Ayotunde Summers

Prof. Penner

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Discourse Community Paper

The discourse community I am a part of is known as Tase Grip. (GRIP) GRIP is a collective of Hip hop artists and producers. We strive to distinguish ourselves from the mundane repetition of modern-day Hip hop through diligent practice of our individual crafts in the hopes of achieving mastery of self-expression. It’s important to note, that GRIP is not a group; each artist is its own entity. That being said, all artists in the community are connected via the collective consciousness known as Tase Grip. Through these shared interests and beliefs, Tase Grip is a discourse community. My initial assumptions of Tase Grip were that they were a group of pretentious music snobs who had major difficulties fitting into what is considered status quo. Research on Tase Grip was a combination of daily interactions with other members, interviews, and self-reflection being that I am a member of this discourse community.

 What makes Tase Grip unique is our ability to stand on our own merits and talents. Although we are together, we do not depend on each other to be productive. Self-sufficiency is vital to any artist, regardless of the genre. If one cannot find the inspiration from within to create then one’s passion likely lies somewhere else. Fortunately, our shared passion for music keeps us motivated to improve ourselves through our creations. We value freedom of expression above all things. Although music comes in many forms, there is no need to box oneself into a particular set of rules and standards set by a sub-genre of music. Doing so will only hinder one’s potential and growth that can only be obtained by observing all forms of music and create one’s own style. There is no set way of becoming a member of Tase Grip. My introduction to the community was through my older brother, who went to high school with the founding father and leader of Tase Grip, AKAI SOLO. It was through becoming friends and an acknowledgment of my talents as a producer that I was invited to be a part of the community. Other members in the community have a similar story, we’re all just a group of friends whose interests happen to lie in music. With that being said, I was not acknowledged as a full member of Tase Grip until I was taught the handshake. We use this handshake to greet each other or to convey excitement towards the content we have produced.

 We communicate with the outside world through our music. We release music on multiple streaming platforms such as Spotify, Bandcamp, and SoundCloud. Communication is also achieved through promotion on social media like Facebook and Instagram. Performing live shows is also a great way for us to practice and share new content with audiences we would normally not come into contact with had we not ventured outside of our comfort zone. Collaboration with other artists outside the community also achieves the same effect. Intercommunication takes place whenever we decide to meet up. For more pressing matters or general discussion, there is a group chat available. The language we use is akin to Hip hop, anime (Japanese animation) and manga (Japanese comic book) culture. An example from Hip hop culture would be a “Bar”. A “Bar” is a witty line or punch line in a rap song:

 “Emasculate a Dog/

 Just to make him play with balls.”

Another example of language used within the group is “Haki”. This term comes from the manga, One Piece and refers to a spiritual power that is within every being in the One Piece universe. In layman’s terms, “Haki” is the manifestation of one’s willpower. Relating it back to the discourse community, “Haki” is used to give praise to the work and talents of an individual. To clarify, if there is a talented rapper or producer we would say his “Haki” is strong.

 I decided to interview AKAI SOLO, the leader of Tase Grip. When asked what he believed to be the goal of Tase Grip he responded, “To generate and sustain fruitful bonds all in the name of furthering conciseness and perspective. A supergroup amongst creatives, capable of satisfying any need. An infinite formation, comprised of limitless variations.” He continued his statement with a clarification, “Although I say we are a supergroup, the term group doesn’t properly describe who we are as Tase Grip. I’d say we’re more of a collective. There’s a distinct difference between a collective and a group, at least in the context I’m referring to, that I think should be made clear. A group is more tightly knit and dependent on the other members in tandem with collective consensus before anything can be done. A collective is a bit freer. The collective consensus is encouraged and its application is gauged but, not required definitively. Each component is supposed to be a whole adding to a bigger mass. A group is generally composed of fragments that need each other to be whole.” To summarize, each member has the ability to stand on his own merits thus to call Tase Grip a group would be a disservice to the individual talents of all members.

 In conclusion, I would like to make note of how jarring it was for me to examine my discourse community and my place within it from a point of view that is outside of myself. Instances and events that under normal circumstances, I wouldn’t bat an eye towards, were now being examined as if encountering it for the first time. For example, I have been a member of this discourse community for three years. Over that span of time, there have been numerous occasions when we would meet up. Whether it be to create, talk business, or for leisure. All of these meetups have taken place at the same member’s house without fail. Mind you, this member has moved four times over these three years. In some cases, it would have been more convenient to convene somewhere else. However, it was the consensus to meet wherever this member was living at the time. Overall, it was reassuring to know we as a discourse community holds a lot of the same values and beliefs. These topics weren’t discussed until I had to write this paper.

Works Cited Page

Solo, Akai. “Discourse Community Interview .” 17 Feb. 2020.

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