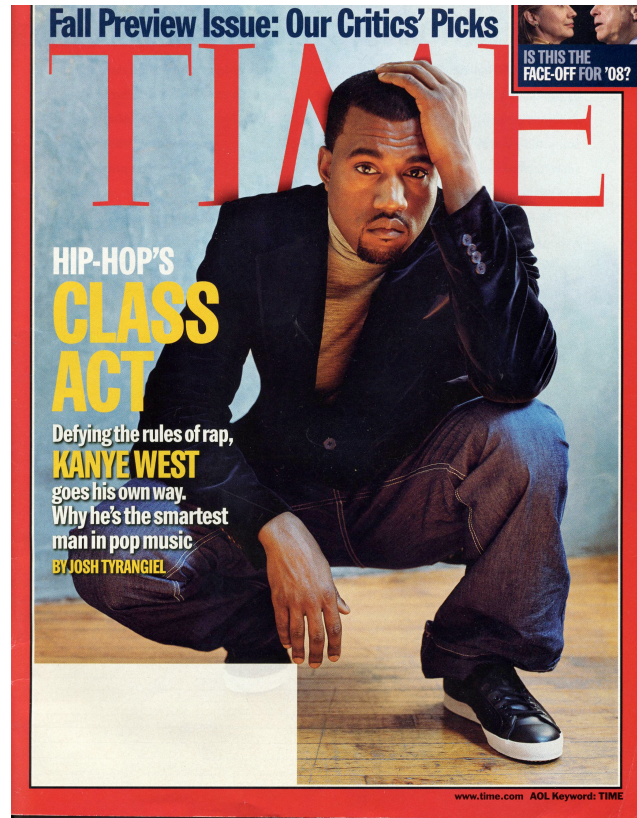
- Pain & Prayer: Moving Beyond The Crisis*
- Get Rid Of It: Everything You Don’t Need
- Stop Wastin’ Time--Explaining What You’re NOT Doing
- Ditch It: Turn A “Should” Into A “Must”
- Brain Sweep: Clean It Out

- Body and Breath: The Only One You Got

About the Author: KANYE WEST

"GLOW IN THE DARK is all about celebrating your moments—in the moment, living life as a dream with the ability to make any change you want. Forget limitation. I want to blast open the door of possibility—blow it open—and start a 'THANK YOU/YOU'RE WELCOME' movement, a new way of living that really works."

International rap superstar **KANYE WEST**, winner of six Grammys and featured among Barbara Walters' 10 Most Fascinating People of 2005, is the nation's hottest hip-hop artist, selling an astonishing seven million albums in three years. A master lyricist, his 2004 debut album, *The College Dropout*, went nearly triple platinum, topped all the major critics' polls, earned ten Grammy nominations, and made rap accessible to audiences that hadn't paid attention in years. His second album, *Late Registration*, dubbed "an undeniable triumph" by *Rolling Stone*, was an even bigger hit, placing #1 on the U.S. charts and selling 3.8 million copies, securing West's stature as a one-man hit factory. The charismatic 29-year-old has now racked up eighteen Grammy nominations; snagged his own HBO TV series; created a designer clothing line; landed on the cover of 16 national magazines, including TIME; and appeared on dozens of national broadcasts, including Leno, Letterman, and Saturday Night Live.



A native of Chicago, Illinois, **Kanye West** grew up the only child of Dr. Donda West, formerly the Chair of the English Department at Chicago State University, and Ray West, an award-winning photojournalist and sociology professor. Highly gifted in both music and art, Kanye was drawing prodigiously before he could even talk; rhyming lyrics at age 8, composing beats by 10, and selling them as a teen.

After attending a Chicago art school for a year, he dropped out to pursue a rap career, though both parents argued against it. "They wanted me to stay in college so I'd have something to fall back on. And I said: 'I can focus on falling back later! I want to focus on me now.' And I wanted their blessing to do it." He got it. Realizing his dream, Kanye was soon a behind-the-scenes wunderkind, composing beats and producing hit singles for major hip-hop / R&B artists, including Alicia Keys, Jay-Z, Janet Jackson, Brandy, The Game, Memphis Bleek, Cam'Ron, Ludacris, Carter Hays, and John Legend. The turning point of his career was composing five songs for Jay-Z's hit 2001 album "The Blueprint," where he pioneered an approach uniquely his own—borrowing bits of 1970's soul records and often speeding up the vocals so they are recognizable but not quite familiar.

By age 24, West had become a leading name in hip-hop production, though he had not realized his greatest ambition--getting a record deal for *himself*. But it wasn't an easy sell. At first, record labels were skeptical about a middle-class kid from an educated family who defied the street image predominant in hip-hop. "Kanye wore a pink shirt with the collar sticking up and Gucci loafers," recalls label executive Damon Dash, cofounder of Roc-A-Fella Records, who eventually signed West.

In the midst of working on his debut album, *The College Dropout*, West's career was almost derailed by a near-fatal car accident in October 2002 when he fell asleep behind the wheel of his car after a long night of recording. The accident left his jaw fractured in three places and he barely survived. Yet it also provided the inspiration for West's first single, "Through The Wire," which he recorded just two weeks after the accident (with his broken jaw still wired shut.) "Death is the best thing that can ever happen to a rapper. Almost dying isn't bad either," he later told Time magazine, which featured him on the cover in August 2005.

With the release of *The College Dropout* West had, at last, realized his dream, launching himself as a major star in the rap world. Immaculately produced, the album revealed West to be a master of the spoken word "That record restored my faith in hip-hop," said actor Jamie Foxx, who lent comic vocals to it. And as one critic wrote: "In West's world, rhymes about strippers, God, college life, and guns can coexist tidily and not undermine each other. He's simply brilliant."

Popular, polarizing, and incredibly entertaining, the multi-talented West, who often makes headlines with his blunt comments on social issues, will reveal his lighter side in an upcoming HBO situation comedy to be produced by Larry Charles, the director of the *Borat* movie and executive producer of *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. The show will focus on the crazy, hectic life of a Grammy-winning artist, and though fictional, it is loosely based on West's life. He's also working on a feature film inspired by his music, produced by New Line Cinema and Anonymous Content.

His next album--*Graduation*—is one of the most highly anticipated hip-hop albums of 2007, to be followed in 2008 by the final album of this four-part set--*Good Ass Job*.

Collaborator Biography

Best-selling author **Glenn Plaskin** is one of the nation's leading celebrity interviewers, landing exclusives with film stars, politicians, TV personalities, business executives, and media figures. "*When it comes to the brutally competitive world of celebrity journalism,*" *Celebrity Service* writes, "*no one is more successful at nailing down the big names than entertainment reporter Glenn Plaskin.*"

Plaskin's newspaper and magazine profiles have included classic interviews with Katharine Hepburn, Elizabeth Taylor, Nancy Reagan, Michael Jackson, Meryl Streep, Bill Gates, Colin Powell, Harrison Ford, Al Pacino, Dolly Parton, Lionel Richie, Diana Ross, Sylvester Stallone, Calvin Klein, Anthony Robbins, Donald Trump, Leona Helmsley, Paul Newman, Diane Sawyer, Barbara Walters, Robert DeNiro, and a host of other luminaries.

His published work includes the critically-acclaimed *Horowitz: The Biography of Vladimir Horowitz; Turning Point: Pivotal Moments in the Lives of America's Celebrities*, featured on Oprah and Larry King and based on the column syndicated by Tribune Media Services; and the upcoming *Transformations* with Anthony Robbins, who notes: "*Glenn is a brilliant writer—passionate, perceptive, and inventive. His use of language reveals the soul of a poet.*"

A native of Buffalo, N.Y. and trained as a concert pianist, Glenn Plaskin began writing culture profiles for the *New York Times* in his mid-20's. He rose to prominence when his Horowitz book—the first-ever biography of the renowned pianist—was published in the U.S., Canada, England, France, Germany, Japan, and Finland, dubbed "*a masterpiece,*" by the L.A. Times, "*as delicious as good detective thriller,*" by the Chicago Tribune.

His inspirational self-help features have appeared extensively in *Family Circle*, while his in-depth interviews have been featured in *Playboy*, *Us*, *W*, *Redbook*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Ladies' Home Journal* and in hundreds of U.S. and foreign newspapers, including the *New York Times* and the *New York Daily News*.

* * * * *

MARKETING AND DEMOGRAPHICS

GLOW IN THE DARK is marketed as a celebrity self-help and inspiration book, targeted directly to:

- a Hip-Hop/Rap audience which, in the U.S. today, accounts for \$4 billion in annual sales of albums, ticket sales, and related products
- a general Inspiration & Self-Help audience—a secondary market of 126 million Americans who annually spend \$580 million on self-improvement books.
- an active Kanye West fan base in England, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Africa, Germany, Canada, Sweden, Ireland, Scotland, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Malaysia

RECORDINGS

THE COLLEGE DROPOUT (2004)

[Chart Position: #2, U.S. sales: 3 million, 2xPlatinum]

An immediate hip-hop phenomenon after this debut album, West received ten Grammy Award nominations, making him the most nominated artist of 2005.

New York Times: “Kanye West has created 2004’s first great hip-hop album.”

Rolling Stone: “With sterling quality to match its massive advance hype, *The College Dropout* is one of those wonderful crossover albums that appeals to a huge audience without sacrificing a shred of integrity.”

At the 47th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony on February 13, 2005, West won:

- Best Rap Album
- Best Rap Song (“Jesus Walks”)
- Best R&B Song (for producing Alicia Keys’ “You Don’t Know My Name.”)

LATE REGISTRATION (2005)

[Chart Position #1, U.S. sales: 3.8 million, 3xPlatinum]

Rolling Stone: “An undeniable triumph, packed from front to back, so expansive it makes the debut album sound like a rough draft.” Nominated for 8 Grammys.

At the 48th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony on February 8, 2006 won:

- Best Rap Album

- Best Rap Song ("Diamonds from Sierra Leone")
- Best Rap Solo Performance (for Gold Digger, performed at the ceremony with Jamie Foxx.)

West's highly-anticipated upcoming albums include:

GRADUATION (2007)

GOOD ASS JOB (2008)

HIT SINGLES

- "SLOW JAMZ"
- "THROUGH THE WIRE"
- "ALL FALLS DOWN"
- "JESUS WALKS"
- "THE NEW WORKOUT PLAN"
- "DIAMONDS FROM SIERRA LEONE"
- "GOLD DIGGER"
- "HEARD EM SAY"
- "TOUCH THE SKY"
- "DRIVE SLOW"

MEDIA EXPOSURE: West's meteoric rise has led to extensive TV and print media coverage--including cover stories in TIME, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, PLAYBOY, EBONY, ROLLING STONE, VIBE, BEAT, SPIN,

TV & MOTION PICTURES

- Starring in upcoming **HBO comedy series**, produced by Larry Charles, director of the *Borat* movie and executive producer of *Curb Your Enthusiasm*.
- Untitled **feature film** inspired by West's music, produced by New Line Cinema and Anonymous Content

TV APPEARANCES (including multiple appearances on)

- Good Morning America
- Barbara Walters 10 Most Fascinating People (2005)
- Late Show with David Letterman
- The Tonight Show with Jay Leno
- The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- Saturday Night Live
- Soul Train
- Punk'd
- Pepsi Smash

- Live with Regis and Kelly
- Jimmy Kimmel Live
- Hard Rock Live Russell Simmons Presents

GLOW IN THE DARK

Book Excerpts

BE LEERY OF THE FREE GIFT BAG

Do Me a Favor; Don't Do Me No Favors

There are people out there who play chess in life--who try to set you up--checkmate you--by putting themselves in a position where you owe them something. Their entire M.O. is: "I did this for you, now do something for *me*."

Who's in a better position? The person who *needs* the help or the person *giving* it? Obviously, the person giving the help. And that's why I always say: *Be leery of the free gift bag. Don't* accept that "gift"--or let people think you owe them

something. That puts you in a position of weakness.

Nothing in life is free. You think you're getting that favor or special deal for free, but you're going to pay for it, or it's going to come back around and bite you in the butt!

I don't ever want to be in the position of owing someone something. I hate that. Why? Because you get snagged up in all those strings and conditions. If someone chooses to give, it's their choice; but you don't OWE them anything back.

That's horse trading--and I'm not into it.

For example, I asked a singer to do a little part on my new album and he said: "I'm not even going to charge you. But, when I'm working on my album, I want you to do a verse for me." And I said: "No, I want to pay you for what I asked you to do and we'll talk about that verse when the times comes."

I'd rather people feel like they owe ME something. But I do it with a twist. I never call in the chip. I don't care. I'm responsible enough not to hold people to it because I feel like no one really owes me anything. But not everybody is like this.

Before I was making albums of my own, I was producing beats for an artist in Chicago. I did his whole demo, I let him record at my house, I'd hang out with him and would sit up in his crib. My mother would say I was over there too late, but we were recording songs, one after another.

He was good--and when he moved out to New Jersey, he got a record deal and starting recording with another producer. He got right into taking the free gift bag. He went out and bought some jewelry and got closer to the end of his budget. And by the time he finished the album, he hadn't paid for even one beat from me. He was a taker, just a piece of shit guy for doing that. And I was

history.

**You can't expect
your blessing to
come from those you
blessed.**

Obviously, he had done me wrong. All my friends wanted to beat him up or shoot him--because that's how we do it in Chicago. But I didn't want that. I feel karma determines your destiny--that the energy you put out into the world

will come back to you. I think by putting out that good energy, you'll receive blessings in unexpected ways.

What happened to his career? Let's just say he's not looking out from his deck at all of L.A. right now. And my goal is to try my best not to be around people who just take and suck you dry.

* * * * *

In 2001, I worked with another artist, this time, again, with no written contract, which made my friends really mad. You need contracts! That I learned. Anyway, we had an oral agreement that this guy was supposed to sign with my label; but he got the opportunity to sign with somebody else, who bribed him with free cars. So he tells me: "Yo, I'm going to sign with them." How far did I take it? I didn't. I could have taken it legally, or to the streets. But again, that sucks up your energy. I wanted to continue to create--to concentrate on *my* work. So I told him: "If you don't want to be with me, I'll just let you go." Who got the free gift bag? He did.

The good news? Although he bought a few beats from me, he wouldn't buy most of them at the price I wanted, so I ended up selling those same beats to Jay-

Z-- who was recording *The Blueprint*, which went double platinum. My beat was featured on the lead single "Izzo (H.O.V.A.)" which wound up kicking off my entire career. It took me to this level--and left that guy who wouldn't sign with me at his level. A major mistake on his part.

What happened? He fell victim to the free gift bag, even though I told him to be leery of it.

I always try to put myself in a position where *I'm* the one giving the favor, where people say: "Damn, Kanye, is there something I can do for you?" And I say: "No, thanks." That's the best feeling. This leaves you in the ultimate position of freedom. And that's one of the main goals in life--to be free.

He took the cars and the money, and left me
behind.

* * * * *

LIFESTYLE CHANGER **THANK YOU/YOU'RE WELCOME**

A young artist composed a song I just used on my new album and in return I told him I would keep his voice on one of the parts. That wasn't a free gift bag--it was a *borrow-trade*--a "*Thank You, You're Welcome*" moment. We both helped each other.

I think you should live your entire life using *Thank You/You're Welcome*. When someone does something for you--*anything*--you did something for them too. Each person benefits. It's a clean transaction. You're the giver and the receiver. You're being useful and used. Something is flowing in and flowing out. It's reciprocal. *That's* a great moment. It's definitely self-serving, but it's not strictly self-serving.

This means that if you say *Thank You* to someone for doing you a great favor--you can also say *You're Welcome*. Why? Because gave them the opportunity to be *useful*, to contribute.

* * * *

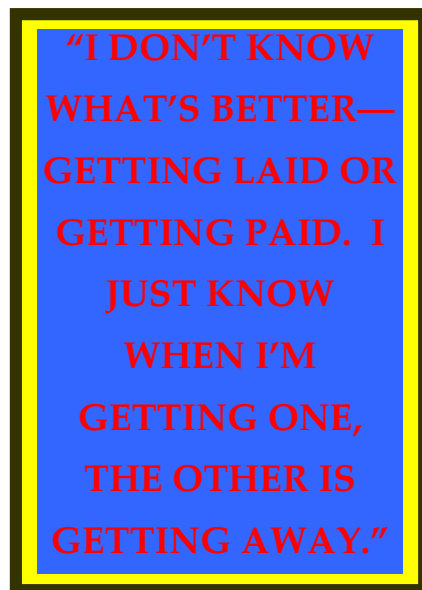


THINK about the word *useful*. It means that something works, that it's practical, handy, beneficial. In my house, everything is there for a reason. There's nothing extraneous, just hanging

around. My clothes are on long racks and everything gets used. In each room, there are just enough seats for the number of people I'd expect to be there.

Everything *works*.

But in relationships, it's different. People are always saying: "I feel used." Or they'll yell out: "How *dare* you use me?"--like it's a disease. Girls are quick to use that card. It's a girl thing: "You used me." (for sex). That's a big lie. Nobody is a victim. No one is a puppet. You *chose* to have sex with me. I chose to have sex with you. You didn't "use" me in a bad way. That's my choice. If I'm having fun--use me again!



So why does being "used" have such a negative connotation? . On tour, there were times after a concert when I would bring a girl back to the hotel to have sex. I remember that in London, it once happened so quickly I felt I couldn't even enjoy it. I'm like, "Damn. Of course, I did something to get this. I'm a successful artist. It just comes along with it."

But with this woman, I felt I didn't earn it. I hadn't gone through the proper steps of intimacy to be deserving of what she gave me. I hadn't even taken her

out--didn't dine her. So while I was having sex with her, I didn't feel worthy--whereas she might say *she* didn't feel worthy.

It made me scared. I even asked myself: "Is this a setup? Is she trying to get something?" She played her card so quickly, it's like--"What's your angle?"

Sometimes, it can be a clean one: I was horny, she was horny, so we had a perfect *Thank You, You're Welcome* moment. But in other cases, that free gift can boomerang--and what snaps back is a lawsuit, a story in the tabloids, a pregnancy, you name it. Nothing in life is free. So we're really talking about *trust*.

In the best of situations, when both people benefit, it's a win-win. **I'm a user and a usee**--which is really what I'm supposed to *be*. We're using each other all the time. PLEASE use me and allow me to use you! That's the perfect *Thank You, You're Welcome* moment. Both parties benefit. It means you're USEFUL. You have a purpose. You do something that helps someone because they ask you to, or because you decide to, or because you're being paid to. You're FUNCTIONAL!

Your biggest fear should be NOT being used. That means you're *USELESS*! So you need to ask yourself this question: Can I be used? How?

You should want to be used; so put yourself in a position where you can be.

The problem I have is if you misuse or overuse me, or abuse me like those guys I mentioned who cut me out. That's when you *take advantage* of someone, do something selfishly with no regard for anyone else.

So going back to the story of that guy getting the beats from me, then signing with another record company and cutting me out, what really happened there? He first used me (correctly) then he misused me. People say: "Man, Kanye, it keeps on happening to you."

And yes, there are certain things in my life that are redundant. But I redundantly sell albums and win awards. It keeps happening to me. And I redundantly got screwed over by those users and misusers. But you have to accept yourself as you are.

It's okay if you're a generous person and you run into a misuser and you take the chance of being misused. But don't alter yourself. In the long run, it's better to trust until you're proven wrong. You always learn from what you think are the worst things that happen to you. There's no wasted effort.

* * * * *

PAIN & PRAYER

Lyrics From "Through The Wire"

***"I spit it through the wire man
Too much stuff on my heart right now man
I'll gladly risk it all right now
It's a life or death situation man"***

Physical pain is inevitable. It happens to everybody--whether it's a kid falling down and skinning his knee or someone crashing their car and nearly getting killed.

After the accident, the recovery was a horrible experience. When I came to, I saw my mouth getting bigger and bigger, like in a horror movie.

I used to pray to God to be delivered from all pain--*any* kind of pain. I meant pain of the heart (because a girlfriend leaves you), the pain of frustration, the pain of whatever. It was a smart-aleck prayer. And that was *before* my car accident.

My jaw was separated, broken open in three places and wired shut; I was bleeding internally;

and I had permanent damage to the cartilage inside my nose. Even today, when I go swimming, I have to use nose-plugs or the water floods in--even if I'm blowing *out*. So it took months to recover. The pain was bad, even with Vicodin. But it didn't stop me. I was just as focused after the accident as I was before. I was like a kid falling on his face. He screams, "Ouch!," but gets up and keeps running.

I focused on my music, on the future, and on what I wanted to

The worst thing can transform into the best thing. It was like I looked up into the sky and I saw that my stars changed. I felt protected by that angel."

do--not on what was holding me back. And ever since the accident, I've had a thing about angels. I think I was protected that day by a guardian angel. I could have been killed or permanently disabled. But I only broke my jaw. Maybe that angel was trying to tell me that I talked too much. "Calm down young man, calm down."

Was it an accident, bad luck, or destiny? I'd say destiny. God had a plan for me and was saying: "Nobody is that interested in you, Kanye. Let me do something that will wake people up. I'll almost kill you--then give you a better life than you ever would have had without the accident."

"Through The Wire," would never have been written had I not been in the crash. And it was my breakthrough solo single. That's

fate. So horrible as it was, almost dying was a strange gift, which only

When I had my accident, I found out at that moment, nothing in life is promised except death. If you have the opportunity to play this game called life, you have to appreciate every moment. A lot of people don't appreciate their moment until it's passed.

proves that life is 95% how you react to what happens.

IMPULSE CONTROL

My "Come To Jesus" Moment

U.S.A. September 2, 2005: **During a live televised benefit concert for Hurricane Katrina relief on NBC, West deviated from the prepared script, saying:** *"I hate the way they portray us in the media. You see a black family, it says, 'They're looting.' You see a white family, it says, 'They're looking for food.' And, you know, it's been five days [waiting for federal help] because most of the people are black. So anybody out there that wants to do anything that we can help — with the set up, the way America is set up to help the poor, the black people, the less well-off, as slow as possible. I mean, this is, the Red Cross is doing everything they can. We already realize a lot of people that could help are at war right now, fighting another way — and they've given them permission to go down and shoot us! George Bush doesn't care about black people."*

Denmark, November 3, 2006: **At the MTV Europe Music Awards, West is so disappointed when "Touch The Sky" doesn't win for Best Video that he**

interrupts while the award is being presented to Justice and Simian for “We Are Your Friends,” saying his video should have won because it “cost a million dollars, Pamela Anderson was in it. I was jumping across canyons. If I don’t win, the awards show loses credibility.”

I would rather lose because someone else was right than win when I’m wrong. It goes along with: **You don’t learn anything from a compliment.**

Do you know how much you learn when you argue and you’re wrong? Those are growth moments. So one of the best things that can happen to you is for someone to prove you wrong. You can apply it and learn from it.

Was there a time I can remember this happened to me? Well, it’s so hard for me to think of times when I was wrong!! (Ha ha!)

OK: Was I wrong for running up on stage when “Touch The Sky” [video] lost. I can see wrong things about it. On the other hand, NBC could say I was wrong for saying what I did--but there was everything right about it.

Running up on an awards show was entertainment--it wasn’t emotional connection with people. People said it was bratty. What’s so crazy is that the show told me I was going to win that award. That’s the reason why I flew over there for it. It was no surprise when I won Best Hip Hop Artist--look at the people I was nominated against...there was no way they could beat me. I was blatantly better

than them. It wasn't like I was up against 50 Cent, Eminem, T.I. or

people that were as impactful as me.

**Never justify your
behavior with
other people's
wrongs.**

By getting up there, I actually broke my
own principle of NOT EXPECTING

SOMETHING FROM SOMEONE. They had me expecting the award
and I reacted to that. They misused me. I guess I'm saying I was

wrong for what I did, but they were in the
wrong too. We know two wrongs don't make
a right. So I was wrong. I was wrong for
running on stage saying that I deserved that
award. I could have said it later. Realizing
this was my "come to Jesus moment."

**Recognize and
embrace your flaws
so you can learn
from them. You
embrace your flaws
and move beyond
them by admitting
to them.**

IMPATIENCE AND ARROGANCE

Call Them Flaws

I'm impatient. That's another character flaw in me. I have to
embrace that one too and slow it down. Take time. Breathe. Let
people say or do what they need to. Don't rush them. I can still be
fast and super-efficient--but impatience can close down my ear. I can
miss something I need to hear. So I'm learning to slow it down.

People say another one of my flaws is that I'm arrogant-- but I
haven't embraced that flaw yet. I feel like my arrogance is really my

competence mixed with their low self-esteem. X (my competence) + Y (their low self-esteem)=my arrogance.

I know that arrogance has a negative connotation. It means conceited, brash, cocky, pushy. OK, I'm all of that--yet I don't feel like I'm arrogant. You can be cocky without being arrogant. People blur those lines. Is arrogance truly a bad thing? What are the advantages of it?

OK! I'm arrogant!!

Look at the definition: having or displaying a sense of overbearing self-worth or self-importance. That actually describes me. But arrogance is something you can use....

In "Last Call" I wrote:

*"Now I could let these dream killers kill my self-esteem
Or use my arrogance as the steam to power my dreams
I use it as my gas, so they say that I'm gassed
But without it I'd be last, so I ought to laugh."*

So.....

"I feel like my (so-called) *arrogance* is really my competence mixed with someone else's low self-esteem."

CHANGE YOUR STARS

My entire family used to tell me: “You don’t need to get your teeth fixed. They’re fine!” But there were too many of them and they were all crowded together. Kids in the lunchroom would say: “Your teeth are big and white just like horse teeth.” They said my teeth were the size of Chicklets. And when you’re ripped apart like that, it’s like the emperor is naked. I said: “Fuck this.”

So I got braces and the orthodontist had to remove eight teeth! Imagine how crowded my teeth must have been. Then I was teased for having braces. But after I had them fixed, everybody said: “Your teeth look *so* much better!”--the same people who said I didn’t need to get them fixed!

Who am I listening to? Did these people not want my teeth to look better than theirs? Everybody in my family had fucked-up teeth, loaded with plaque and crowded and crooked. I had a really good mother who taught me how to think for myself, but she wasn’t into

You have the power
to change your
stars. You only
have one life to live
and might as well
do it.

dental hygiene. She missed that one. By the time I got my first cleaning in high school, the tartar was black, not yellow.

So now, when I see people with messed-up teeth, I want to be that one person who tells them the truth, like kids told me: “Your teeth are big and white like a horse!” I don’t believe in accepting a condition that limits you and that can be changed. That’s right next to giving up.

JUST NEXT TO STUPID

Not Shyness

“In America, they want you to accomplish these great feats, to pull off these David Copperfield-type stunts. But let someone ask you about what you’re doing, and if you turn around and say: ‘It’s great,’ then people are like, ‘What’s wrong with you?’ You want me to be great, but you don’t ever want me to say I’m great?”

Shyness can come off as stupid or weak--but it’s neither. I have some shyness in me and I’ve tried to overcome it because I was taught that it wasn’t OK to be shy. Jamie Foxx, who’s really good at breaking down personalities, told people that I was really shy when he first met me. He’s one of the few people who could really see it. I’ll sit in a room and not say much, trying to evaluate the situation. But once I get comfortable, I want to express myself. So part of getting past shy is relaxing enough to be yourself. You have to relax.

There are many definitions of shy: bashful, easily frightened, timid, suspicious, distrustful, reluctant. Why is anyone shy? Because they're afraid of what somebody might say about them, how someone is going to react.

I might have some cockiness. It's always a conflict. Maybe I'm more self-conscious than I am self-confident, and self-consciousness is what makes me ask thirty different people for their opinions. I overcompensate for my anxieties.

You have to be confident in the information you have. You have to feel like you matter. But first you have to have self-worth.

Shy people start off in a black hole. And they stay there. You have to pull yourself out of that hole and realize you haven't made any mistakes. You have to deal with reality. Everybody has their insecurities, and nobody feels good all the time.

OBSESSION

As Good As It Gets

To become successful, you turn up the volume in everything you do.

I always hear about how successful people have a higher sex drive than most people. It's true for me. So I'd say they're right. You're not passive in one area of your life and really aggressive in another. The same thought process permeates how you approach all aspects of life, which sex is a part of.

The energy running through your body can be used for lots of things. You can direct it where you want. You can call it sex or inspiration. You can take that energy and funnel it into creating a great song; and if you have some energy left over, you can use it for sex. In an intimate relationship, you have to keep recreating that (hot) moment. How do you maintain the one-night stand every night?

How do you keep it fresh?

I don't get halfway into anything. If I'm into it, I want this to be the best of its time, ever. I want it all to be award- worthy.

I have an addictive, obsessive personality. I'm totally tuned in and keep going over and over that one thing again and again. One of my favorite movies is "As Good As It Gets" with Jack Nicholson. I loved him in that. Everybody always says: "That's Kanye," because I have a little OCD [Obsessive Compulsive Disorder] in me. Anything I'm into, I obsess on, and if I'm not into it, I don't care about it. It's in cold storage.

"I envy people who settle for mediocrity. When *Late Registration* was about to come out, I was driving myself crazy. The years I'm losing off my life stressing out about a drum sound is the reason people can go to the store and purchase an album of that caliber. My pain is everyone's else's pleasure."

FAME

Just before my first album came out, I remember riding up the escalator at a Virgin Megastore completely unnoticed, and I thanked God for those last moments of solitude. "Man, let me soak in these moments before I blow up." I was savoring it. Yet, I couldn't wait for it to happen. Now that I don't have that anonymity, what's it like? It's crazy. You have to prepare. It's almost like every day is a rainy day. That's when most people hold up an umbrella and pick the quickest route to their car. They don't amble around the way they do when the sun is out. That's the way it is for me. I'm mindful,

cautious. I keep my head down and my hood up if I want privacy.

Fame? You should want what you want. You need talent first; then perseverance; then, if you have some luck too, you just MIGHT get to the success.

But you have to be willing to put that huge amount of work into it--the sacrifice and pain and running the gamut of emotions required to truly become the best you. I'm

always perfecting it. I'll use words or rhymes no other rapper has used. *'Take your diamond*

My favorite thing in the world is post-production. I like it more than sex. And I like sex a lot!

and throw 'em up like you're bulimic/Yeah, the beat cold, but the flow is anemic.' Damn, nobody would ever rhyme those two words together.

But my greatest talent, more so than being a rapper, is the ability to produce, to grab things that seem like they don't belong and put them together. I love building things, all the labor and fine-tuning.

One of my goals was to become a star. But so many people are

I want my raps to be in the textbooks. I'm pretty calculating. I take stuff that I know appeals to people's bad sides and match it up with stuff that appeals to their good sides.

shooting, falling stars,
unlike the legends that are
still hot 20 or 30 years later.
Some people think I'm
going to be a falling star. I
don't worry about it."

THE BIG M

I'm always thinking about ways to make that kind of "fuck you" money-- so that I'm my own boss forever and don't have to work for anyone.

Freedom Money

Money isn't everything, but not having it is. It's just like family--it's all relative.

People like Jay-Z, Puffy, and 50 are at the \$200-\$300 million level. I'm not there yet.

And even if everyone turned their backs on me, I'd be completely okay. But right now, I'm not my own boss. The people are my boss. I'm at their mercy. And I'm always concerned

about that, about public perception of me, though I'm a little bit braver than the average celebrity. I speak from my heart. Then afterward I think about public perception. "Damn, did I just said

THAT?!"

We are infinite beings. So why limit ourselves? At what point are you satisfied? And is the true goal satisfaction?

So how much is enough? When you make your first \$1,000 it sounds like a lot, but you soon realize how easy it is to spend it--so you bump up your expectations. Then you have \$100,000, but you're looking beyond that. Sometimes, I'm envious of people who are satisfied, who say: Hey, I've got enough. That's not me. I know down the line, I'll need something new.

'Painting' With Money

Money is not the driver; it's the vehicle. It can take just take you where you want to go. It gives you the opportunity to fully express yourself creatively, just like when you're a little kid and you get art supplies--except the "supplies" are more expensive now.

The way most people say, "I'm painting the living room a new color," Bill Gates paints the world and says: "I want to improve on this." He has a bigger bag of paint supplies.

Years ago, it hurt to be at the Gucci store with a girlfriend who was busting me because I didn't have enough money for it. 'Back when Gucci was the shit to rock/ Back when Slick Rick got the shit to pop/ I'd do anything to say I got it/ Damn, them new loafers hurt my pocket." Gucci is now like Disney World to me—and I like to ride!

As an artist, I paint the world with music, visuals, messages, concepts. It's my job to always be thinking, creating--trying new things to push it and expand, never being satisfied.

At what point do I drop an album? I ask a lot of questions. Have I worked on it long enough? Will it connect with enough people? The only thing that limits me is a deadline. An album has to be shipped. But I tell myself. "it's not quite done." So I just put out what I consider to be unfinished products. Everything I've ever put out is unfinished. It's like decorating a house. You never stop working on it.

BE YOU

Most people live their lives based on what other people want them to be. They're programmed. They conform. They follow the rules. They sleepwalk. Fitting in is everything; standing out is the plague.

**It's a lot more fun
NOT to fit in and
conform--especially
if you know you're
better.**

It starts early. So kids dress alike, look alike, talk alike. I never wanted to. In high school, some guys had a problem with me. If all the

“cool” kids were doing drugs, I never did. So they’d say: “What’s with you? You think you’re better than us?”

Parents are programming and pressuring their kids all the time.

“He’s going to be a doctor, a lawyer, a football coach.” Oh sure. But maybe that little kid wants to be a rock star or a chef. **So many people are limited by what other people tell them they can or can’t do.** I say try *anything*. Try everything. Do what you want to do.

Follow your instinct, your intuition. And you shouldn’t let NOT knowing what you’re doing stop you from doing it. I never let that stop me.

Hip-hop has always been about speaking your mind and breaking down barriers, but everyone in hip-hop discriminates against gay people. We gay-bash way more than we disrespect women. We call a gay guy a fag to his face. But if we walked up to a woman and said ‘aight, bitch!’ we would know that was disrespectful. Five years ago, when I was shopping with my girlfriend, I said the word fag kind of loud. She was like: ‘Yo, c’mon, step into the new millennium.’ Well, my level of consciousness has since raised. I just tell my rappers: ‘Yo, stop it.’

ROLLER COASTER LIFE

Following your dreams is like riding a roller coaster. It's a wild ride, but totally worth it.

When you stop feeling afraid--that's when you should start worrying!

That's what Donald Trump said when he nearly went bankrupt in the 1990's. After that, he stopped operating as if he couldn't lose

everything. For me, doing my best involves a little bit of fear. But it's a huge struggle in people--the need for keeping things the same versus adventure and variety. I need both.

What's stronger? That's tricky. For me, my biggest fear is boredom--which is one of the reasons I would never want to go to jail. Boredom means there's nothing happening, no change.

That state is deadening and numbing. It's like cocaine without the high. Even though I've never used cocaine, nor plan on using it, I often think that people who do coke must feel numb and bored, wishing they could do

something more exciting. I don't need a drug. The opposite of boredom is FUN! [Add some material here about what he does for fun.] Even though people sometimes tell me (especially at awards shows) that I'm not in a position to have fun anymore, I think you have to have fun the way you want to have it. Fun doesn't have to stop when you become an adult.

You have to maintain your childhood, but accept responsibility. And the secret to having fun is staying in the moment. Don't just be at life; be in life.

PLEASE DON'T PLEASE

But Be A Good Host

I don't know the absolute key to success, but I do know *that one of the keys to failure is trying to please everyone*. But it's tempting to please for applause. That approval is a drug you can't get enough of. A pop icon knows all about it. People like Walt Disney and Marilyn Monroe did a great job of pleasing. [We need better examples, these are too old, plus neither one performed on a stage.] So do I. I create product. The goal is to please everyone, to generate universal appeal, but if you get 80% of that approval, you're winning. I *want* to please.

Even at dinner with a bunch of different people, I want everybody to leave saying they had a great time. Sometimes I'll serve as "translator"--because I know how to speak so many different "languages." For example, I speak "black" and "white" very well. I know how to speak arrogant and shy. I serve as the mediator a lot of times in situations. So I guess I'm a good host. The concept of the skilled host is to please everyone in work and in relationships. That makes me feel good. I'm useful, I'm being used. It's the classic THANK YOU, YOU'RE WELCOME moment.

MAGAZINE

COVER

STORIES

AUGUST 29, 2005

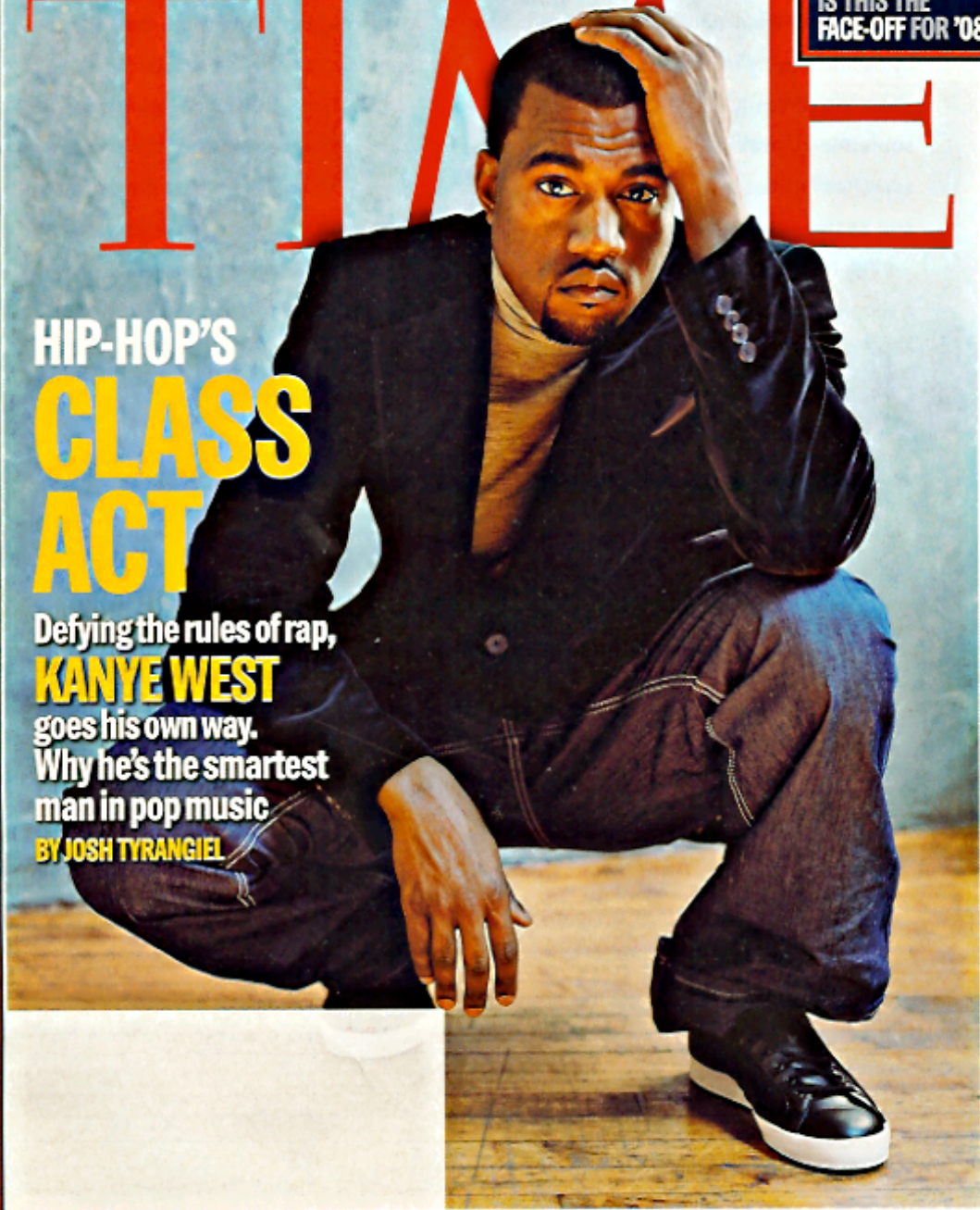
Fall Preview Issue: Our Critics' Picks

TIME

HIP-HOP'S
**CLASS
ACT**

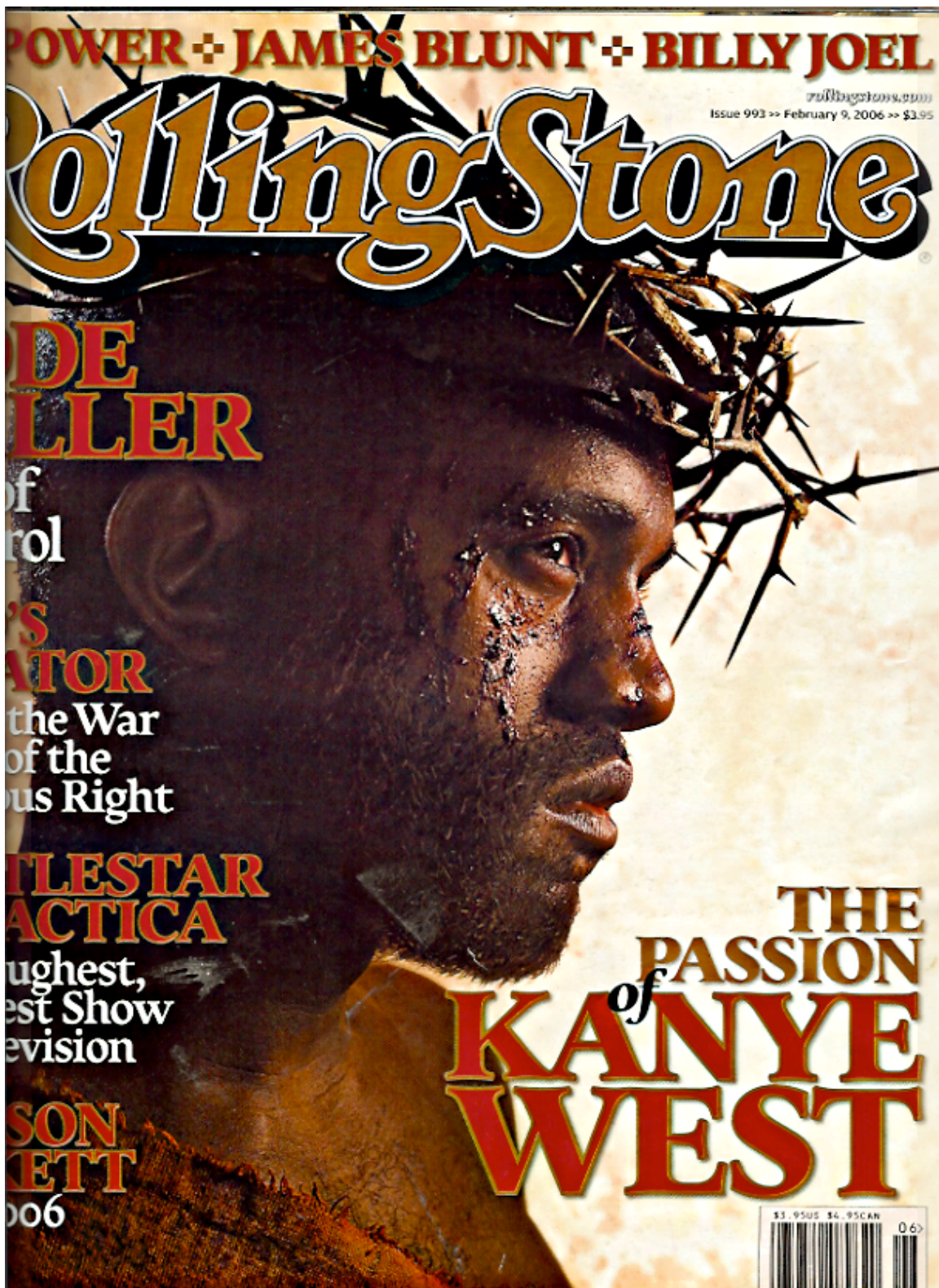
Defying the rules of rap,
KANYE WEST
goes his own way.
Why he's the smartest
man in pop music

BY JOSH TYRANGIEL



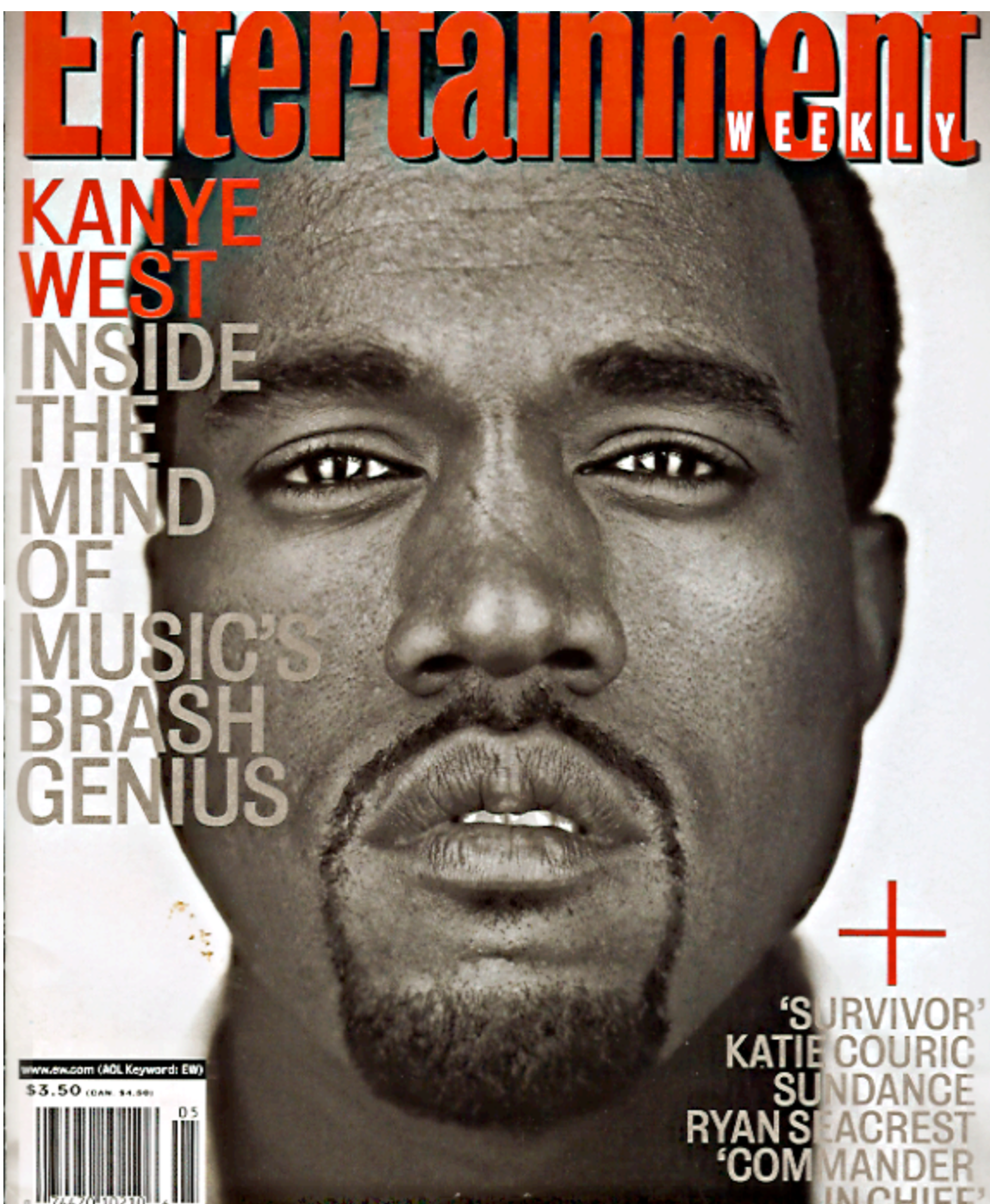
IS THIS THE
FACE-OFF FOR '08?

www.time.com AOL Keyword: TIME





So far as he's concerned, West is the Greatest. He calls a song he's working on "so good, it's disrespectful to motherfuckers. Niggas are gonna hear this and be like, 'Come on, fall back.'"



30 LEADERS
Of The Future

EBONY

APRIL 2005 USA \$2.99/CANADA \$4.99

SINGLE SISTERS:
5 MISTAKES That Can
Keep You From The Altar

Black College Queens
Then & Now

What's Behind All
The Changes In
BLACK LEADERSHIP?

Gospel's New
Voices Of Praise

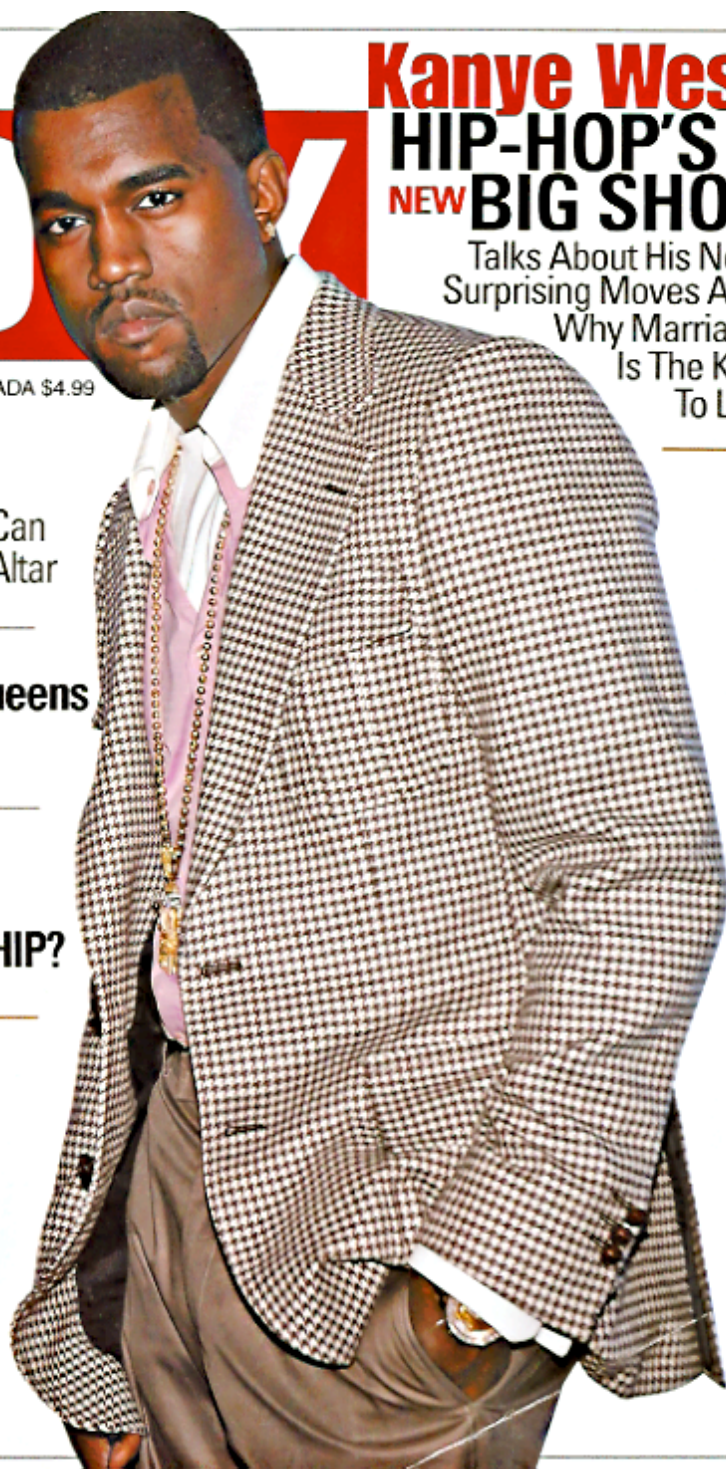


www.ebony.com

A JOHNSON PUBLICATION ④

Kanye West HIP-HOP'S **NEW BIG SHOT**

Talks About His Next
Surprising Moves And
Why Marriage
Is The Key
To Life



WHY HIP HOP LOVES TO HATE THE BLACK EYED PEAS

VIBE



**YING
YANG
TWINS**

**NO MORE
SONG AND
DANCE**

**KANYE
COMMON
LEGEND**

**TOO G.O.O.D.
TO BE TRUE!**

PLUS

**OLIVIA, N.O.R.E.,
DAVID BANNER,
I WAYNE,
CASSIDY**

U.S. \$3.99/CAN \$5.50 JULY 2005



www.vibe.com

