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**“Surviving Darwin:” A Multi-Method Darwinian Criticism of Destiny’s Child’s “Survivor”**

This qualitative project explores the music video “Survivor” by Destiny’s Child using art criticism. Biographical and United States socio-cultural contexts are established to analyze the video considering post-millennial conditions relevant to the 2000-2003 redevelopment of Destiny’s Child. This approach identifies “Survivor” as a response to the highly publicized feud between the group and two recently ousted members, and its sensationalism as a corollary of the celebrity-frenzied atmosphere circulated by MTV-era media. Resources from Khan Academy’s digital research library are used to synthesize formalist, stylistic and technical analyses and produce a descriptive summary including considerations of composition, style influences and production processes. Integrating lyrical analysis of the song into the descriptive summary allows investigation of the video within an unprecedented lens via iconological/iconographic methods. Foregoing theoretical analyses traditional of art criticism, the researcher uses biological and psycho-sociological Darwinian theories outlined in post-Romanticism Victorian Era (1850-1901) England. Accordingly, representative perspectives from Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin are integrated through direct quotes and explored using modern scholarly publications (books, journal articles, etc.). This interpretive method ultimately reveals that “Survivor” incorporates extensive iconological and iconographic references to Darwinism through costuming, lyrical content and imagery which authenticate and defend the moral, evolutionary and physiological superiority of Destiny’s Child relative to the ousted members. This project represents transformative research by significantly broadening the subject’s critical analysis scope, but perhaps more significant is its integration of digital resources. Digitization still elicits ambivalence from history of art practitioners, with digital research centers occupying a particularly marginal status. By successfully conducting formal analysis of a music video using the Khan Academy research library, this project illustrates the capability of digital art creations to effectively undergo traditional criticism informed by a digitized research body and the opportunity to generate new perspectives by incorporating theories outside of canonical art history approaches.

*Keywords: Destiny’s Child, Survivor, music video, Darwin, analysis, meaning, formalism, stylistic, technical, digital research*

Source for digital research status in art history: <http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-2/transitioning-to-a-digital-world-by-diane-zorich/>

Identify the central research question, objective, or thesis of the project

☐ Summarize the methodology and/or findings of the research or creative work

☐ State conclusions, significance, and/or current state of the project