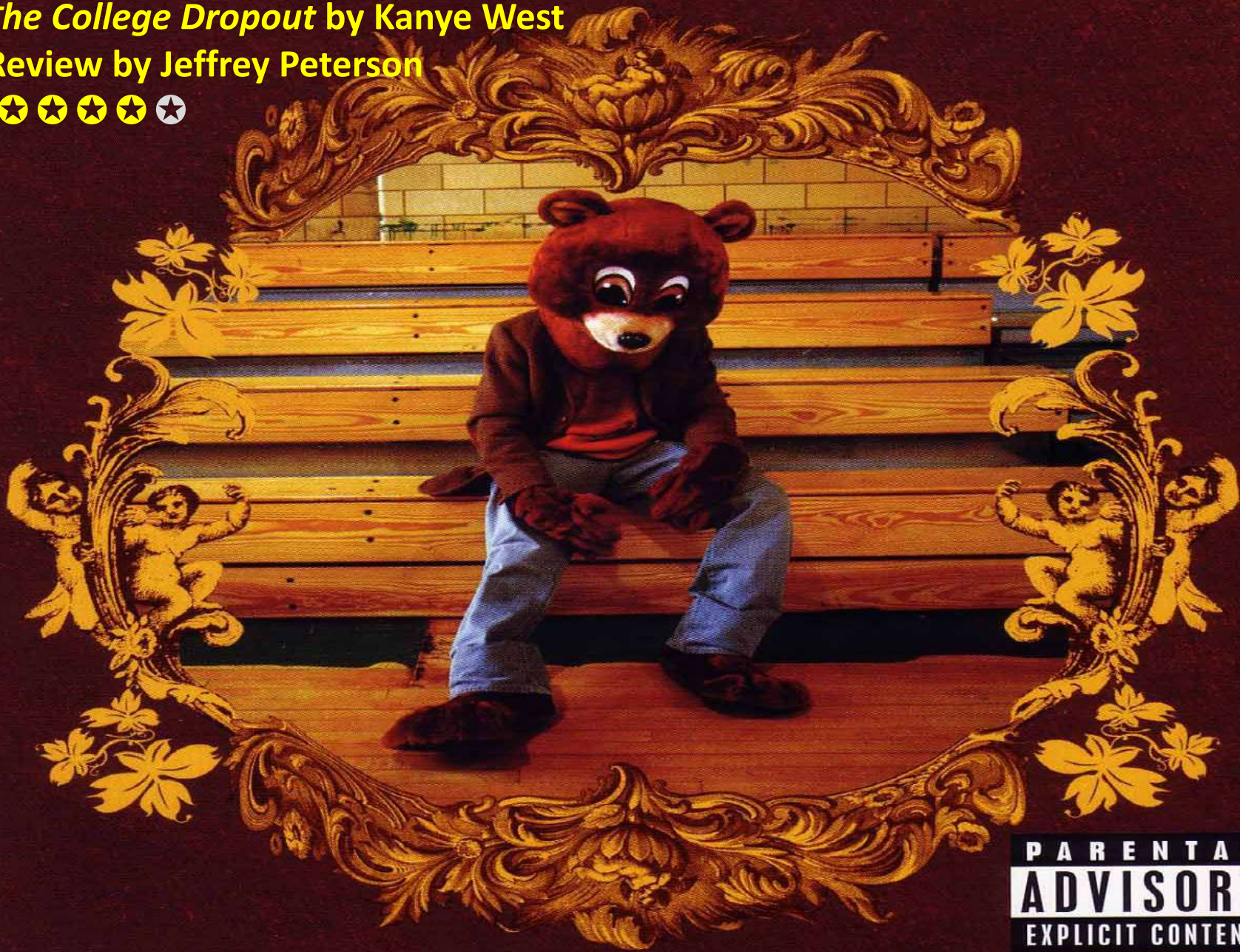
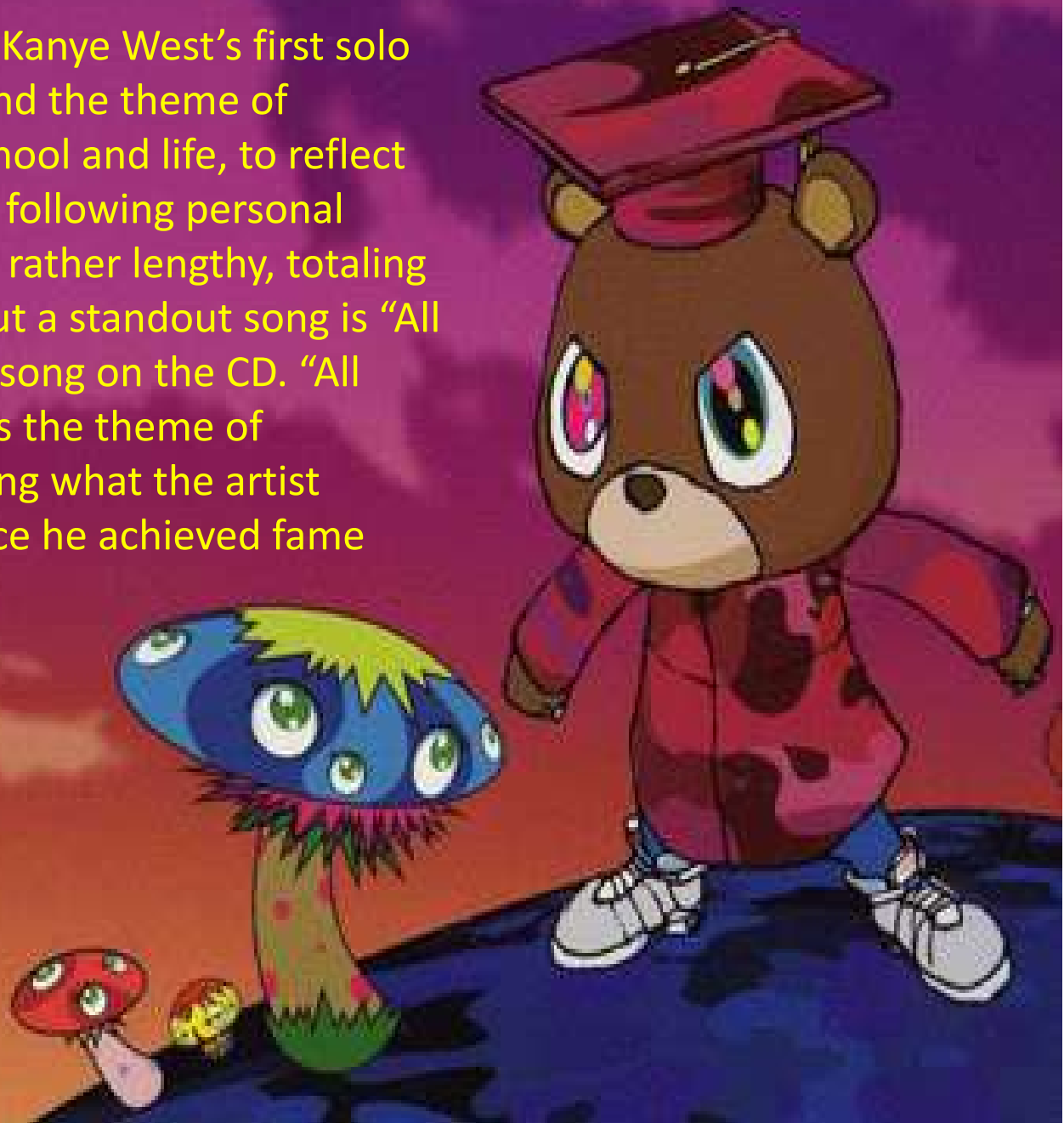


The College Dropout by Kanye West
Review by Jeffrey Peterson



PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT CONTENT

The College Dropout, Kanye West's first solo album, revolves around the theme of education, both in school and life, to reflect on the importance of following personal dreams. The album is rather lengthy, totaling 21 tracks and skits, but a standout song is "All Falls Down", the fifth song on the CD. "All Falls Down" continues the theme of education by discussing what the artist learned about life once he achieved fame and money.

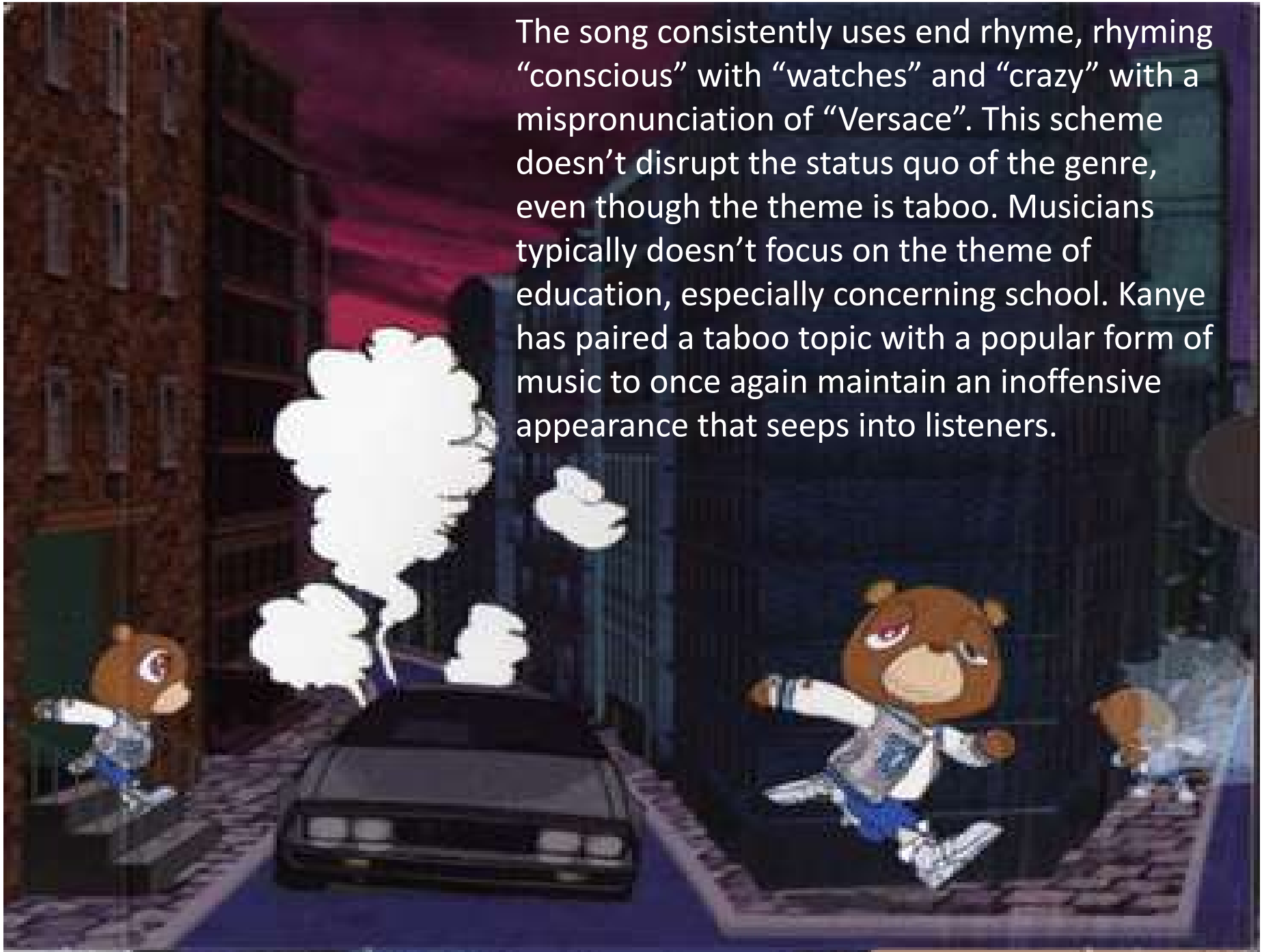




“Man I’m so self conscious, that’s why you always see me with at least one of my watches” is the opening line to the verse centered on male narcissism and materialism. This line discusses how the speaker, presumably Kanye, didn’t learn he was materialistic until he achieved a certain level of fame and then reflected on his journey. The song has a playful tone, referencing “Versace” and purposefully pronouncing it wrong or reminding us that he’s spent \$400 on a watch just so he can spout “you ain’t up on this!” But this tone is in contrast with the actual message. Kanye is discussing a serious topic with a playful tone so his message doesn’t appear offensive. He desires for listeners to be open to the message “the people highest up, got the lowest self-esteem.”



The song consistently uses end rhyme, rhyming “conscious” with “watches” and “crazy” with a mispronunciation of “Versace”. This scheme doesn’t disrupt the status quo of the genre, even though the theme is taboo. Musicians typically doesn’t focus on the theme of education, especially concerning school. Kanye has paired a taboo topic with a popular form of music to once again maintain an inoffensive appearance that seeps into listeners.



Though the time periods of the pieces are very different, “All Falls Down” underscores a theme from “The Story of An Hour” and “Dust Tracks on A Road”. Chopin helped us as readers see that we as humans can’t always handle or control our greatest desires because they are often too large, whereas Hurston reminded us that education and life experience are powerful. Kanye is lucky enough to be at such an age to where he can appreciate his life experiences, yet learn from them without being overcome.

