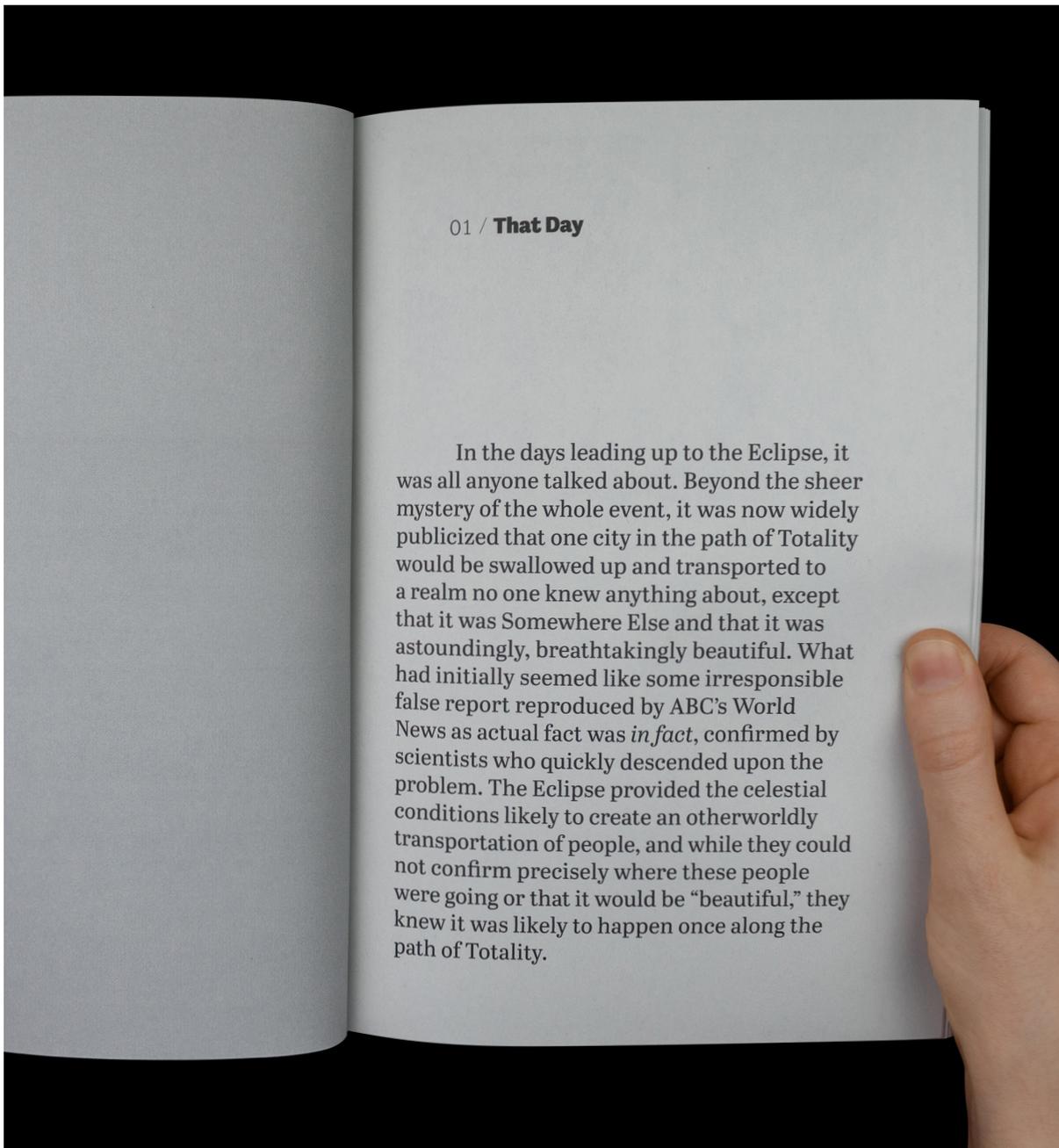


Ali Tomek

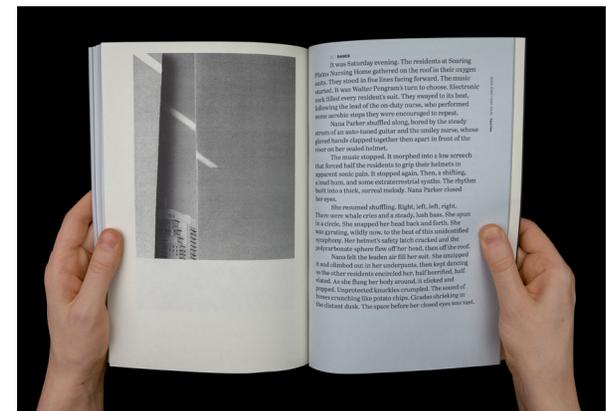
PORTFOLIO

atomek1@saic.edu / 402.677.4906 / alitomek.info



01 / That Day

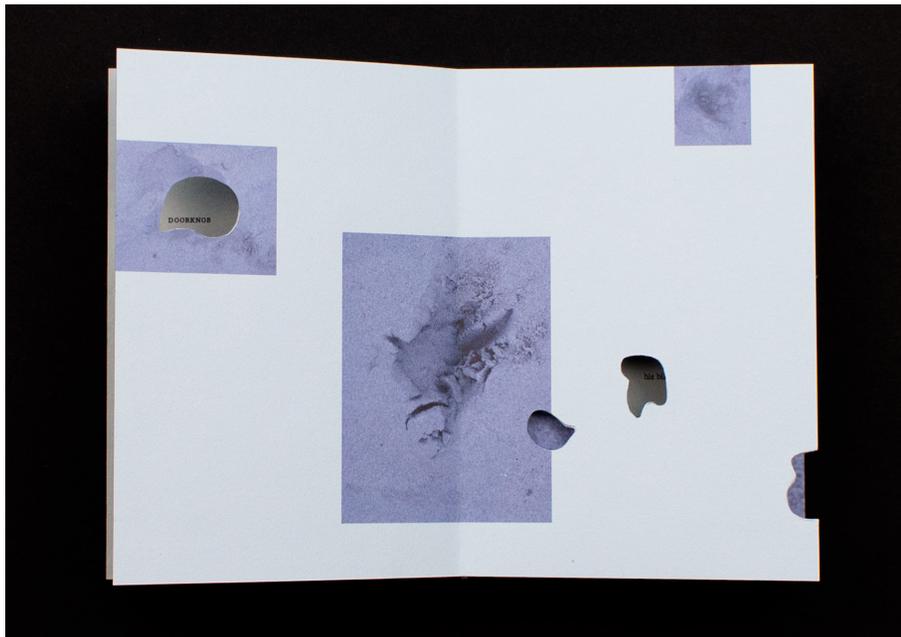
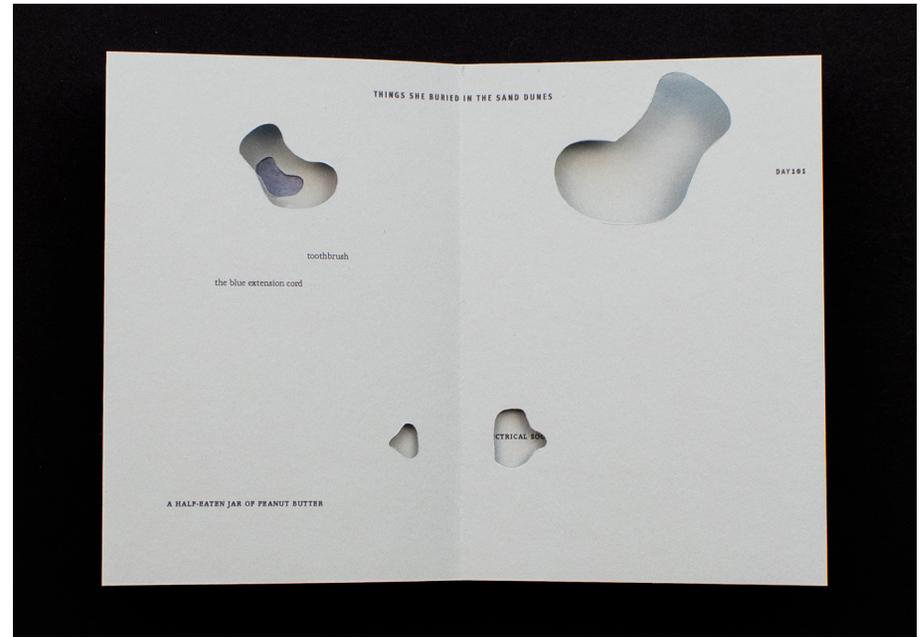
In the days leading up to the Eclipse, it was all anyone talked about. Beyond the sheer mystery of the whole event, it was now widely publicized that one city in the path of Totality would be swallowed up and transported to a realm no one knew anything about, except that it was Somewhere Else and that it was astoundingly, breathtakingly beautiful. What had initially seemed like some irresponsible false report reproduced by ABC's World News as actual fact was *in fact*, confirmed by scientists who quickly descended upon the problem. The Eclipse provided the celestial conditions likely to create an otherworldly transportation of people, and while they could not confirm precisely where these people were going or that it would be "beautiful," they knew it was likely to happen once along the path of Totality.



When Something Solid Collapses Under Itself is a 129-page science fiction novel, pictured on display in School of the Art Institute of Chicago's MFA Show. Writing, photography, book design, production, and exhibition design. 2019.



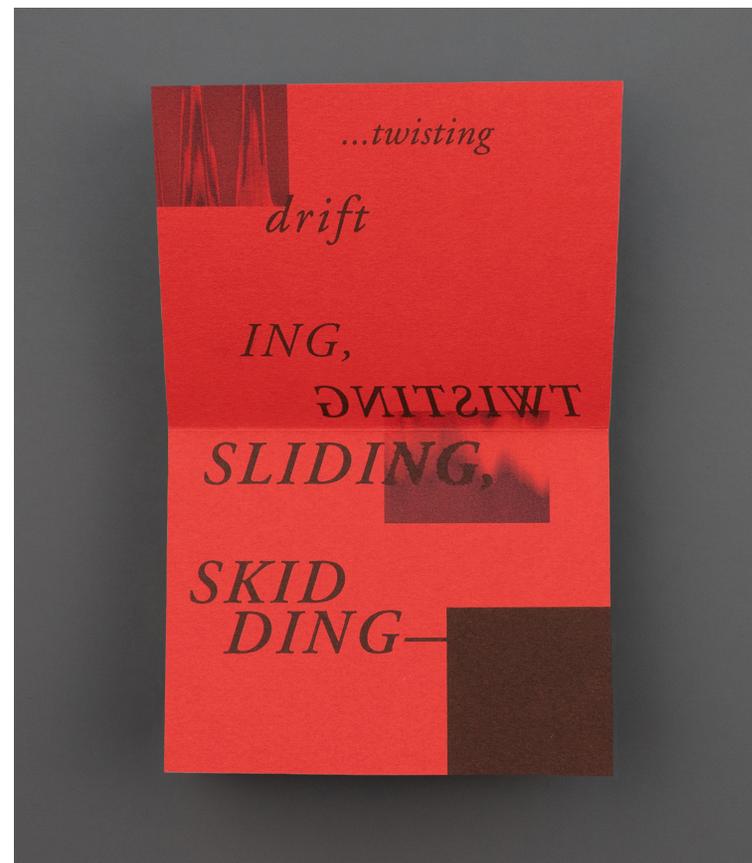
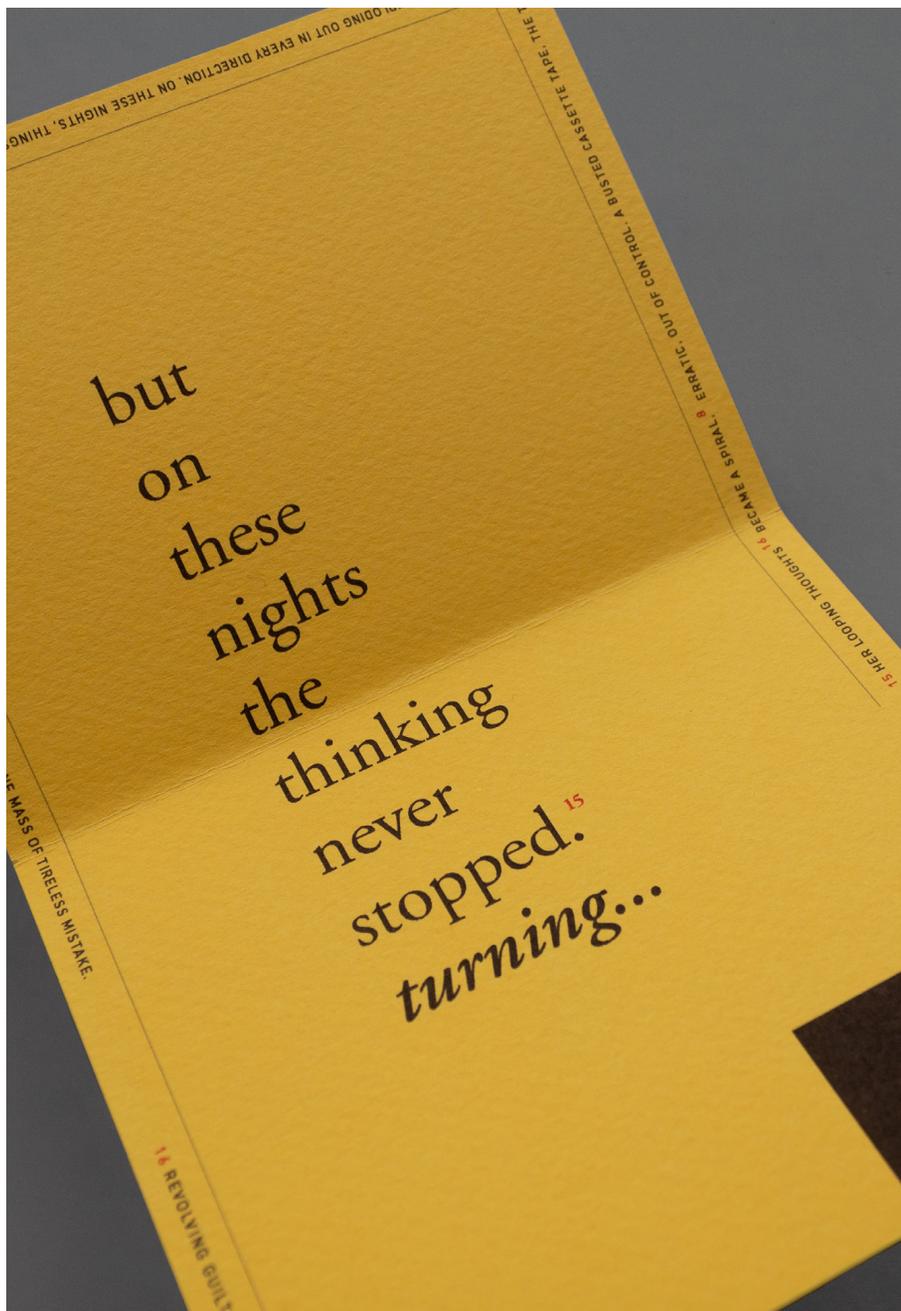
A set of posters designed to promote discourse about Brutalist buildings at Northwestern University (extension of an essay on the current state of architecture on its campus). Concept, photography, and design. 2019.



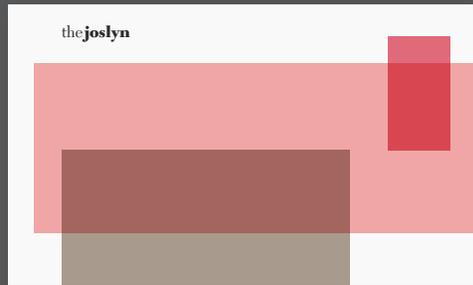
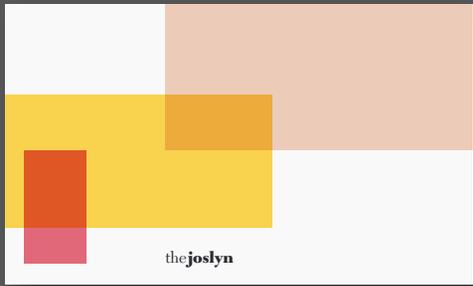
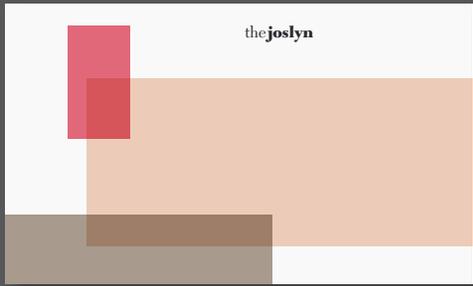
After is a short story and artist book that explores the weight and depth of grief. Writing, design, photography, and production. 2018.



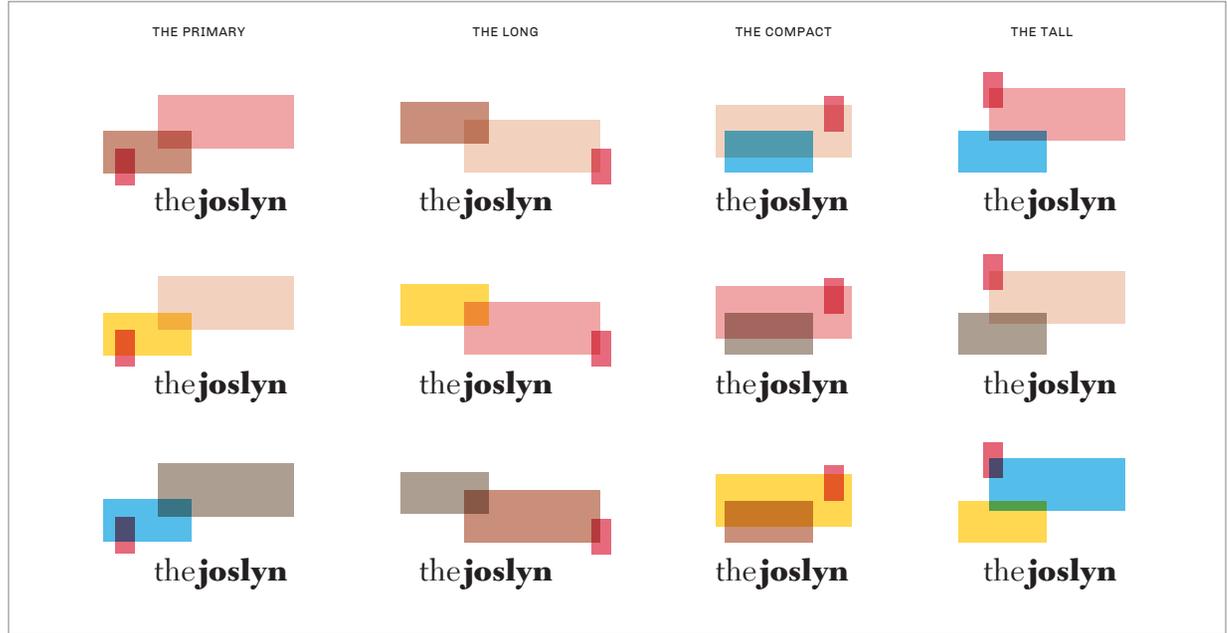
The More More More You Know Know Know is a poster advertising a fictional event for new graduates. Concept, writing, and design. 2019.



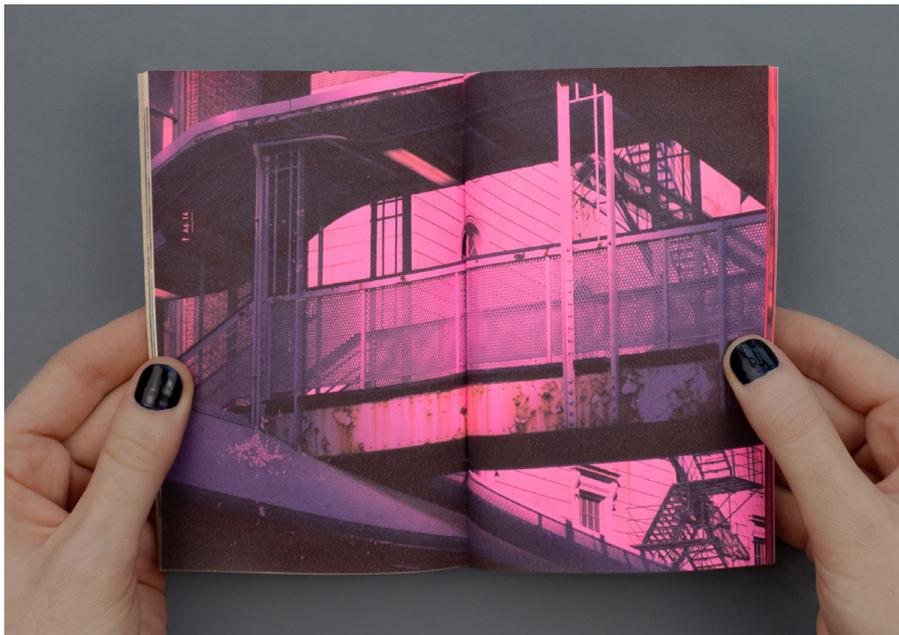
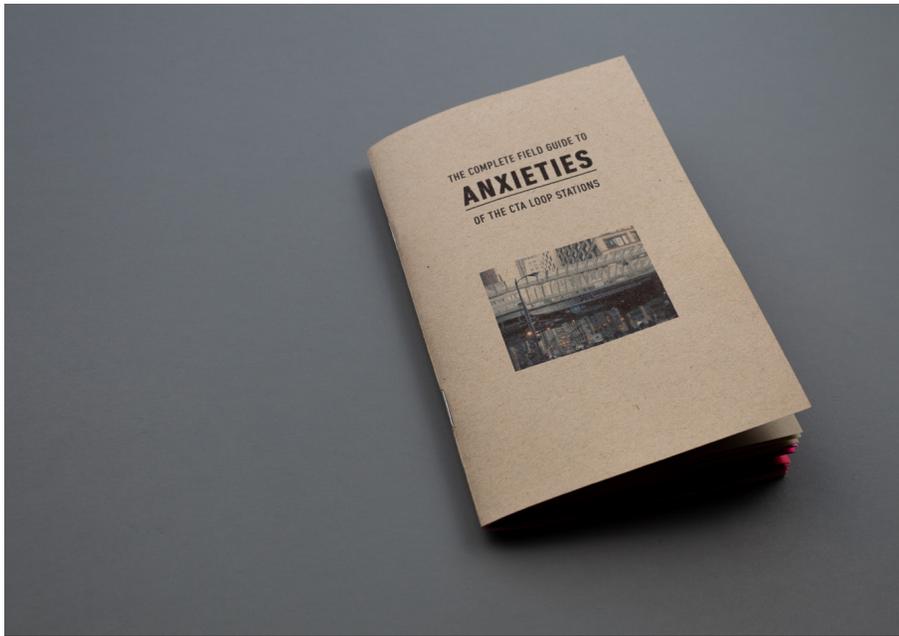
A Loop is a short story and artist book that explores the concept of looping thoughts via footnotes that occasionally direct the reader backwards in the book. Writing, imagery, design, and production. 2018.



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A self-initiated identity for Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Nebraska, including the full system of available compositions and colors, alongside trademark applications. Concept and design. 2018.



The Complete Field Guide to Anxieties of the CTA is a field guide detailing my anxieties surrounding the elevated train system in Chicago, primarily driven by a fear of heights. Writing, photography, design, and production. 2017.

DISCOURSE

Underlying all of this is the difficulty of these types of conversations that promotes a lack of discourse surrounding student loan debt in the places where it is most important. 28-year-old writer Seamus Kirst, who attended Brown University and then Syracuse University for his master's in journalism, owes \$100,000 in student loans. In a *Vice* piece, Kirst details how the debt weighs on him, affecting many aspects of his life, including crushing any hopes for getting married, owning a house or car, or having children. He calls his debt a secret, due to the American taboo surrounding money: "I often write about my struggles with mental health, my experiences with addiction, and even my sexuality, and I cannot tell you how much scarier it feels to write this piece where I am being honest about how much debt I have."²³ There have been dozens of articles and studies published on the topic, but is there enough discourse in homes and schools—the places where it really matters?

In the 2016 election, the issue became more widespread as it was discussed on the national political stage. But in some ways, politics has stalled private discourse, as Americans place faith in public efforts to address the problem. Unfortunately, government efforts have accomplished very little in the way of lowering institutional price tags, and are one of the reasons these price tags were allowed to spiral so dramatically. The failure of political discourse to sincerely address the problem is one of the reasons why this booklet focuses on identifying where change can occur within the existing higher education system: because it is not likely to face serious reform anytime soon.

FEELINGS 1,000 STUDENT LOAN BORROWERS ASSOCIATE WITH DEBT



There is also the less obvious, but still startling, lack of awareness on the part of students about the entire loan process that amounts to another failure on the part of higher education institutions. Research concludes that half of students underestimate how much they've borrowed and many don't recognize the



The United Students of Debt is a booklet about student loan debt, containing essays on the topic, as well as a proposal for initiating change in financial aid award letters. Writing, design, and production. 2019.