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The 5 Boldest Things Kanye West is Saying

Marcia Alesan Dawkins · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Kanye West, troubadour of politics, race and the fight against commercialism, sat down last week with BBC Radio for a series of interviews that reveal much and have also stirred controversy. There's been a Jimmy Kimmel parody and West's Twitter backlash, all of which obscure the boldest things West is saying...

1. Self-esteem shouldn't be controversial, but it is... the overwhelmingly negative reactions to Kanye West's proclamation that he's like "a god" reveal exactly what he's fighting against; racism that tells men of color that they're not good enough and are represented properly as nonhuman "gangstas" and "niggas."

2. Out-of-the-box original thinking is discouraged... but makers like West won't take no for an answer. He realizes that a changing world – complete with changing economic systems – requires new belief systems and new modes of production and delivery. And a determination to not be controlled.

3. Fashion is more than material, it's about access... and access is about transformation and populism — getting through glass ceilings to create new possibilities and communities.

4. Humor is a powerful tool... it is a way to address multiple audiences within multiple messages at the same time. But Kanye isn't inviting everyone to laugh at him. He's inviting those who dare to laugh with him and his outrageous claims to make things better. What's the alternative?

5. Ready or not, the future is now... as a self-proclaimed futuristic thinker, West isn't just a musician. He's interested in every medium of art as an instrument that can extend power, influence, and comfort as soon as possible. And he's intent on sharing his interest in and vision of the future with the rest of us right now.

Here are the BBC Radio interviews, ably conducted by Zane Lowe:

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