

Establishment Complexities and of Trust With Adolescent, Multilingual Youth in a Virtual Book Club

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Abstract

This study explored how trust and relationships are established in a group of adolescent girls who participated in an after school on-line book club. This book club was created six years ago to support recently arrived, multilingual, immigrant girls to help them navigate their transition into U.S high schools. The current girls in the book club have participated in the book club for the past 2 years. The participants of this study consisted of four high school girls who are English language learners with origins from South American countries. Every Friday from 2:30 until 3:30, the girls as well as three facilitators including myself supported the young women through personal issues and engaged with the themes in the literature that we read together. Ethnographic field notes were collected from the weekly meetings and were followed up by interviews. Results suggested that this book club held an impact on the adolescent girls by providing them opportunities to create and maintain trust-filled relationships, although the quality and authenticity of those relationships differed between individuals.

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Started with Empanadas

In order to get to know the young women in my book club, I created a group chat with just me and the girls. Luna¹ was the one who presented the idea of naming our group chat and here is how that conversation went:

Luna: I wanna rename our group but idk to what the name 4 people is wack

Glendy : That sounds fine to change the group name

Gaby: Hahah omgg we should name our group

Luna: To what tho 😂

Gaby: We could be paper girls, or brown paper girls, or spice girls, or da 5 lil empanadas

Gaby: Idk idk 😂😂

Luna: 5 empanadas is funny I like that

Glendy : Paper girls haha 😂

Hela: I like that Luna

Elle: I like it, it's cute lmaoo

Luna changed the group chat name to da 5 lil empanadas

Elle changed the group chat name to da 5 lil empanadas 🥟

I did not know it back then, but this was one of the first steps to building relationships with the young women. They were enthusiastic about the creation of the group chat and were

¹ All participants and facilitators are referred to by pseudonyms to protect their identity

eager to start building a relationship with me through it. Although I was still nervous about getting to know the girls, I put myself out there by sharing some group names that I thought of. The girls accepted one of my ideas with enthusiasm and immediately used it to change the group chat name. This small moment ended up being an important one because the discussion and implementation of our group chat name made our space feel like a little community. It was the first step to establishing trust with the girls and creating meaningful relationships.

Trust is a complex topic which is often ignored in schools (Garakani, 2014, p.233). It is the hidden elephant in the room that everyone recognizes either implicitly or explicitly but no one talks about. Eric, my thesis advisor, is asking me to “explicate the problem/focus [I am] interested and provide a brief overview of [my] plan to address the problem” and it’s funny because I didn’t even know trust was something I was remotely interested in nor did I have a plan to address the problem. When I entered the book club, I had no idea what was going on or what I was going to do. For the majority of the time I was in the book club, I forgot about my praxis project because I wanted to work with these young women regardless of my project, support them and learn from them. My thesis was about capturing a small portion of my learning to offer to myself and others. Although the topic of trust was something I recently reflected upon, it was apparent during all of book club. Trust is an inevitable factor among all relationships but we seem to rarely talk about it or think about it. So as I looked back over the course of nearly a year I spent working with the young women in the book club, I had become interested in understanding the role trust played in our work together. As trust seemed important for students to make connections to their peers and to their teachers and, in this case, with me, an adult mentor working alongside them. In this exploration of trust with these young women, I sought to examine:

1. How do I and the participants understand what trust is?
2. How is trust established between students and teachers and between students and their peers?
3. In what ways is trust important in academic spaces?

In order to explore these questions based on my work with the book club, I have carefully examined the field notes I have collected throughout the year and I have conducted interviews with the four students and the teachers.

What Has Been Said About Book Clubs Already?

The purpose of any club is to bring a community together to learn about and discuss something that matters to them, and a book club is no different. Reading engagement was a main goal of Johnston's (2013) research. Learners were engaged by their own control or power within their learning. Two significant big aspects of Johnston's research were the importance of students being able to select their own literature and the pace at which they read the literature. Both aspects were essential in connecting readers with text and motivating them to share their learning experience with their peers. Focusing on skills and strategies while analyzing text is a specific focus in reading, which is an important part of developing as a learner (Johnston, 2013, p. 54).

Commonly found within other book club structures is a structure in which the teacher allows the learners little control (Petrich, 2015, p.2). In many book club structures, the emphasis is on reading and is set by the teacher with little flexibility (Ediger, 2000). In contrast, Johnston (2013) reported positive effects in giving students control within their reading and learning.

From this empowering model of engagement there were a number of influential results. First, learners invested in the learning experience, regardless of if they shared the same literature. There was an energy stirred from their desire to read and how they shared their passion with others. Additionally, participants' shared vocabulary increased as a result of being engaged in their reading, which equipped them for learning within diverse content. Finally, relationships were strengthened both with people they related with and people with whom they normally would not have engaged in conversation. This challenge develops all learners to better learn from similarities and differences in other people; students branch out and become more comfortable individually within a more diverse group of learners. Similarly, Dresser (2013) asserted the necessity of addressing the unique social-emotional needs of learners within school environments. Academics are important, but without addressing the social-emotional aspects of the individuals within, the learning communities will not succeed (Dresser, 2013). When the community meets the social-emotional needs, success can be obtained both individually and as a community. The connection between the emotional and academic learning of a person is vital in determining their engagement and success. At the forefront of emotional learning and engagement is an emphasis on social skills, social engagement, and both peer and mentoring relationships within the communities (Dresser, 2013). Social-emotional needs are met in academic environments through relationships with teachers, but are also met in students through relationships with their peers. Through his research, Dresser (2013) found, as a result of the social-emotional learning not being embedded within education, novice teachers were unaware of the relationship between social, emotional and academic development, and most novice teachers did not emphasize or involve their students in social-emotional learning. Without social-emotional learning, there is not as much involvement in classroom communities, creating

dissonance between the social-emotional and academic aspects, leading to negative results (Dresser 2013). Without engagement, the classroom environment will not foster improvements academically or socially. Students need to feel valued individually and critical to the community's success. Dresser (2013) argued that the more connections students make with their mentors, teachers, and peers, the more willing and engaged they will be in their learning, both emotionally and academically. Through social contexts, respect and trust are gained, empowering learning even through failure because emotional hope is found. Through relationships, students feel valued and are encouraged, enabling academic engagement and success. If trust is being built within classroom communities, individual students are supported even through struggles, whether the struggles occur within the social, emotional, or academic contexts. The emotional connections can often motivate higher levels of thinking as well. The safer and more supportive an environment is for students, the more likely academic success is present. Most of the literature published on book clubs focused on the academic benefits book clubs provide rather than social or emotional benefits. I appreciated how Dresser (2013) explored the academic components of book clubs, but also stressed the importance of social and emotional connections. He mentioned relationships, respect, and trust as important elements to students' success. Although academic literacy is important, it is just as significant if not more to attend to the social and emotional needs of students.

Dr. Jie Park, wrote her dissertation on her after school book club in New York in the summer of 2010. She designed a 10-month long qualitative study of 23 participants (all girls) who were broken into three smaller book clubs to accommodate different grade and reading levels. Jie was curious about "how, why, and what adolescents read should be *with* students" (Park, 2010, p. 42) and she explored how the girls' different identity markers such as race,

gender and class impacted their reading and discussions of texts. Although the notion of trust was not explicitly explored in her dissertation, trust was an inevitable factor that infiltrated her relationships with her participants especially after working with them closely for 10 months. “The book club became a space for relaxing, laughing, forming relationships and friendships, and collectively exploring issues and experiences that matter to adolescent girls” (Park, 2010, p. 10). Jie and I grappled with the same issue of not wanting our participants to feel as though they were study “objects” of our paper. With Jie’s girls, trust presented itself in different ways. The girls were not afraid to express their disapproval of some books they were reading. It takes a certain amount of trust to boldly state dislikes to teachers. Heather, the literary teacher, made it a point to make Jie’s intervention more organic, “Heather paid particular care to position me as an active participant, contributor, and member of the classroom” (Park, 2010, p.44). Jie’s relationships with her participants went beyond just her research, “My relationship to the students and Heather evolved throughout the year. I also attended school functions, such as the school talent show, Seussical (musical production), and eighth-grade graduation ceremony” (Park, 2010, p. 44). The girls from Jie’s book club saw Jie much more than a researcher who practiced intervention. They saw her as someone who they could ask questions to, engage in vulnerable conversations, and is valued at important events.

Although Dresser did mention trust and social/emotional in his work, the majority of literature on afterschool book clubs is focused on literacy skills. Little research has shown the role of trust and how trust undergirds and supports the relationships necessary for accomplishing the learning and/or social goals. In this study, I sought to more deeply understand the role of trust and how it shaped the relational aspects necessary for building relationships, learning, growth and so much more.

Honesty, Reliability, Vulnerability and Care

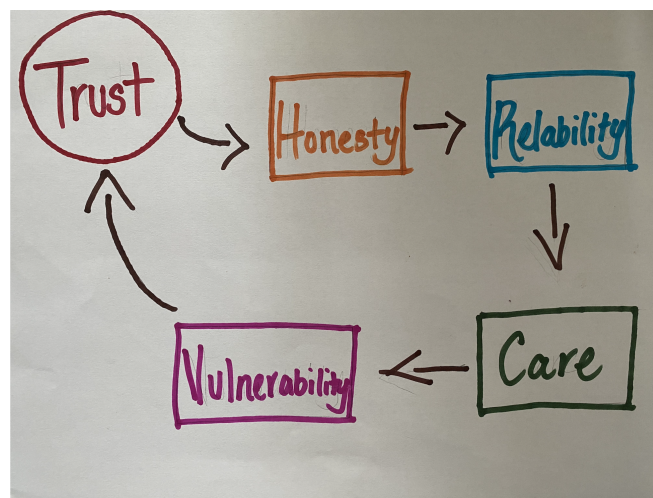
In constructing my conceptual framework, I drew from my interactions and relationships with my girls in the book club. It was important to recognize the key lenses I used to engage with the girls. The concepts that became most salient for me in investigating the research were based on Dean Fink's (2016) concepts of honesty, reliability, care and vulnerability. As Fink described:

Definitions of trust abound in the literature on the topic but almost all seem to reflect three fundamental concepts: honesty, reliability, and caring. Another word that also permeates the trust literature is 'vulnerability'. In trusting, one makes oneself vulnerable to other people, organizations, institutions, or even to an idea or ideology. The more one trusts the more one has confidence in the other, and the more vulnerable one becomes if trust is betrayed. Conversely, distrust reflects a lack of confidence in the 'other', and the more one distrusts the less vulnerable one becomes. (p.14)

Fink boils down trust to the main elements of honesty, reliability, care and vulnerability—themes consistent in most of the literature on trust. Trust is essentially confident, positive expectations of another's conduct. Trust is first rooted in honesty and reliability. If someone is continually dishonest and unreliable, the foundation of trust cannot be created. This makes it harder for vulnerability to take place which is key for trusting relationships. Vulnerability is a tightly related concept to trust. One cannot be spoken without the other. Vulnerability was shown on different occasions with the girls in the book club and was a sign of

trust being built. Indeed, one of the markers of trust being established was the recognition of vulnerability. One needs to feel comfortable enough to share vulnerable information in order for trust to be built. Fink's representation follows a more linear approach in terms of thinking of trust as steps. He believes honesty and reliability comes first, allowing for care and vulnerability to follow in order to establish trust. This is my illustration of Fink's representation of the elements and establishment of trust:

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The act of caring is also essential in building trust. One needs to know that the other authentically cares for them before being able to trust them. Stewart, Babino, and Walker (2017)), explored the importance of care in relationships between students and instructors. The authors stated that:

Caring should be the priority of teaching and should come before any academic learning (Noddings, 2003, p.1) . While caring is an abstract concept most related to a feeling, the author explained how caring in this context moves beyond feeling to include an ethical action, where

² Please excuse the informality of the illustrations, time and limited resources posed barriers to produce professional illustrations

students feel genuine care from the instructor. That is, students must feel that they are more important and valuable to the teacher than the subject matter (Noddings, 2003, pp.1-2) Care should always come first, especially between students and teachers. In an era of standardization and accountability, we must creatively imagine and enact a pedagogy where the onus of accountability is to the students through a pedagogy of care (Noddings, 2003, p.21). Although care can be abstract, it embraces the idea of improvisation in its design to create and describe specific methods to care for adolescents. We must apply care through our pedagogy because care leads to crucial, successful relationship factors such as vulnerability and trust. Care and trust go hand in hand with each other. If a student knows that their teachers care about them, it is easier for the student to trust their teachers.

Methods

Methodology

The research approach I took to conduct my research was practitioner inquiry based. Practitioner inquiry based research is similar to ethnographic research, however, unlike ethnographers, practitioner inquiry researchers are designed to influence the space and have authority. Practitioner inquiry also reflects on engagement of the role as a practitioner. This is precisely the research method I employed during my time with the book club. Another key difference between ethnography and practitioner inquiry is that practitioner inquiry focuses on the practitioner's practice – in my case, my practice of facilitating and holding a youth space. Ethnographers, while recognizing themselves and their subjectivity, tend to study “others” – but practitioner inquiry is very much about the self. I helped facilitate discussions and sometimes took charge of the sessions. For my project, this allowed the dynamic of the book club to flow in

an organic manner. The girls were able to interact with the facilitators, Julia and Sarah, as well as me without feeling as though my intervention was too overpowering. Instead, I was simply observing the book club sessions, taking field notes and occasionally hosted the book club on my own. Interviews were conducted at the end to make sense of my field notes and as an opportunity to talk to the girls individually about their thoughts on the implications of the book club in regards to trust. This type of research was a good fit for my project because it smoothed my intervention into the book club. It allowed me to enter the space without causing significant disturbance or change. This was incredibly important to be conscious of because as I entered the book club as a site, it was a delicate, intricate, pre-established space. This space was created over six years ago for a specific purpose and population of students of Claremont. Although that dedicated purpose and population has since then evolved, it was crucial to keep an ethnographic stance when intervening initially as an outsider. However, it was important for me to understand that this book club did not need me to intervene. A radical intervention would have been detrimental to the book club and changed the dynamic of the space. This would have gone against my values of being empathetic to the past nature of the group as well as the group's needs. The girls used the book club not only as a space to engage with literature but mainly they appreciate the space as a resource to relieve their stress, discuss salient issues in their lives, or simply to talk about their day.

Site

The book club was brought to my attention by my CYES professor, Eric DeMeulenaere, who vouched and supported me joining as a member, as my initial project had to be scrapped as a result of the pandemic. I had always enjoyed the idea of participating in a book club and when I

learned the book club consisted of female identifying individuals, I was eager to join. Eric reached out to Julia, his colleague, who asked the permission of Sarah, and the girls if I could join and the entire group agreed. Graphic novels serve the purpose of uniting the group, but mainly the time is used to talk to one another about random topics and issues not related to the book including exciting events occurring in someone's life or to engage in theoretical discussions. However, the history of the book club differs from what it is currently. The initial idea for the book club came from Julia when she saw a need to create a space for girls who were new arrivals to the United States. This space was created for these girls who not only had to navigate their adjustment into the new country but also figure out what it means to be female in a new country. Since its inception, the members of the group have changed but remained consistently of girls who were multilingual and were a part of Sarah's ESL classes. In terms of the purpose of the book club, Julia and Sarah had slightly different reasons for what the purpose of the book club was. For Julia, it was important to hold a space where these girls could engage in identity navigation through a dialogical manner. The books were a vehicle used to talk about life where the girls could share their experiences and grapple with challenges together. For Sarah, as an ESL teacher, the main purpose of the book club was to support the recent, multilingual immigrants with language development and literacy skills. The two purposes worked in harmony with one another. As the book club evolved through time, the purpose of the book club has changed as well. Sarah and Julia both agree that the purpose of the book club has organically changed into a space where the girls can build relationships with each other and talk to each other. This is one of the rare spaces and opportunities that the girls have to just talk. It has been beneficial for the girls especially during the pandemic to still have a space where they can come to release their thoughts. Most of the girls were too shy to talk in regular school classes via

Zoom, so the girls were eager to participate in the book club to not only read together, but to ask questions and present issues that are important to them.

Participants

There were four young, multilingual, Latinx, female identifying women who participated in the book club. They participated in the book club because either they were recruited by Sarah, or by a fellow peer. The demographics were incredibly important to this project because when Sarah and Julia created this group, they were conscious of what demographics they were trying to reach through the book club. These demographics were carefully chosen in order to aid this particular group of students who face unique challenges within school. Gender was the most central demographic because it was important to the girls to maintain exclusivity to only females. When Julia and Sarah initially created this book club, they wanted the space to be filled with girls who were recent arrivals to the United States. All of these girls were multilingual and/or learning to speak English. Race and nationality were not explicit demographics that Julia and Sarah focused on to recruit to members, but since they were reaching out to immigrants, the members of the book club resulted in young women of color who were continuing to learn to speak English.

Name	Occupation	Salient Identity Markers
Hela	High School Student	Female, Latina, Multilingual, Low Income, Immigrant, First Generation Student, Committed Christian, Sibling, Child of Divorced Parents, Reserved, Talkative, Curious
Luna	High School Student	Female, Latina, Multilingual,

		Low Income, Immigrant, First Generation Student, Only Child, Raised by Single Dad, Reserved, Shy
Elle	High School Student	Female, Latina, Multilingual, Low Income, Immigrant, First Generation Student, Lives with a Big Family, Has a Job, Outgoing, Friendly
Glendy	High School Student	Female, Latina, Multilingual, Low Income, Immigrant, First Generation Student, Oldest of Three Younger Brothers, Academically Driven, Reserved, Shy
Sarah	ESL Teacher	Female, White, Monolingual, Educated, Mother of Four, Leader
Julia	Professor	Female, Asian American, Monolingual, Educated, Mother, Leader

Positionality

The facilitators and the girls were gracious enough to let me join this past September to be a member and carry out my praxis project with them. My relationship with the young women in the book club goes beyond the book club itself. I am a senior at Clark University which puts me in an interesting position where I do serve as an “authority” figure because I am older, but I am close enough to their age where I can relate to them in different ways as well as help them with school/college work.

My theoretical framework is embedded within intersectionality theory, coined and conceptualized by Kimberlé Crenshaw. Intersectionality is an analytical framework for

understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege (Crenshaw 2016). There are many different parts that make up who I am. This leads to intricate interactions made with others and relationships built with them. Everyone has a unique set of identities that shapes their experience with the people around them and the world. My positionality can include age, race, gender, and ability to speak Spanish all work together to create a social dynamic within the book club all of which we navigated through differential and interlocking systems of power. Although I am older than the young women in the book club, I am younger and less experienced than the facilitators Sarah and Julia. I navigated the different power dynamics by trying to be myself in each space whether I was in the full group or just with the girls. However, it did not always play out this way. Coming as an outsider to the group, I was intimidated by the unfamiliarity of the young women as well as witnessing Sarah and Julia facilitate with comfort and experience. I was not sure what role to play as a newcomer in the group. I did want to disturb the previous established relationships and environment in the group, but I also wanted to engage in a non-intrusive manner. This was a bit difficult to do because there I was as a Senior in college, future Spanish high school teacher, trying to connect with these young women but making sure I did not overstep or say the wrong thing under Sarah and Julia. In an attempt to connect with the girls, I recognized a few, shared identity markers between us. For example, I was also a first-generation immigrant raised by a single mother in a low-income household who spoke more than one language. Although I did share similar identities with the girls, it did not necessarily frame the basis of being able to connect with them and gain their trust. Yes, I was an immigrant woman of color but the countries the girls and I resided from make a huge difference. Personally, I chose not to hold onto cultural, religious, linguistic or traditional aspects from my country, India. On the other hand, these

different aspects were important to the girls and their families' lives. Spanish was the primary language spoken in all of the girls' homes and they participated in cultural and religious gatherings significant to their respective families. I learned to become multilingual but I was not advanced in the Spanish language until I was over 19 years old. The girls had no choice but to learn English at a young age when they arrived in the United States. Even though it is remarkable to learn another language, I had the choice to learn another language, but they did not. The girls mainly spoke English unless they were with their families so my ability to speak Spanish was not practiced with them. In regards to Sarah and Julia, I had little in common with the facilitators where our age and experience difference put a barrier between us. It could have been because I was intimidated to communicate or because it was difficult to get to know and communicate with authority figures in an online setting. Positionality is a concept I have grown to learn the importance of and appreciate through my education career at Clark. My positionality put me in an interesting spot with the girls where my similarities with them also translated to differences making it tougher to connect. The power dynamics in relation to my positionality was not something I was conscious of everyday but experienced inside book club sessions as well as outside of the club. My positionality and these different dynamics played a role in building trust with the different participants. A critical aspect of positionality is not only being aware of how your positionality directly affects others but also recognizing when and where your positionality lacks in order to still support others. In June Jordan's "Report from the Bahamas", I learned the importance of knowing when to step back no matter how much I want to help the issue myself. Jordan recollected an experience with a young, Black woman named Sokutu who had come to Jordan to express her situation of domestic violence due to her husband's alcoholism. Jordan, deeply disturbed by her story, listened intently and started calling people and resources she knew

of to support Sokutu. When almost at a loss, Jordan got in contact with an Irish woman who was able to help Sokutu. Although Jordan had past trauma in regards to the Irish and their views differed, Jordan escorted the young woman to Sokutu. The Irish woman knew exactly what to say and what to do because she herself had been through a similar situation. At the end of the night, Jordan watched them interact as though they were sisters and Sokutu left feeling better, safer, and supported (Jordan, 1982, pp. 14-16). I described this story in depth to provide a clear example of the importance of positionality in respect to aiding others. In a fragile, vulnerable situation such as the one with Sokutu, it is crucial to handle it with the utmost care and thought. Jordan quickly recognized that although Sokutu trusted Jordan, Jordan did not have the capacity to truly help Sokutu. Although Jordan was a Black woman herself, Jordan realized she could not help Sokutu because there was a lack of experience in the area, but she could use her resources to find someone that could. This is something I struggle with to this day. I deeply desire to help people when they personally come to me for support because I want to be that rock for them. However, especially in delicate situations as the one Sokutu was in, it would be unjust to try and solve the problem on my own. Instead, the appropriate thing to do would be to provide the right resources and step back from the situation. Knowing how to help and when to remove yourself is significant to positionality. To be able to do practice this is what makes trust stronger in relationships.

Data Collection

The data that I collected consisted of field notes, interviews as well as text messages from our group chat. For the first few sessions, I refrained from taking field notes in order to fully give myself and the girls time to adjust to my presence. Once I started writing my field notes, I observed the different interactions that took place in each session as well as capturing an

overview of what occurred during the session. Interviews were conducted in the first months of 2021 after four or five months of spending time together in book club. The interviews followed a semi-structured protocol asking the participants about their views on trust and relationships with each other in book club. The interviews were recorded for the sole purpose of looking back at it to reflect and analyze. I interviewed each girl once and they lasted anywhere between 25 minutes to 2 hours. Participants were able to expand upon my questions and their answers often led us to different paths that we explored.

Data Analysis

The interviews provided significant evidence in relation to the connection between trust and relationships within the book club. However, field notes and observation were used to collect data as well. The data was mainly used to reflect upon observations and what participants said in order to generate a personal analysis. I was looking for in which ways trust was established between the girls and I as well as how trust was not present in our relationship with each other. In all honesty, when I was trying to find evidence of trust in my data, I thought back to any interactions I had with each of the girls outside of the book club itself. The majority of the data that I presented consisted of moments I had with all of the girls together or moments I had personally with each of the girls. It is ironic that my data mainly derives from outside of the book club even though the book was my official site for my praxis project. I found it easier to interact with the girls outside of the book club because I was able to engage with them individually. During the book club sessions, I witnessed interactions that occurred because of the trust and experience Sarah had built with the girls, who were all her students in the past. There were some occasions where the girls just did not feel like talking but a large portion of the book club

sessions resulted in the girls asking questions to Sarah and engaging in abstract, theoretical conversation sparked by Sarah and Julia. It was important to me not to disturb these organic discussions because it was one of the few opportunities where the girls could come and talk to Sarah and the group about topics or issues salient in their lives. I found it comfortable to reach out and engage with the girls outside of the book club space because it gave me the opportunity to connect with the girls and build trust with them. Therefore, the data analysis markers I looked for originated from outside interactions I had with the girls whether it was through our group chat, Zoom meetings, or in-person get togethers. As I was carefully sifting through all the data, I was looking for different markers that pointed to trust. I chose the examples I did because they presented markers such as moments of vulnerability, honesty, reliability, care and more. As I look back upon the experience, those examples of the interactions outside of book club were the highlights for me. For example, vulnerability presented in ways where I got to know more about the girls' personal lives. Luna and her dad shared the past history of her mother and the hardships of growing up with a single dad. Glendy expressed her struggles and emotions of being a student remotely. Glendy was also honest about her likes and dislikes even if it differed from the group. As a result of looking for trust, I also discovered moments of mistrust where vulnerability, honesty, reliability, and care were missing. Moments where I noticed the girls holding back the truth such as Hela not wanting to reveal directly that she is undocumented. Or when Elle said she felt as though we were close when that was not necessarily true. While I asked specific questions in the interviews to gain the students and facilitators views on trust, I also combed through the field notes to look for evidence of the development of trust. The primary marker I paid attention to was the moments when the students (or the facilitators) revealed vulnerability. I chose to focus on vulnerability because it was a strong marker of trust building especially in an online setting.

Other markers included moments regarding communication and honesty where the girls were not afraid to speak their mind. I also looked for evidence where the girls did not present markers of trust such moments where the girls chose to withhold personal information or refrained from opportunities to show deeper vulnerability. There is high significance in not only markers of trust built with the girls but as well as markers of distrust. They both can present interesting information about establishing and maintaining trust.

“Let’s Just Talk Ms.”

At first, I was not sure how to connect with the girls in the book club. I was highly aware that this book club had been established for several years and the current girls had already been participating for a few years. I felt like an outsider and often like a fly on the wall during book club meetings. Julia and Sarah, were amazing facilitators who successfully led the book club with confidence and posed guiding questions with ease. It was a bit intimidating coming into this close, intricate space for the main purpose of my praxis project. This intimidation combined with trying to find my role in the book club was paralyzing, often leaving me silent. However, I quickly realized my assumptions about what book club would be like were wrong and in our interviews all the girls shared that they had similar assumptions as well. This shared assumption was based on the notion of what traditional book clubs usually look like where primarily the time is used to discuss the book previously read, make inferences, and analyze. Rather, our book club was focused around reading the book together facilitated by guiding questions, entertaining related tangential conversations, but most importantly the book club provided a space for the girls to just talk about school and life in ways not at all connected or only very loosely connected to the book. We used books as our reason to meet but the main purpose was to allow the girls to

just talk about whatever they wanted to talk about. The girls loved reading and were intrigued by the series we were reading but often when Sarah would ask the girls, “Do you girls want to keep reading or do you want to talk?” The likely answer would be that the girls just wanted to talk.

When I realized this unique aspect of our book club, I was relieved because I could spend the time getting to know the girls and making connections with them. Actually, I had a deep desire to do so. The girls had such intimate relationships with each other and the facilitators, Sarah and Julia. I did not want the girls to think that the sole reason I was there was because of my praxis project. Many times, during book club, I genuinely forgot about my thesis project because I was trying to focus on learning about the girls as well as sharing about myself. In the beginning, I thought my praxis project might encompass the idea of the impacts of book club on the girls in regards to their academic and social performance. However, as I started to recognize the dynamics of book club with the girls, I realized what was more pertinent to our group was the different relationships built and the trust or lack of trust embedded within those relationships.

Bad Bunny and Ice Cream: How Trust Was Established

Establishing trust can be tricky at first due to awkwardness of meeting and trying to get to know each other. The awkwardness definitely stemmed from me mostly trying to find my place in the space and interact with the girls in an authentic way. A trusting relationship can be thought of as a flower, to create one is to plant the seed and watch the bud develop. In a way, I would say there were seeds planted in all the girls. One of the first seeds planted was the creation of our group chat. I was aware that there already was a group chat created just between the girls, Julia and Sara. I thought it would be a good idea to create a group chat with just the girls and I so we could get to know each other and communicate without the other teachers there. One of my

favorite parts was the naming of our group chat. I had opened up the space to the girls to choose a name for the group and we had come up with “da 5 lil empanadas”. It was a great introduction to building trust and relationships with me through humor and connection. Group chats and other forms of communication outside ‘traditional’ school channels can facilitate trust. The format and modality of the group chat enable trust-building because it can be the form in which students engage in relaxed, humorous talk and peers can reach out to each other for questions and help.

Sarah and Julia would ask me to facilitate a book club on my own a few times when they were not able to make it. I not only appreciated them giving me the responsibility to hold book club, I was also grateful for the opportunity to get to know the girls in an even more intimate space. Back in October, I was a teaching fellow at Breakthrough Greater Boston’s virtual after school program where I came up with a short curriculum on Bad Bunny, a popular icon in reggaeton and Latin pop music, and the impact of his music on social justice movements. For one of the very first book clubs I facilitated on my own, I decided not to read with them but rather I pulled from one of my lesson plans and shared the content with them. I used Nearpod, a teaching tool, to engage with them in a different way. We watched a controversial music video by Bad Bunny called “Yo Perreo Sola” where he had dressed like a woman and used his song to advocate for women’s right to dance alone and free. I opened the space for discussion in response to Bad Bunny’s music video. To my surprise, only Luna likes Bad Bunny and listens to him regularly. Although Hela and Elle did not listen to him, they shared how they liked the music video because it was revolutionary to see a Latino man proudly dressed as a woman and advocate strongly for women's rights. Glendy disagreed with her peers and frankly stated that she did not like it because she does not listen to this type of music. When I asked her what kind of music she likes to listen to, she responded that she mainly listens to Asian music such as k-pop.

Luna was the only one who enthusiastically showed her love and appreciation for Bad Bunny and his music. This definitely took me by surprise because Bad Bunny is loved not only amongst the Latinx community but around the world. I should not have assumed that because the girls identify as Latinas that they would have been more inclined to like Bad Bunny. When that book club session ended, I thought I had “failed” because my assumption did not prove to be true and all the girls did not end up liking Bad Bunny. However, upon deeper analysis I came to see that trust was established in a few ways in this scenario. The fact that Glendy was comfortable enough not only with her peers, but with me as well to state that she did not like Bad Bunny and disagreed with her peers was important. It shows that she trusted us enough, even at this early point in our relationship, to share her opinions even if it may not align with the rest of the group. This speaks to the idea of honesty that Fink (2016) recognized as a critical component of trust. Had Glendy been afraid to share her differing opinion, then we would know trust was not being established. Indeed, these girls rarely speak in any of the school classes because they do not trust the space. Speaking alone is a sign of trust, but being willing to speak their truth, even when it goes against what everyone else thinks is a much deeper reflection of trust being established.

As an attempt to get to know the girls outside of book club, I invited just the girls out to get rolled ice cream near Clark. The girls were ecstatic because all of them had heard about rolled ice cream, but they all never tried it. They all lived relatively close to each other, so I offered to pick them up in my car and we drove over to the ice cream shop. Not only did the girls trust me enough to let me pick them up and take them out, but my favorite part was learning something from each girl when I picked them up. The first girl I picked up was Luna and I was greeted by her dad as he was already sitting on the front stairs of the house. He was more comfortable speaking in Spanish and we ended up having a lengthy conversation in Spanish

where he shared a lot about Luna and her mom. At first, I was nervous to meet her dad because parents always make me nervous. However, once he realized I spoke Spanish, he started speaking to me as if we were friends and he was recalling memories to share with me. The conversation became more natural because my nerves calmed down after I realized how kind her father was. While we were waiting for Luna to finish getting ready upstairs, her dad shared a personal history of how her mother left them when Luna was young and that she was not a good mom. This is why he loves her so much and is quite protective over her. He expressed appreciation for me taking her out because he thought she needed it. When Luna got in my car, I told her about my conversation with her dad. She agreed with what he had said and explained about how her mom had a history of infidelity, lying, and neglect. She shared that Elle's mom helped raise her when she was younger, which is why the two girls were so close. She expressed how much her dad loves her and how she understood why, but wishes he was not as protective. I was taken aback by how much Luna's father shared with me within seconds of meeting me. My ability to speak Spanish was key for this connection to occur because if I did not speak Spanish, her father would not have been able to communicate his story with me. However, it could have also been because her dad saw that I cared about his daughter and that enabled him to open up and trust me. This interaction had the potential to establish trust with Luna in a few ways. Trust is not just about getting to know someone, it is about these small interactions. There were important markers that could have led Luna to trust me. I took the time to talk to her father in their home language and we were able to communicate about deep memories. It mattered to her father more than Luna that I am not a native speaker of Spanish but made the effort to become fluent in it. Luna was able to speak English with me and she already went through the challenge of having to learn a new language versus her father who was more appreciative of me being able

to speak in Spanish since he could not speak in English. However, it still posed a marker of trust for Luna because she saw that I was able to interact with her father at a deep level where maybe even most of her teachers at school were not able.

When I picked up Hela, I learned that we had to pick her up from her dad's house and not her mom's because they are divorced and Hela spends her time with them separately. Shortly after, we picked up Elle and I learned that her family is planning to move to a different house in Worcester because there are too many people living in her house, and they all need a bigger space. The last girl left to be picked up was Glendy, and I learned that she had just gotten done with her chores in order to be able to come out with us. When we arrived at the ice cream store, since it was my idea to take them out, I offered to pay for all the girls. They put up a little fight against it, but I insisted, and they were appreciative. While we were waiting and eating our ice cream, we all sat on the couch and talked. We conversed about several, random things in a way where it was just an organic conversation that flowed. I engaged each of the girls with questions asking them about themselves and the girls responded and talked amongst themselves as well. We talked about school, college, social media, boys, or lack thereof, anime, music, dogs, and more. Before we left the ice cream shop, we met the owner's fiancé who to my surprise was the college counselor for Hela and Luna at school. She asked Hela and Luna about their college application process. I told the counselor that I could be a resource to help them with the application process as well. I explained to the college counselor how I was working with them in the book club. We ended our little outing at the dog park. The girls got to meet my dog who they loved, and we spent some time at the dog park watching all the dogs play. It was so nice getting to know the girls and sharing about myself as well in an informal, personal space. We were able to understand each other better. Although our virtual book club meetings were a safe space to get

to know each other, this hang out session in person I believe was crucial to establishing a foundation for trust. This in-person hang out session allowed for the different markers of trust (honesty, reliability, care and vulnerability) to be initiated and formed. The girls saw that I cared about them because unlike past Clark researchers, I reached out to them to meet outside of the book club space. Since I was the one who invited them out, I insisted on paying for their orders which lets them know I care about them. Since the girls are high school students, most of them did not have a job, instead choosing to focus their time on their studies. The girls saw that I could be reliable because I followed through with the plan and safely picked them up and dropped them off at their respective homes. My responses and input were honest, and I was able to engage in vulnerable conversations. There was something about physically being together that allowed us to get a better understanding of each other. Unlike behind a screen, we were able to fully be ourselves. This was a huge marker of trust being able to be ourselves in front of one another and engage in meaningful conversations.

Traits and Mental Wellbeing: How Trust Was Present

I believe I built trust with each of the girls to a certain level, but some of my connections held more trust than others. Luna let me into a sliver of her life by sharing the personal history of her relationship with her mom. She and I also have similar interests in regards to music, dogs and fashion. We listen to the same music like Bad Bunny, reggaeton and Latin pop. We both share a love for dogs, especially pit bulls. She would often slide up on my Instagram stories and we would talk about dogs as well as fashion. I helped her pick out an outfit for her birthday. There is some sense of trust built in our relationship and in our interview, she stated that she did trust me and could confide in me if needed.

This was similar to Hela. With Hela there was some sense of trust in our relationship as well although I would say she was the girl that I had least in common with. Hela knew she could reach out to me for help and she had in regards to college. We had a zoom meeting where she shared that she was stuck in the college application process as well as looking for scholarships. Hela was also easy to talk to and my interview with her was the longest out of all the girls. She had a lot to say about her other peers in the book club as well as her teachers. Although it was an interview, it takes trust to be able to share her opinions clearly.

Elle is an interesting character because from the start I knew that Elle reminded me a lot of myself. She is outgoing, talkative and steps up to the plate. In the beginning, she would always have her camera on and talk about her day. She was often the first one to volunteer to share or refresh our minds with a recap of the book or be first to share a theory that others could agree or disagree with. When we had our ice cream date, she talked the most out of all the girls. However, interestingly, she and I do not have much in common with each other, despite what I had assumed. In her interview she shared, “Umm not a lot of things, like we don’t have a lot of things in common with each other but there are some things. Like, ummm, we both love dogs. And umm what else... *short silence* oh and um we both like the same kind of music” (Interview with Elle, 03/05/21, p. 2). Which is true, we do like the same music, she sent me an iMessage aside from our group chat with a playlist that she wanted me to listen to and I expressed my enjoyment of the music to her. In her interview she also shared that she trusts me, “We’re pretty close. Like I said before hahaha you actually talked to us not like the other Clark girls”(Interview with Elle, 03/05/21, p. 3).

Out of the girls in the book club, I would say the most trusting relationship I have is with Glendy. From our messages via text and to the interview, it was clear the way our relationship

was created. The pivotal moment was when one day I noticed that Glendy had not shown up to book club twice in a row, so the second time I checked in with her via text to see if everything was okay. She responded saying that she was mentally struggling and felt depressed. She asked me not to share this information with the other girls in the book club or the teachers. The way that I responded to this situation was critical because it can make or break the trust in a relationship. Trust is incredibly fragile and if I had not handled her vulnerability correctly, it could have shattered the trust she put in me by sharing. In those same messages with Glendy, I thanked her for trusting me with this information and her emotions. I asked her if it would be helpful to set up a meeting with me so we can talk through some of the issues and maybe come up with a solution. She agreed and the next day we met via zoom. The meeting consisted of her pouring out her stress and depression to me while I listened. She expressed that much of her stress and depression was coming from school and zoom fatigue. The rest of the meeting was spent helping Glendy catch up on her AP Literature assignments and we agreed to set up another meeting so that I could support her more. Glendy and I would continue to meet a few more times through zoom where I would help her with catching her up on homework assignments. After we had met a few times on Zoom, we eventually stopped meeting because Glendy stopped reaching out for help. However, I would occasionally check in on her each week or so to see how she was doing. Glendy also texted me updates, sharing her recent accomplishments with either school or outside activities related to academics.

Glendy is the girl I would say I am the least like. She is quite reserved, cautious, focused, mild mannered and even aloof at times. However, once she gets to know people she becomes open about the things she is passionate about. We were able to bond over our love for anime and she loved to share her passion for Asian culture in general. Other than that, she and I do not have

much in common with each other, but we were able to build the most trusting relationship out of the group. When I asked Glendy why she thought she could trust me, she responded, “I had a gut feeling. I could tell just from your vibes” (Interview with Glendy , 02/20/21, p. 2).

If someone were to ask me in the beginning of book club who I thought I would become closest with, I would have said Elle because she reminded me of myself and is an easy person to talk to. However, my most trusting relationship ended up being with Glendy, the girl who was almost the complete opposite of me and with whom I did not have much in common with. This speaks to the connection between care and trust. Glendy said she thought she could trust me due to her gut feeling and vibes she received from me. In addition, the reason Glendy was able to trust me was not because we shared common connections but because I reached out to her when she needed it the most. I continued to reach out, followed up, helped her with her homework, and checked-in with her. These were all markers that showed Glendy I cared about her and her well-being not just academically, but mentally. This touches on Fink’s notion of trust consisting of honesty, reliability, care and vulnerability. Glendy was able to trust me because she and I presented evidence for the four components of trust: honesty, reliability, vulnerability, and care. Glendy was able to rely on me to help her and I continued to show up and be there for her. Glendy in turn was honest about her struggle, emotions, and needs. She felt as though she was drowning and it was difficult to ask for help. Glendy allowed herself to confide in me and share vulnerable information. This was more prominent to building trust than the common traits I had with Elle. Elle and I were similar people but did not have much in common. Although we did not have many, shared commonalities, we were still able to trust. Despite one of my assumptions about trust, being similar did not seem as important as the four other characteristics Fink described. Fink’s different elements of trust did not completely apply to my relationship with

Elle. Elle knows that I care for her and if she were to reach out to me, I would be there for her. However, she was the girl I had the least amount of interaction with outside of the book club and the quality of trust was lower than the trust between Glendy and I. This shows that sharing similar traits with one another does not necessarily mean trust can be built easily.

Past Experiences and “Ughhh”: How Trust Was Not Present

This is a tricky section to reflect upon and write about because even before I had the slightest inkling of what my project was going to be about, when I entered the book club space, I knew I wanted to build relationships with these girls. I did not want them to think that I was only there for my thesis and that was the only value I held in working with and getting to know them. My goal was to build a relationship with them regardless of my project and unconsciously I think part of the relationship that I wanted to build had the desire of trust embedded within it. To reflect upon the ways I failed in this goal is a bit difficult to face. In the beginning when I first started book club, I would forget about the thesis and solely focus on being present in the book club with the girls. So when I started having to take field notes, I dreaded it because it started to feel less of an organic dynamic for me by observing and taking notes on everything that happened in the book club. It became more of a reality that oh yes I am here as key to my praxis project. However, the process of praxis, acting then reflecting upon my actions, was crucial to developing my relationships with the girls of book club.

As mentioned earlier, all the girls expressed that they trusted me and acknowledged our relationship to a certain extent. Although there are different ways in which trust was present within all the girls and I, there are also ways in which trust was not present. Hela said in her interview that she does trust me, however, because she has only known me for a little bit, she

would not trust me with her “deepest, darkest secrets.” She usually only shares those secrets with people who has known for a while and has been friends with for a long time. For example, she trusts Luna and Elle even with her deepest, darkest secrets because she has known them for years and they have gone through a lot with each other. Their families were close enough that they often had get-togethers providing plenty of opportunities to hang out. This is completely understandable and I admire her ability to trust me enough in order to communicate in a raw, honest manner. Trust is about not only shared experiences, but also about many shared experiences over time. It is something that is earned over extended periods of time. Tatiana Garakani (2014) speaks to this in her participatory action research project, “Gaining trust obviously remains key to working with youth...However, building relationships requires time and a continuous presence...” (Garakani, 2014, p. 243). Shared experiences are important to establishing trust, however, a collective of shared experiences are necessary for trust to emerge and be maintained, but this requires time. How much time does it take? There are no correct answers, it depends on who the people are and how the shared experiences affect their relationship.

Aside from her direct evidence in our interview, there were some examples within our interactions that led me to believe her trust ends at a certain extent with me. In our Zoom meeting set up to support her through the college application, she shared with me that she did not have social security and was not able to apply to college without the DACA application. Her immigration status could play a role in her distrust. Especially in the United States where immigration is an intense issue, Hela’s lack of papers had led her to be distrustful and unwilling to really trust people outside of her family and close friends who with knowledge about her status could have deep power over her and her family. Being an undocumented youth in the

United States is an incredibly difficult challenge. Roberto Gonzalez (2011), professor of education at Harvard, has researched and explored the effects of undocumented youth.

Hela, who was a Senior and soon to graduate, had worries about what her future will look like without the security blanket of K-12 schooling.

This was a huge transition for Hela and it was not easy to trust someone who she did not really know and had not spent much time with. Therefore, she was pretty cautious to not reveal directly that she is undocumented which put up hurdles for her during the college application process. Hela values time and experience in relation to trusting someone with vulnerable issues. She and I had not been gifted the time nor enough experiences in order to achieve a deeper level of trust. For some such as Hela, the quality and authenticity of trust cannot be high if there was not enough time and experiences shared.

Honestly, in turning now to be in a relationship with Elle, it took me by surprise when she said that she felt we were pretty close in her interview. The main reason for my surprise being that I did not feel the same way and there were not many indicative factors of this “pretty close” relationship. Elle is someone who is easy to talk to and when we are together our conversation flows effortlessly. However, aside from a few sessions where I facilitated on my own towards the beginning of book club and our ice cream date, Elle and I did not interact much whether it was during book club itself or outside of book clubs via our group chat or separate Zoom meetings. Although it felt good to hear Elle describe our relationship in a highly positive manner and I wanted to validate her words, a part of me wonders if she only said it because she thought that is what I wanted to hear or she truly felt our closeness based on the limited interactions we’ve had. Maybe she was just telling me what she thought I wanted to hear which is an indication that she did not have the trust to be fully honest. At the end of our interview, I

asked Elle, “Is there anything I could have done to make our relationship stronger?” She believed we were already close but maybe the one thing that could have made it stronger is if we had hung out more. Here the theme of time arises again similar to Hela. It was true that we only hung out once and aside from the few book club meetings I facilitated, we did not interact much in the book club either. However, unlike Hela, I have a feeling that it would not take as much time or as many shared experiences to establish a high quality trusting relationship. Elle seems to be more open to letting other people in her life after hanging out with them a little more. This could be due to various reasons but time and past experiences are prominent themes in respect to gaining trust. For Hela, her past experiences with living undocumented in the United States could have caused her to be more cautious of who she trusts with vulnerable information. There may have been past experiences where her trust was betrayed making it harder for her to trust others, especially people who have newly come into her life. Elle may have had less traumatic past experiences in her life and therefore is more open to the topic of trust and building trust with people, old or new. The concepts of past experiences and time cannot be generalized because people go through various experiences and have different opinions on time in relation to trust.

On the other hand, there is Elle’s best friend, Luna, who shares similar and different traits from Elle. Luna is more on the reserved side, as Sarah describes “someone you have to keep poking at in order to get her to talk” (Interview with Sarah , 04/19/21, p. 2). Luna is an incredibly sweet, kind girl who does love to talk when she is in the right space. In our recent book club session, we had read for about thirty minutes and when Sarah asked the group if they wanted to keep reading or just wanted to talk, Luna immediately voiced “Let’s just talk Miss” (Field Notes, 04/16/21, p.1). And indeed that’s what we did, we caught each other up on our lives and just talked about random topics. However, there is not much evidence to point to trust in our

relationship. Similar to Elle, other than my solo facilitations and our ice cream date, Luna and I did not engage much with each other. Although Luna seemed comfortable elaborating on what her father shared about her mother to me, there were no other vulnerable moments shared. It also makes me wonder if I had never met her father that day, would it be likely that she never would have been vulnerable with me in the first place? In a way, maybe she felt forced to share her mother's history with me because her dad had already shared that information with me. However, I believe Luna is also similar to Elle in terms of if we had spent a little bit more time together, Luna would have also opened up to me on her own.

As mentioned earlier, I have the most trusting relationship with Glendy because she and I connected during our ice cream date, we've spent more one on one time with each other virtually, she has confided in me with vulnerable, personal issues, and keeps in touch with me occasionally to share her accomplishments. Before, I never put much thought into where trust might be lacking in my relationship with Glendy because I was proud of the fact that I was able to build a relationship with her and Glendy claims she is confident about her trust with me. However, my interview with Julia enlightened me about some areas where trust was lacking between not only Glendy and I, but between Glendy and the rest of the group. When Julia was describing her thoughts about Glendy, it struck me by surprise at first but quickly, I realized Julia was right. I, therefore, am quoting Julia's thoughts at length:

Julia: I worry about Glendy out of all the girls....She is the most, I guess, academically oriented. She likes reading, she's traditionally a good student, right. I also think, you know, she's the most selfish,..., not in a bad way like she's a bad person but like I feel like a lot of the times that she comes into the

group it's about her and the book. And whereas, like the other girls ... they care about each other,...they'll say like, 'oh so how are you doing?...There's very little that Glendy is doing to make it possible for other people to contribute. And so, you know, I guess if I put on kind of like my lens of like, you know, the book club is supposed to be at the end of the day, like a humanizing and caring place. I feel like she's the person who probably for me has the most growth to do in that area (Interview with Julia, 04/02/21, p.5).

I have come to agree with Julia's analysis. It's a one-way street with Glendy in regards to the book club. Part of it may be because Glendy had traditional assumptions of what the book club would look like before she joined. The traditional sense in which the book club is solely used as a space to read, reflect and analyze the book being read as a collective. To be fair, this was my assumption as well although I have never been part of another book club in the past. The difference is I believe Glendy is holding onto that traditional sense of a book club and as Julia suggested frankly, Glendy may not like book club due to its lack of deep focus on analyzing the literature. Trust in a relationship should be a two-way street, a trait coexisting and shared between all parties. However, this does not exist between Glendy and I nor between Glendy and the rest of the group.

For the past several months now, Glendy's attendance has been rare because she has other obligations that stress her out and she feels as though the book club adds to that stress. This was different from the rest of the crew because as Julia pointed out the other girls view the book club as a space to come and talk about their stress. Glendy sees book club as one more thing she has to do rather than a space to process stress and obligations. This has caused some tension

between the group because the group had already made changes to accommodate Glendy. Originally we were meeting on Wednesdays but since the timing on Wednesdays did not work for Glendy, we moved the book club to Fridays from 2:30-3:30. After a few months, that timing did not really work either because Glendy had an obligation that started at 3:00 so the group changed the timing on Fridays from 2:15-3:15 instead. Regardless of the changes made to accommodate Glendy, she still failed to show up consistently. This created some tension between the girls as well as the facilitators because they felt as though they were putting effort into trying to make the book club work for everyone, including Glendy, but Glendy did not seem to reciprocate the same effort. Trust cannot be established or maintained if all parties do not put in the same effort.

In regards to just Glendy and I, the one way street analogy remains. Out of all of our interactions, I think Glendy asked how I was doing once or twice in our relationship. This did not bother me because especially during our private Zoom meetings, I was there to listen to her and support her because she had reached out with fragile information about her mental health and wellbeing. So I was never hurt by her not asking about my well being because it was never her responsibility. However, it is important to note that it was mainly Glendy sharing, and I rarely shared about myself. For trust to be authentically claimed, both parties should feel comfortable to share about themselves. When Glendy texted me saying she is feeling depressed and took me up on my invitation to talk, I was not sure what to expect about what she would share with me. I assumed that she would talk about how remote schooling was overwhelming. I wondered if maybe she would talk about the stress of her role as the oldest daughter with four younger brothers and the responsibility that comes with that in an immigrant family. Or maybe she had some interpersonal conflict that she needed me to listen to and possibly weigh in on. Our first

one-on-one Zoom meeting, she shared her depression stemmed from the stress of school and that she was struggling academically. She did not confide in me with other topics. I wanted to validate those feelings because she is not alone in the struggle of gaining mental wellbeing while attending virtual school during the pandemic. I understood why Glendy was so academically oriented and driven. She was the eldest child of an immigrant family whose parents sacrificed their home in Guatemala in order to give their children better educational opportunities. Glendy feels immense pressure to excel academically because she sees it as her only ticket to make her family proud and survive in our capitalistic society. All her family's sacrifices to come to the U.S. are riding on her academic performance. I understand because I was that girl as well. I share a similar immigrant story whose single mom who put overwhelming stress on completing a capitalistic path via education so that I can be financially sufficient and secure. This narrow path, most likely chosen for most immigrant girls, often does not have the time to share trust and care with others. This is understandable, however, it is curious to compare with the other girls in book club who also come from immigrant families with their own familial obligations, maybe not as extreme as Glendy's, but still have the ability to humanize and care for others in their circle.

Moreover, in respect to authentic trust, as I was describing my relationship with Glendy to Julia, she kindly pointed out something that honestly left a ball in my stomach. I was explaining how I felt good whenever I helped Glendy with her school work. Glendy asked me for help on AP literature and I tried my best to support her although literature and English are not my forte. It brought me great joy to hear Glendy say things like, "Wow you're a really great teacher" or "You explained this way better than my teacher did, I understand it so much better, thank you". However, aside from the first time we met on Zoom where I was genuinely excited to help her, I was going through some personal and mental issues myself which gave me an

“ugh” feeling every time I hopped on Zoom with Glendy. To be clear, the “ugh” feeling was not because of Glendy herself but rather having to put in effort to help with her difficult overdue AP Literature assignments. Back then, I was barely putting effort into myself or other relationships I was in. When I was on Zoom with Glendy , I would be fully present and try my best to help her understand and catch up on the assignments. After the Zoom call ended, I would feel a mixture of relief that the call was over but also happiness because helping Glendy was a reward in itself. When I mentioned this to Julia in our interview, her response was enlightening.

Julia: I mean, I think, and I don't know if you're going or if you have gone into that but... I think that's the part about trust that no one writes about right so like, you know, this person reached out to you, and yes it was, you know, an act of trust on their part that they reached out to you and so you obviously want to cultivate and grow the trust. Right, so then you offer you and your resources, kind[ness], knowledge...I've thought about this also with my, not with [our] book club... [but with] other work that I do with youth there's a way in which like the fear of losing trust which makes me give a lot more and not set boundaries in ways that I would with adults.

Gaby: Yeah I completely agree.

Julia: ...You know once you start getting into the place where, you know, maybe resent is a really strong word, but like where you start to...not enter into the conversation with joy but more like, ughhh, you know, then I think, you know, you actually haven't, you're,

you're like almost playing, putting up a facade right and that's not fair to the other person right.

Gaby: Right.

Julia: So I think like this idea of like, trust, and boundaries and showing your full self is really complicated because at first I feel like this is me, I feel like I can't really show and express everything that I'm feeling and experiencing with the youth because they would be like, Oh, okay we don't wanna bug you (Interview with Julia, 04/02/21, p.7-8).

If it was not for this part of my conversation with Julia, I genuinely do not think I would have been aware of this whole other level of complexity to trust. People do not talk about this side of trust or lack thereof because quite frankly it is embarrassing. I was embarrassed or more so ashamed that I did get that “ugh” feeling when I entered the academic workshop with Glendy. Glendy, practically out of the blue, entrusted me with vulnerable information about herself and due to the fear of losing that trust, I failed to set up boundaries. The reasons why I failed to set up boundaries are unsure. Is it because of my deeply rooted insecurity of always having to please people even if it affects me negatively? Or is it because personally I believe if boundaries are set up, it potentially limits the amount of trust that can be built? Is there a way to balance boundaries and trust without jeopardizing the maximum potential of either?

My interaction and relationship with Glendy enlightened me about trust and building trust. All the components of trust I defined earlier (honesty, reliability, vulnerability and care) were present between Glendy and I, at least to a certain extent. Under the category of care in

respect to trust, there is an underlying subcategory of sacrifice as well. If you care for someone, there is a level of sacrifice that plays a role in that care. Sacrifice could include time, space, effort physically or mentally. People could be sacrificing their time to care for the other person as well as give up their space. Sacrifice also means effort that is put into that person either physically having to be there for them or it takes an effect on your mental wellbeing as well. Caring for some is not easy work, it does take sacrifice. However, there is a difference between sacrifice enthusiastically given versus sacrifice that is reluctantly given. This difference either adds or takes away the levels of complexity of trust. Sacrifice that is enthusiastically provided points to a deeper level of trust built versus sacrifice that is reluctantly given does not give much evidence of authentic trust. With Glendy, as disappointed in myself as I am, I have to be honest that my sacrifice of time, space and effort was not enthusiastically given. Initially, it was because I was excited that Glendy entrusted me with vulnerable information about herself. However, my enthusiasm lowered as time went on. Not because of Glendy particularly, but because I myself was struggling with my mental health at the time. When you are struggling with your own mental wellbeing, it makes it harder to take care of others because it feels like taking care of yourself is incredibly draining. Does this mean that every time you care for someone, sacrifice always has to be given enthusiastically? Not necessarily. That would be unrealistic to ask of any human. However, a crucial aspect of sacrifice in regards to care and trust goes back to Julia's point and my question about boundaries. With trust, boundaries have to be established as well. To place boundaries sets the complexity and longevity of the relationship up for success. I failed to create boundaries with Glendy and in return the complexity of our trust was not able to deepen nor last. If boundaries are established in a healthy manner, it is more likely that the sacrifice component will be provided enthusiastically for the entirety of the relationship.

The relationships of trust require a degree of reciprocity, trust has to go in both directions. My relationship of trust with Glendy did not go in both directions, but rather it was a one-way street with her. For deeper levels of trust to be claimed, the relationship has to be an organic dynamic in which both parties trust each with the elements of honesty, reliability, vulnerability and care. With Glendy, these different components of trust were not completely reciprocated by me. I was not honest with Glendy about my mental wellbeing and how that affects the effort and enthusiasm I put into building a healthy relationship with her. In turn, I was not able to be as reliable as I could have. I was reliable in the sense that I always responded to Glendy about her concerns and accomplishments in a timely manner, but in regards to continuing helping her academically and mentally, I was not. I never expected Glendy to be reliable for me either because she was a high school student who had her own issues to tend to. Due to this, it did not even cross my mind to be vulnerable with Glendy. I believe Glendy cares about me to the extent that if something negative were to happen to me, she would be empathetic, however, it is unclear if any actions would be taken on her end to aid me.

In the conceptual framework, Fink describes trust as first rooted in honesty and reliability. If someone is continually dishonest and unreliable, the foundation of trust cannot be created. He believes this makes it harder for vulnerability to take place which is key for trusting relationships. While I agree to a certain extent with the latter, if someone is consistently dishonest and unreliable, of course trust cannot be established. However, I do not believe trust has to be *first* rooted in honesty and reliability. With Glendy, she saw that I cared for her because when I noticed she was missing book club often, I reached out to her to check-in on how she was doing. This enabled her to be vulnerable with me about her issues. Therefore, our relationship of trust was first rooted in care and vulnerability before the aspects of honesty and reliability

played a role. As we know, vulnerability is a closely related concept to trust. In the beginning of a relationship, there is beauty in taking the risk of being vulnerable first. It is a risk that can either blossom the relationship or if not handled well, it can kill it altogether. Regardless there is much strength to be applauded in the ability to be vulnerable first without the safety net of already established trust. With Glendy, my care aided her to be able to be vulnerable with me without a relationship of trust already created. Although, I believe I handled the situation well because I listened to her and supported her, our relationship was only able to bud. If she and I both continued to apply the different components of trust with each other, our relationship most likely would have blossomed into a beautiful flower. Where at that point, it would have been both of our jobs to nourish it in order to keep it alive. Unlike with Fink, I agree with Stewart, Babino, and Walker's (2017) idea of care. In the conceptual framework, they agree that care should come first in a relationship. This presented to be true in my relationship with Glendy . She saw that I cared for her and therefore the other elements of trust (vulnerability, honesty, reliability) were able to follow.

Soon I Will Be A Teacher, How Do I Make Sense of What I Learned for the Future?

When the idea of joining the book club was first introduced to me and Eric connected me with Julia, my acceptance into the group was not guaranteed. Julia figured that the girls would be okay with it, but was unsure of what Sarah's response would be. This was mainly due to the unreliability of the past Clark student who was part of the book club. I remember thinking to myself, "If Sarah accepts me into the group, I want to prove that I can be a better contributor than the past Clark participant." I never explicitly thought, "I want to gain Sarah's trust," but right off the bat my way of thinking indirectly pointed to my desire for already building trusting

relationships. As Fink explains the key components for trust include reliability, honesty, care and vulnerability. Sarah needed me to be reliable and honest in order to trust me to be part of the book club. These traits are important to possess especially when intervening in such an intimate space.

Trust can vary to different extents and can be established in various ways. Four girls portrayed four different lives therefore four different relationships. Glendy was someone who can establish trust for someone else through her gut feeling and the vibes that she receives. On the other hand, there's Hela who needs extensive time and experience before being able to fully trust someone. I have come to realize that there is no simple formula for establishing trust. Some youth and some people in general are more open to trust others while others are more distrustful. These differences are probably connected to a host of reasons including past experiences, environment, economic or social status in trusted relationships, or betrayals of trust. Each of the girls did trust me to a certain extent, some more than others. However, I have a good relationship with each of the young women. Before this project, I equated trust with having a good relationship. I believed you could not have one without the other. This research has revealed that trust has various levels of complexity. To put simply, there are lower levels of trust where trust is present in the relationship but not strong. There are higher levels of trust where the extent of trust is much stronger. When I started on this journey of trust, I had high expectations for myself because I implicitly connected the idea of trust with large displays of affection and empathy. This was an unrealistic expectation of myself, of the girls and of trust itself. My thinking of what trust looks like was narrow and skewed. Trust does not have to be claimed in grandiose manners for it to be established or present. It is the little things that matter which can still establish trust. Little acts such as me sharing about myself to the girls, Glendy expressing her disapproval of the

Bad Bunny song, Luna providing me a sliver of her personal history and Elle and I bonding over our love for dogs. It is relieving to realize that little things can still meaningfully connect us together and pave the path to build trusting relationships.

Trust can be established in different ways depending on the people in the relationships. Trust will look different between students and teachers versus students and their peers. Between students and teachers, care is a significant factor in establishing trust between the two parties. The student needs to know that their teachers care for them, it is easier to trust someone that you know cares for them and can be there for them. It is important for both students and teachers to practice honesty and reliability. Teachers can help their students better when their students feel as though they can be honest with their teachers about their feelings and stay consistent. In reciprocity, teachers also have to present honesty and reliability for their students. The students need to be assured that their teacher is not lying to them and the students can rely on them consistently. There has to be a sense of vulnerability as well between both parties. As explored before, authentic trust is not a one way street. The students cannot be the only one attempting to be vulnerable with the students, it's important for the teachers to be vulnerable with their students as well. Students will appreciate this and can make the relationship stronger. Especially between teachers and students, boundaries are a crucial factor of trust between the two parties. The teacher and student have to establish what are the boundaries they are comfortable with in order to ensure that the relationship will be sustainable. It would be unfair to ask the teacher to be reliable 24/7 and it would be unfair to ask the student to be vulnerable with all of their feelings at all times. Boundaries tie into the aspect of positionality which pertains mainly to the teacher. The teacher has to be conscious of their positionality in relation to her students. This requires teachers to not only know where their positionality benefits their relationships with their

students but also it is crucial to know when to step back. This can give the student the help they need as well as making sure the teacher does not burn out leading to more lasting relationships. Trust between students and peers looks a little different from trust between students and teachers. Care is still a significant factor between students and peers because students need to know that their peers care for them. In contrast between students and teachers, time and experience is major between students and peers. It is easier to build time and experience with peers because they mainly stay constant throughout your schooling versus teachers who can change year to year. It is important to build time and experience with their peers allowing time to establish other factors of trust such as reliability, communication, and vulnerability.

Trust is one of the most significant elements in academic spaces. As a future teacher, I am inclined to reflect on the implications that trust has between teachers and students in urban schooling. When juggling 60 or more students, how can teachers build meaningful trust with each of their students? Of course, it is unrealistic for teachers to have expectations of cultivating deep, trusting relationships with all of their students. However, trust does not have to be set up through monumental acts but rather through implementing steps of building positive teacher-student relationships. Steps can be simple things to do such as modeling good relationships and creating an engaging classroom. When a trusting relationship exists between students and their teachers, students are willing to engage and interact more. The purpose of schools is to develop a place where all students learn at high levels. In order to achieve this, we must establish meaningful relationships marked by trust. As teachers, one of our main responsibilities is to help foster and nourish these relationships. Trust is feeling that someone has your back. Trust is an environment where individuals can be their best selves. However, trust is also a learning process that requires risk. It requires the willingness to strive, make mistakes, be confused and ask

questions. These are all risky because it makes the person vulnerable. Trust is the ability to create a space where it is okay for vulnerability and risk-taking, rather it is welcomed. Trust is not about being comfortable. It is about helping people get out of their comfort zones which is needed for learning. Trust enables that especially in academic spaces.

There were limitations of the research project as well as some alternatives that could have been explored. Trust is definitely not an overnight process or even several months. I knew the girls for eight months before I started writing about trust. That was a relatively long time to build trust with the girls. Although I am confident that each of the young women do trust me to a certain level, time limited the potential our trust could have been able to reach had we seen each other more regularly or over a longer period of time. We met once a week since September, however, there were several occasions where the entire group was not able to make it. Book club was cancelled due to time conflicts and in respect for holidays. As I wrote this I was surprised by the number of months I counted in my head of how long I've known the girls. Time flew by. Time did help evolve my relationships with the girls in the book club in a positive way, but it also brought a deficit in regards to lack of higher level trust with the young women. Trust cannot be established overnight or within days. It takes months and years to build trusting relationships. In addition to time, the setting also set significant limitations. The setting of Zoom was unavoidable due to the pandemic and posed several hurdles to building trust within our relationships. I was grateful to be able to meet the girls virtually because I could see their faces, hear their voices and still be able to create and maintain good relationships with them. The girls' initial experiences of book club was in person and they each commented on how they missed having book club in person. They felt as though it was more comfortable and being in person made it easier to make connections with other peers in the group. Connections were more easily

made because the girls were able to read body language clearly and experience more together. This brings in a whole new concept about the importance of touch and trust. How do hugs, greetings, and in person communication shape trust? The coronavirus pandemic has shed light on how essential touch and in person communications is for the mental wellbeing of others as well as creating and maintaining relationships. Interacting behind the screen is just not the same and inevitably puts an awkward barrier between people. This makes it more difficult to create and build relationships for the first time. A favorite memory common between all the girls was when Sarah brought pupusas to book club and they talked, laughed and celebrated. These moments and experiences matter to the process of building trust among relationships. The virtual nature of the book club was inevitable, but I wonder how this project would have played out if the book club was in person. Would there be higher levels of trust among the girls and I? How much does time and space really matter in regards to establishing trust?

Trust is a component of relationships that is not spoken about but plays a pivotal role in the success and benefits of relationships. Trust is a crucial element in determining success between teachers and students. Often students do not place trust in authority figures such as teachers because maybe traditional assumptions of the rigid lines between teachers and students or maybe because past student experiences with teachers failed due to mistrust. In addition, a whole other thesis could be written about the barriers of race, class, gender, and language shape levels of distrust between students and teachers. The traditional assumptions of the rigid lines between teachers and students makes me wonder about why I did not think to trust Glendy and work towards making our relationship a two way street. There were prominent demographics that set us apart such as our age and the fact that I had a certain level of authority over her. I also cannot recall from my past schooling one relationship between a teacher and student that was a

two-way street. The majority of the relationships consisted of the students trusting their teachers, but not the other way around. However, we know for trust to reach a deeper, more authentic level, trust must pass in both directions. How can we dismantle the rigid roles between students and teachers so that trust can be shaped on both ends? How does the concept of boundaries play a role to only protect students and teachers but also to ensure that the trusting relationship can be successful?

It is astonishing to think about how this project is the first time I have deeply thought about trust. Even within my education classes at Clark, trust was not a topic that was deeply mentioned or explicitly explored. This one year long praxis journey has taught me the importance of how to build trust and the strong emphasis of effort I should put on establishing trust between my students and I. Building trust is a process embedded within the concepts of honesty, reliability, vulnerability and care.. And it's not just about trust between teachers and students, but between teachers and other teachers, and support staff too—and between students and other students. The end goal is the moment we can collectively have honest dialogue about our students, our practices, and our impact. Or better yet, have that dialogue *with* our students and their families. The positive influence of trusting relationships on student learning cannot be overstated. Whether the learning environment is in-person, remote, hybrid, or in continual flux, one key factor remains constant: the relationship between students and their teachers is critical. I often say, if there is no trust in a relationship, then there is no relationship. At first, I thought that trust needed to be present and displayed through large moments. I assumed that trust can only be claimed if significant moments occurred that established trust. However, this study taught me that trust does not have to present itself in grandiose ways. Rather, it is revolutionary and powerful to build trust through small moments. Small moments matter. Even though the moment

might have seemed insignificant, when you put all the small moments together, they add up to create strong bonds and meaningful relationships.

Metacognition was a notable aspect of this project because I was conscious that I was writing for people who were in the space with me. Even though initially the notion of trust was not part of my plan, when I was attempting to build trust with my participants, I was metacognitive of my desires and actions when interacting with the participants, both the girls and the facilitators. Even before I was officially accepted into the space, I knew there was a sense of distrust due to past experiences in the space with Clark students. In the hope that I would be accepted into the book club space, I made it my goal to earn the trust of not only Sarah but the girls as well. I did not know the full story but I heard the issue had been with reliability, the past Clark student was not reliable in the group. When book club resumed at the beginning of the school year, I made sure to make it to every book club session that I could. Even if I did not talk much in book club, I made the effort to be present and engage with the literary text. There were complexities embedded within the girls and the facilitators in regards to trust and managing trust. Let's take another look at Glendy, I was trying to win her trust by responding carefully to her struggles and supporting her the way that she wanted. She was honest with me about her feelings but the honesty was not reciprocated from me. I was not truthful with Ana about my feelings and needs. I was not honest because I did not want to burden her with my struggles when she expressed the overload that she had on her plate. But mainly I was not honest with her because I was afraid I would have lost her trust. For a little bit, I was her rock that she relied on for academic help which in turn helped her mental health. However, this was a bit selfish of me. Wanting to support Ana was not selfish but the way in which I went about it was. I could have supported her much better if I was more cognizant of my positionality or lack thereof. At that

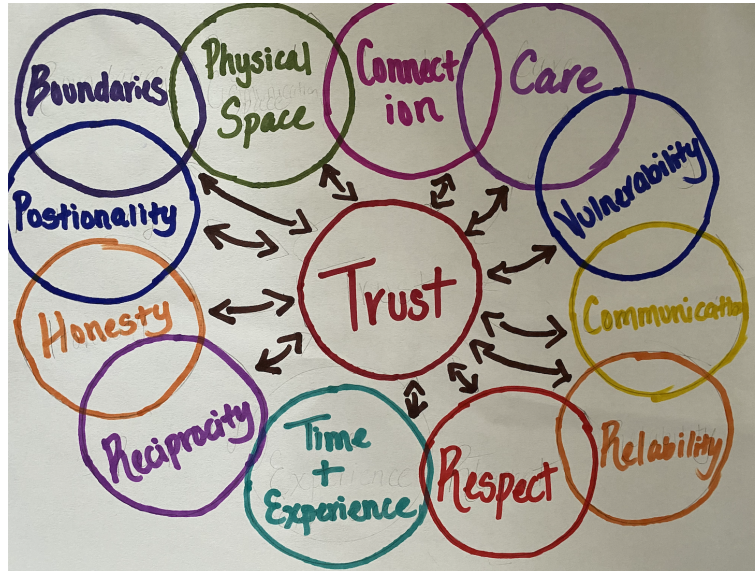
time, I was not in the position to help Ana that way she wanted or needed me to. This was a situation where I should have taken the agency to reach out to the facilitators, Sarah and Julia, to aid Ana. This is similar to what June Jordan had done in her story with her friend Sokutu. Jordan recognized that she could not directly help Sokutu no matter how saddening the situation may have been. Instead, she did the right thing and provided proper resources that had better positionality to support Sokutu just the way she needed. Now this begs the question, how come I did not reach out to Sarah and Julia? Was it because I wanted to be the only one, the rock, that helped Ana which could feel rewarding? Or was it because Ana specifically had asked me not to reveal the issue to Sarah and Julia? To a certain extent, the answers to these questions show why I did not reach out to the facilitators. Yes, I wanted to support Ana which also made me feel good for helping someone in need. Yes, I wanted to respect Ana's wishes of keeping her feelings and information confidential. However, there is another level that complicates and can provide a clearer understanding. I did not reach out to the facilitators because I personally did not trust them and did not feel comfortable reaching out. Is that their fault? No, not entirely. I was more intimidated by the facilitators and careful of my actions to do and say the right thing when I was around them. In my time with the book club, the facilitators and I did not build a culture of communication between us. Other than the few occasions where they allowed and trusted me to facilitate the book club on my own, our communication stopped at a superficial level. This was partly because we all already had plenty on our plates with the pandemic and remote schooling, but mainly it was because I was not transparent about my feelings and issues. For example, in the beginning of my time with the book club, I had stated that I felt like a fly on the wall, only there for observation and did not contribute much. This was frustrating because I am usually a talkative, outgoing person who likes stating my opinions. Instead of feeling comfortable to

communicate this frustration to Sarah and Julia, I instead went to my advisor and cohort. Even with my thesis, I was not transparent with the facilitators about what I was exploring and planning to write. If I had been honest with Ana about my positionality and explained that the help of Sarah and Julia could be more beneficial, there is a higher chance she would have been okay with me reaching out to the facilitators. There is no way of knowing this, but Ana is a reasonable girl who just wanted to help. This leads to the concepts of authentic trust versus superficial trust. As much as I would like to say that I built authentic trust with each of the participants, my data and I know that is not true. It is difficult to manage the complexities of trust especially in an online setting with people I had never met before while at the same time trying to figure out what trust even is. My relationships and trust with the participants ended up at superficial levels. There is no easy formula on how to attain authentic trust with people because there are various factors specific to each individual that affect how they look at trust and establish it.

To define trust in a personal and global way is an arduous task. There is no linear way of thinking about trust. In fact, it is quite the opposite, trust is a complex map that everyone looks at differently. Starting points vary because people are composed of different factors including environmental and past experiences. It was interesting to hear the participants' views and definitions of trust. The girls did not go as in depth about their views on trust as the facilitators did but interestingly the girls all had similar views on how they thought about trust. To the girls, trust meant consistency, reliability and confidentiality. For them, to trust another person signifies that person will be reliable to keep their secrets or vulnerable information confidential and be consistent with this reliability. They also believed that their trust can be given to anyone who proves that they earned it and not only to people who share similar traits as them. They all felt

strongly about the fact that they would not trust a Latina teacher more easily solely because of her race or gender. It was more important to them to give their trust to someone who they know is reliable with confidential information and therefore cares for them. When asked about trust, Sarah reflected on how she established trust with her students in retrospect of what was important to her students. Sarah worked hard to foster a classroom of reliability, stability, and a culture of respect because she knew this was what her students wanted and needed. Consistency was important in her classroom, if she said she was going to make brownies for the class if the class finished their assignments, she followed through. Sarah was conscious that many of her students did not have stability in their lives at home and made sure to provide it in her classroom. This all ties in to the culture of respect that she worked hard to establish in her classrooms. Sarah collaborated with her students to come up with what this culture of respect would look like and followed through. She emphasized what is said in the classroom, stays in the classroom and she practiced this culture of respect by always listening to her students. Julia touched upon different aspects of trust that were important to her. Openness and reciprocity were elements of trust she tried to incorporate with only this cohort of the book club, but past cohorts as well. The idea that it was valuable to build an environment where the girls felt as though they can be open and vulnerable, but it is significant for the facilitators to reciprocate vulnerability and openness as well. Physical connection and acts of care was important to Jie, she was able to establish more trusting relationships with past book club cohorts because she was often there in Sarah's classroom. This allowed for those girls to show acts of care through throwing a party because Julia was getting married and later now threw her a baby shower. All this enabled for the trusting relationships to grow stronger.

My understanding of trust is dynamic as I continue to grow and experience what life has to offer me. From my praxis experience, I have learned that trust is an intensely complex concept that we as a society experience everyday but slowly explore. Globally, we practice trust in many different ways. We trust our doctors to take care of us and heal us. We trust our lawyers to defend and protect us. We trust that corporations are truthful about the food they feed us. These are simple ways of looking at trust globally, however, when trust in academic spaces becomes more complicated. It would be ideal for all students and teachers to have a strong sense of trust in their relationships with one another. Unfortunately, we know this is simply not true. Our urban schools are struggling because of a deeply, rooted distrust as a result of systemic oppression placed decades and centuries ago. This is not to say that students have not been able to succeed because of their distrust in their teachers and schools. But, establishing and maintaining trust between students and teachers would make those relationships stronger and allow for students to feel supported and know someone has their back when situations get vulnerable or risky. It has been concerning and amazing to see how students, teachers and schools have been able to continue learning through the pandemic via remote settings. However, a prominent theme that has surfaced through this praxis project is physical space and connection. Julia explained how Luna has a unique family situation compared to the other girls in the book club. She has a strong, close relationship with her dad who she loves but that is pretty much it. For Luna, being able to attend school physically granted her the ability to form and sustain other connections. For me, trust goes beyond the four concepts (honesty, reliability, vulnerability and care) Fink presented. I agree that these four concepts are significant when looking at trust and the establishment of trust. However, there are other numerous, key factors that also play a large role in the establishment and sustainability of trust. Here is a visual map of my representation on trust:



I only learned and recognized a majority of these illustrated elements of trust through this paper. Fink believed in a linear manner that honesty and reliability were the roots of establishing trust and then care and vulnerability come into play. Although this may be true for some people, for others there are several, different factors that signify the establishment of trust. It was due to this project and experience where I started to learn the importance of reciprocity, openness, physical space, connection, respect, boundaries, positionality, communication, and experience. At first, I thought of making the bubbles different sizes depending on the effect and significance it has on trust. But that would not be fair because it failed to take into account that all the different aspects of what goes into trust looks different for people. Of course, all the elements of trust are important but it is up to individual people to decide what elements matters most to them in regards to establishing trust. For the girls, it is reliability, physical connection and care. For Sarah, reliability, stability, and respect are most salient. For Julia, reciprocity, openness, care and vulnerability are prominent. For me, I have learned that boundaries, positionality, and

³ Please excuse the informality of the illustrations, time and limited resources posed barriers to produce professional illustrations

communication are most significant to me mainly because those are the elements I need to work hard on. In a way, I am saddened that I was not more conscious of the complexities of trust prior to my final year as an undergrad. I could have possibly been more successful in creating more authentic trusting relationships with my participants or I could have saved past relationships in my life. However, I am glad that I learned regardless because there is much joy that comes from enacting trust. Trust is not easy work at all. Like everything in life, it takes practice. As I go on to become a teacher, I will struggle and fail with this practice of trust, but failure as daunting as it may be only provides the opportunity to grow. To trust is to grow. I look forward to both.

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