



You'll Miss Me When I'm Gone!

Exploring Digital Legacy — Process Book

INTRODUCTION

When we were originally tasked with bringing in topics that we were interested in, digital legacy wasn't on my radar and I wasn't even too sure what it really meant.

However, when I saw it up on the board, it prompted a lot of resurfacing thoughts. A friend from home had passed away during my freshman year and that was really the first time I was seeing a Facebook memorial for someone I personally knew. It was weird though because his mom still made posts for him on his Facebook that I felt like he wouldn't have ever been super happy about posting (mainly because he was into posting his art and being spontaneous).

So, that being said, digital legacy and it's difficulty getting into the "sentimental" zone, is something that I am not only very interested in, but also very invested in.

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PART 01 INITIAL RESEARCH

PART 02 THE FIRST MAKING

- 2D “C” Component
- 3D “P” Component
- 2D/3D “E” Component
- Desk Exhibit

PART 03 IDEATE + BRAINSTORM

- Design Brief
- Design Intervention
- Ideation of Deliverables

PART 04 THE SECOND MAKING

- Storyboarding
- Ideation, V2
- Organizing content
- Test printing, material tests

PART 05 FINAL

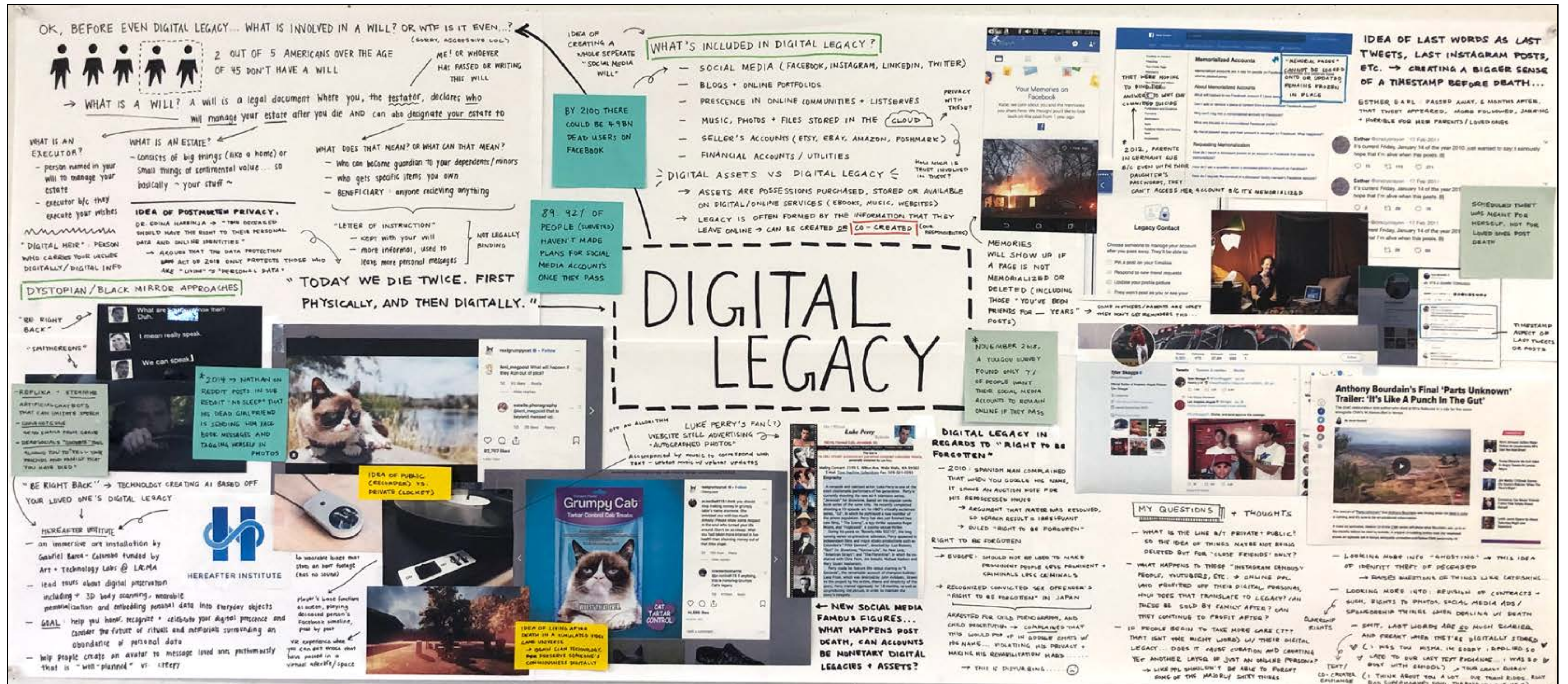
- Branding Design
- Booklet Spreads
- Senior Show Display

PART 01 CLOSING STATEMENTS

INITIAL RESEARCH

WHAT IS DIGITAL LEGACY? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

With the ever changing landscape of our society, it's not out of the question that traditional practices and routines are becoming outdated and are in need of a revision. Death is no exception. As our digital lives grow, our digital legacy (any information you leave online, i.e. photos, documents, social media accounts, etc.) has become an important asset to funeral planning as well as a way to facilitate how our stories and legacy can be carried on.



Description: First steps, mapping out digital legacy

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF INITIAL RESEARCH?

- meant to fuel more interest in the topic
- allowed me to understand small subsets of the topic
- understanding what digital legacy was
- scoping the scene and seeing what dealing with digital legacy already exists

INITIAL SUB-TOPIC INTERESTS

- idea of co-creation for digital content
- last words: on a digital medium vs. actual last words
- how do you manage your mass amounts of digital content?
- private vs. public death

T H E F I R S T M A K I N G

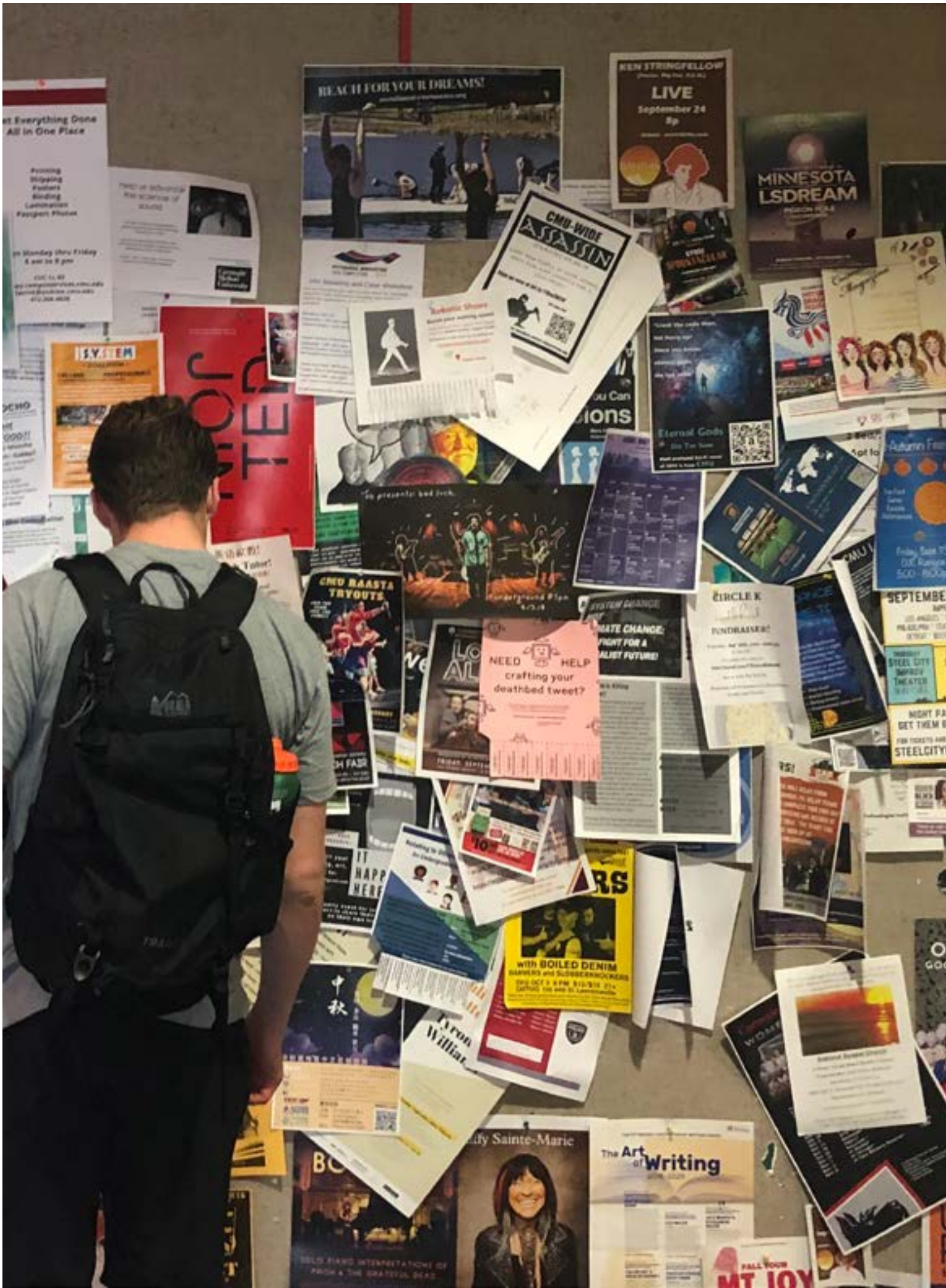
2D “C” COMPONENT

Inspired by the kitschy-ness and familiarity of pull tab flyers

- Putting people into a scenario or world where a deathbed tweet isn't too far fetched of a thing
- Didn't explicitly want to make a 2D component educating someone on digital legacy, but rather to do a double take or be curious
- Experimentation with tone/voice – something a bit more playful that what generally is associated with death
- Playing with this futuristic concept, but using a medium and graphic that is kinda old school



Description: Flyers advertising a death tweet “ghostwriter”

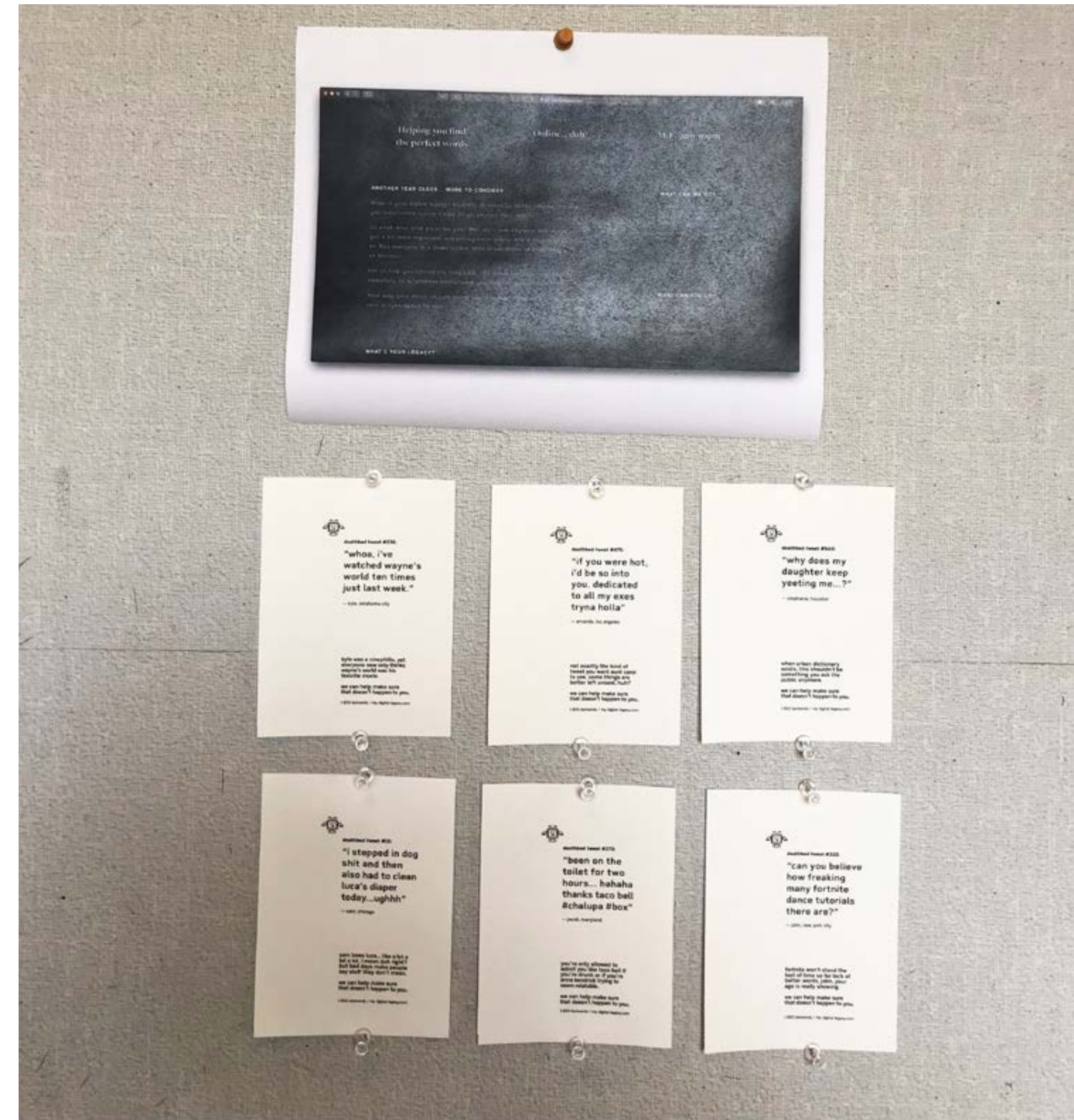


Description: Hung in different places on campus (MM, UC, Tepper Quad) — some rip offs were actually taken!

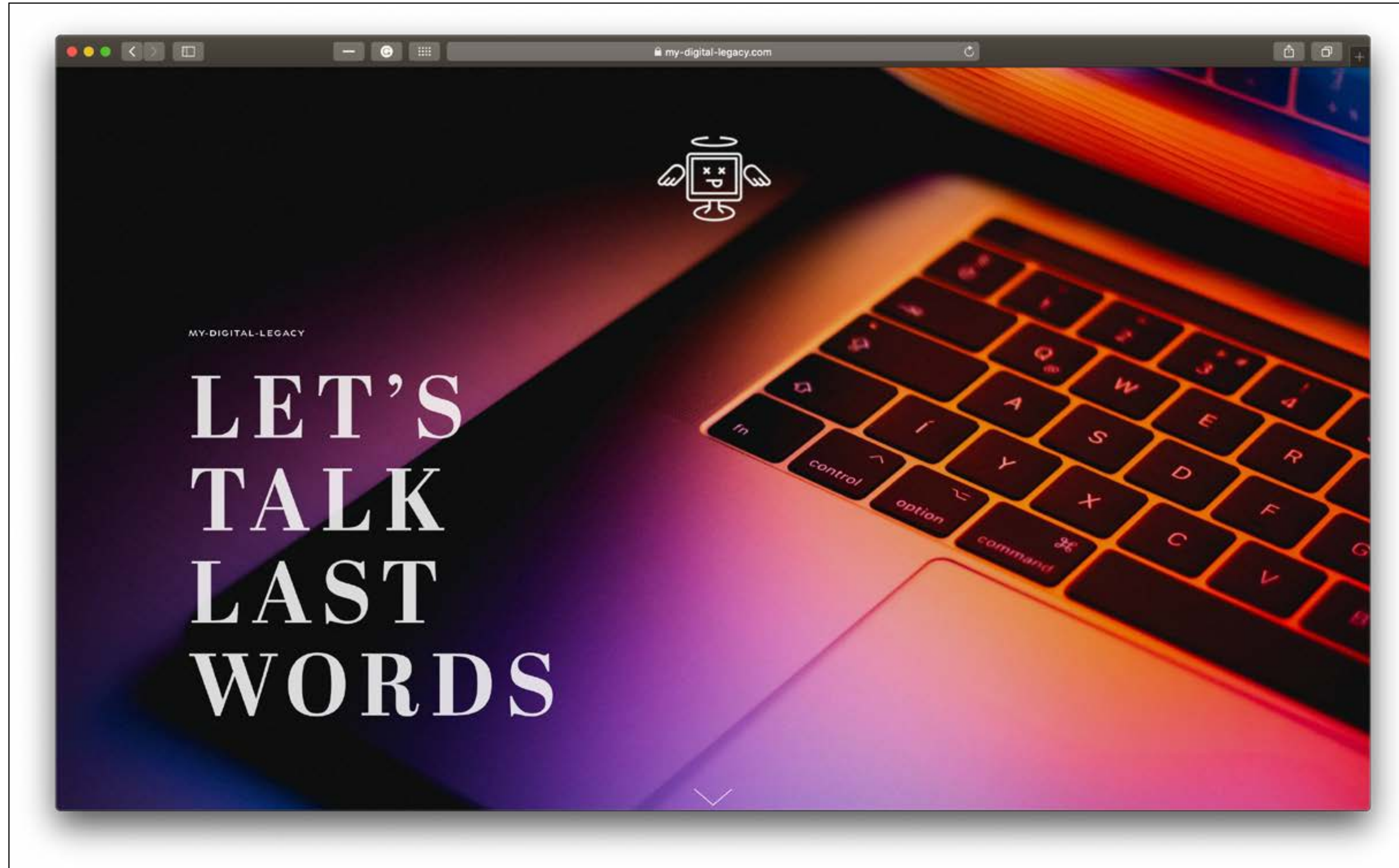
2D “C” COMPONENT, V2

Continuing on the same path, creating small postcard sized advertisements and a website about last words

- Website is live, (my-digital-legacy.com) mainly wanted to see if people were actually visiting the site
- Gaining more traction in tone, something kind of light hearted, funny and definitely a lighter take on talking about death
- Using the same type of branding and imagery to build on top of previous flyer iteration



Description: Postcard advertisements + website



Description: Home page of website: my-digital-legacy.com

3D “P” COMPONENT

An exploration on how our digital lives could appear in a more tangible, permanent and traditional sense of death

- If your profile on social media also became your tombstone, how would it change how you interact with your digital persona?
- Does this somewhat become a deeper layer or a more personal layer than current tombstone engravings like “sister, friend, animal lover”
- In the future, can this be interactive/digital? Can you scroll through the profile right at the tombstone?
- How would a tombstone like this change or affect a living person’s perception of them?



Description: My future tombstone, based off my personal instagram

3D “P” COMPONENT, V2

Inspired by popular gaming slang, “press F to pay respect”, when you die during a game

- Perhaps a little too niche, didn't always make sense to the general audience
- Idea is interesting that everyone would have to interact with this at a funeral and that it would be something very removed from actual human feeling
- Jumbo key is so that there is only 1 at every event, forces you to participate with your whole body if you want to “pay respect”

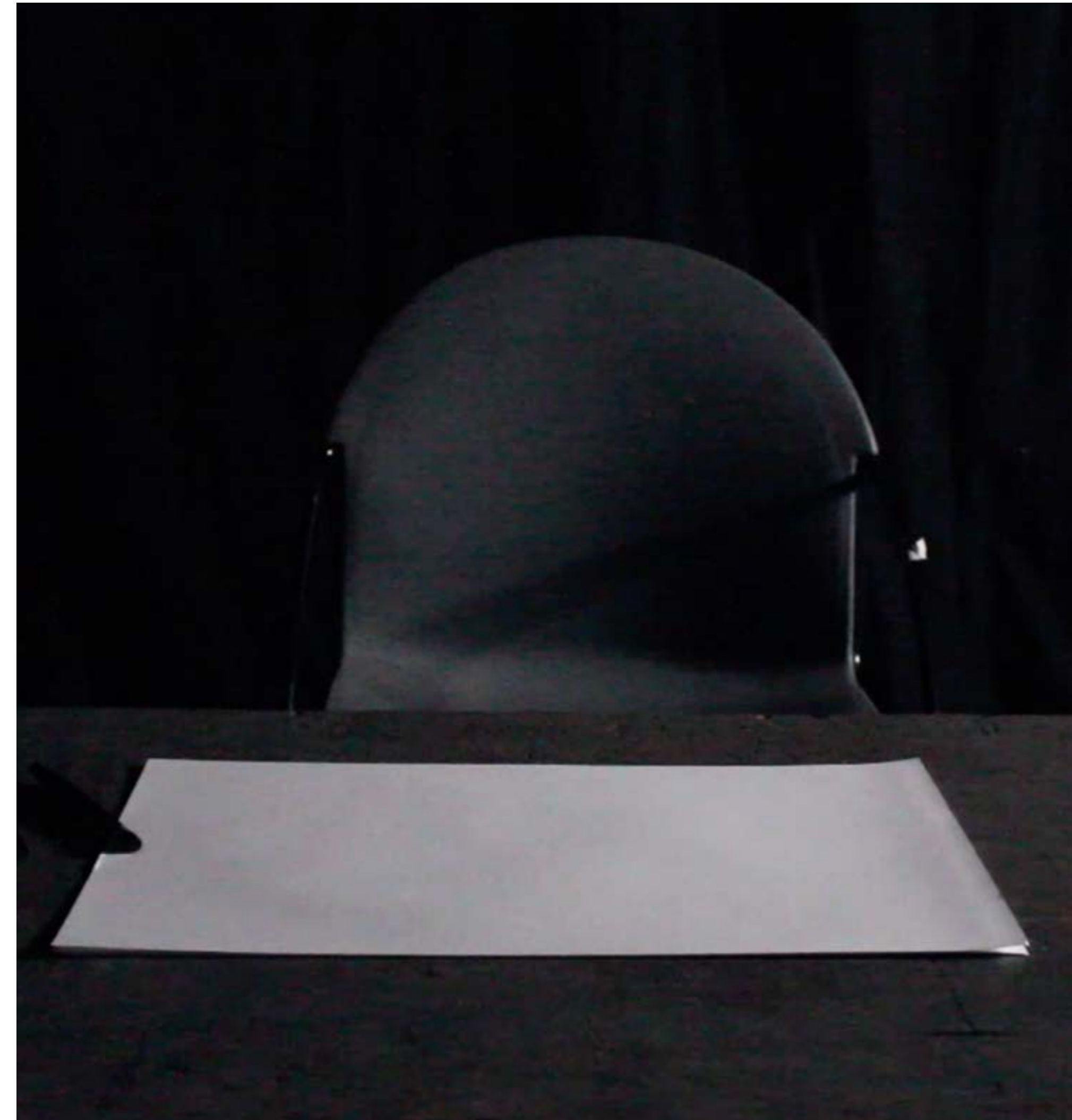


Description: A play on a popular gaming slang, the F key

2D/3D “E” COMPONENT

Video of me reflecting on my friend Misha’s death and how I miss him and things I wish I did, knew, or said earlier

- Felt like previous iterations were losing personal touch, felt too sterile and trying to be mass appeal
- Wanted to reflect and remind myself why I was initially so interested in the topic of digital legacy
- Became a bit more therapeutic/art-y rather than design oriented, but brought out important aspects or more subconscious thought



Description: 30 minute video talking to my friend, Misha

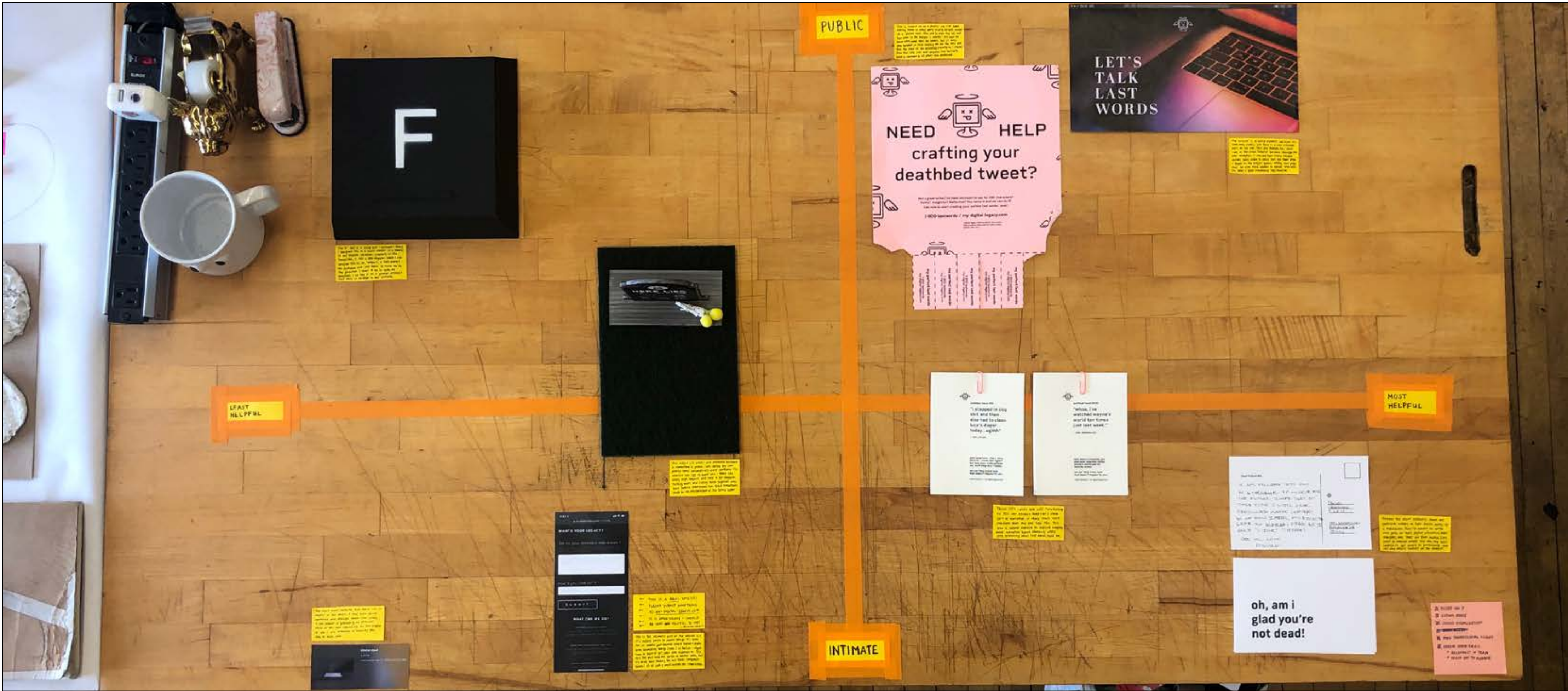
2D/3D “E” COMPONENT, V2

Continuing to try to bring a more personal touch to this process, but trying to make it more generalized

- Bringing in a more introspective aspect
- Although cheesy in aspect of getting it every couple of years, it is an effective way to make people take a step back and evaluate their lives from the standpoint of where they thought it would be
- People had interesting things to say to their future selves, but also didn't realize they had that much to say until they were prompted



Description: Dear Future Me postcards



Description: Laying out making process for desk exhibit

TAKEAWAYS FROM THE DESK EXHIBIT

- Laid out on a spectrum from public to intimate and least helpful to most helpful
- Allowed me to reflect and think of how each piece I've made has added to my overall understanding and also understand which ones felt more successful
- Gave me a better idea of which direction I wanted to move in (towards most helpful and intimate)
- Trying to find similarities between the ones that I thought were more successful

IDEATE + BRAINSTORM

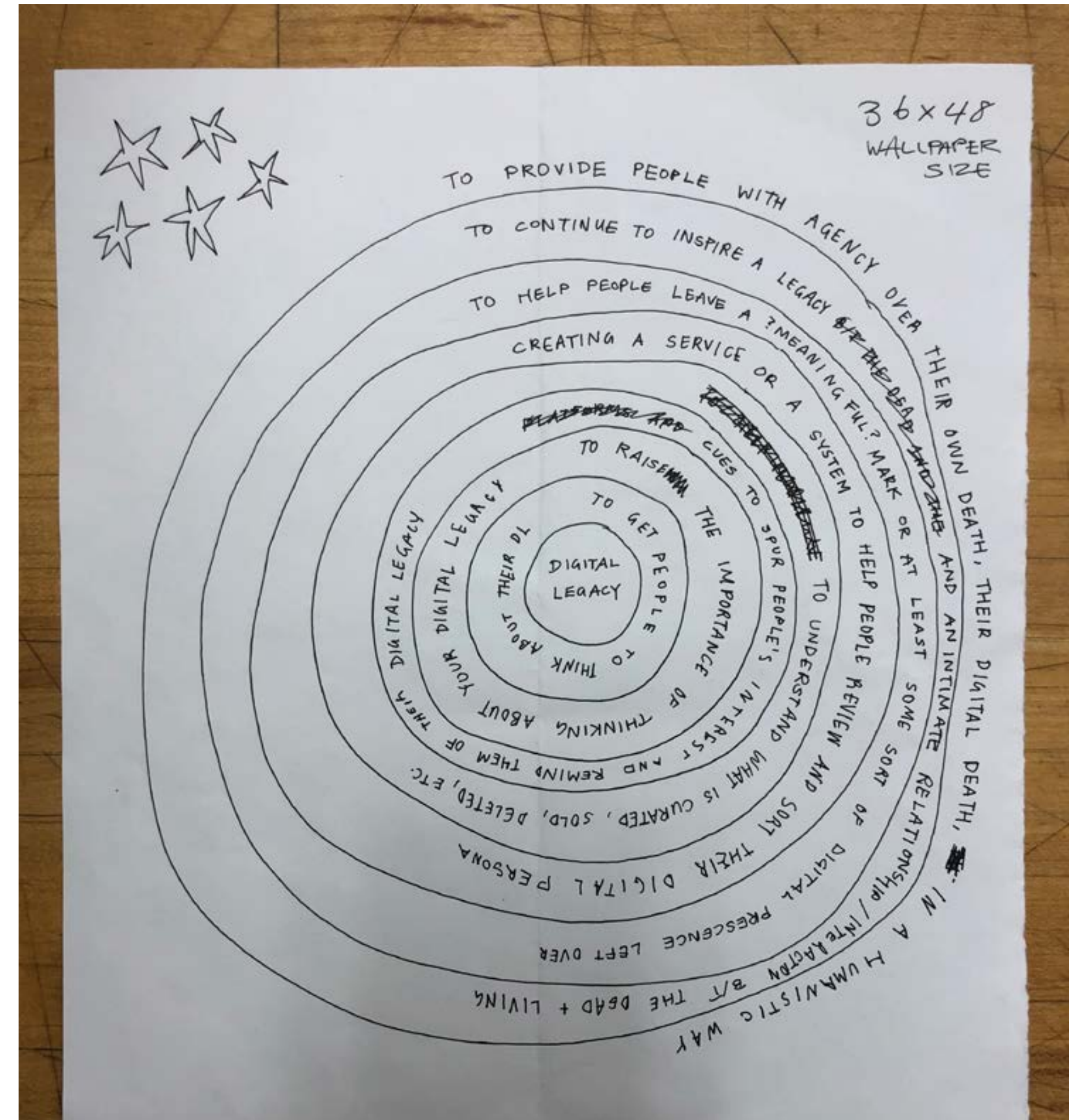
WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

Currently, there is a lack of actual guidance that addresses how we can have a meaningful digital legacy or what importance a digital legacy can carry beyond just a memorial page on Facebook or giving your family your twitter password.

DECIPHERING THE ISSUE

Using different form of design thinking to better understand the issue

- Working from inside out, going from specific to big picture
- Helps with finding the right wording for ideas
- Unravels the layers of scope and makes it feel more managable



Description: In-class exercise

HOW CAN DESIGN FILL THE GAPS?

Design, specifically communication design, can be a powerful tool to bridge the knowledge gap that exists currently for digital legacy, show how we can have some sense of agency over our own deaths and more importantly, facilitate the move of digital legacy from an area of practicality to an area of sentimentality.

DESIGN BRIEF: MUST, SHOULD, COULD

Must:

- Communicate to people what digital legacy actually is and emphasize the importance of it
- Look aesthetically pleasing, but also have a cohesive visual design language
- Create a system where there is a sense of trust and respect
- Address both the living and the dead — have people think about their current digital legacy as well as what their digital legacy could be

Should:

- Encourage people to reflect on their digital lives as of now
- Not seem like it's unfeasible for something like this service to actually exist
- Continue to facilitate a meaningful connection between the living + dead

Could:

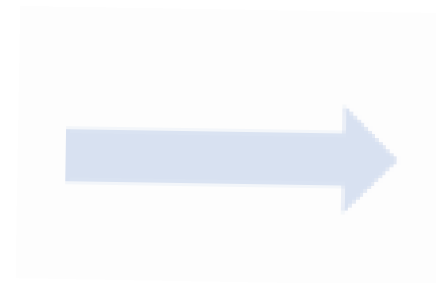
- Prompt people to physically change the way that they interact with their digital media

DESIGN BRIEF: DELIVERABLES

- Visual branding for this one stop shop that handles all digital legacy affairs (branding the website, creating advertisements, stickers, t-shirts, etc.)
- Although this service can do all the work for you, it's understandable that many people would rather have a hands off service. In order to show the range of what the service can provide, there is a booklet that is meant to serve as a guide on how to manage the content of your digital legacy

Four Ultimate Goals:

- 1) Educate people on what digital legacy is and its importance
- 2) Aesthetically pleasing, feels cohesive
- 3) Find ways to continue the relationship between living and dead
- 4) Spur self-reflection



Two Major Deliverables:

- 1) Visual Branding
- 2) Interactive Booklet
- 3) Candle component (can be read about in my original design brief)

THE SECOND MAKING

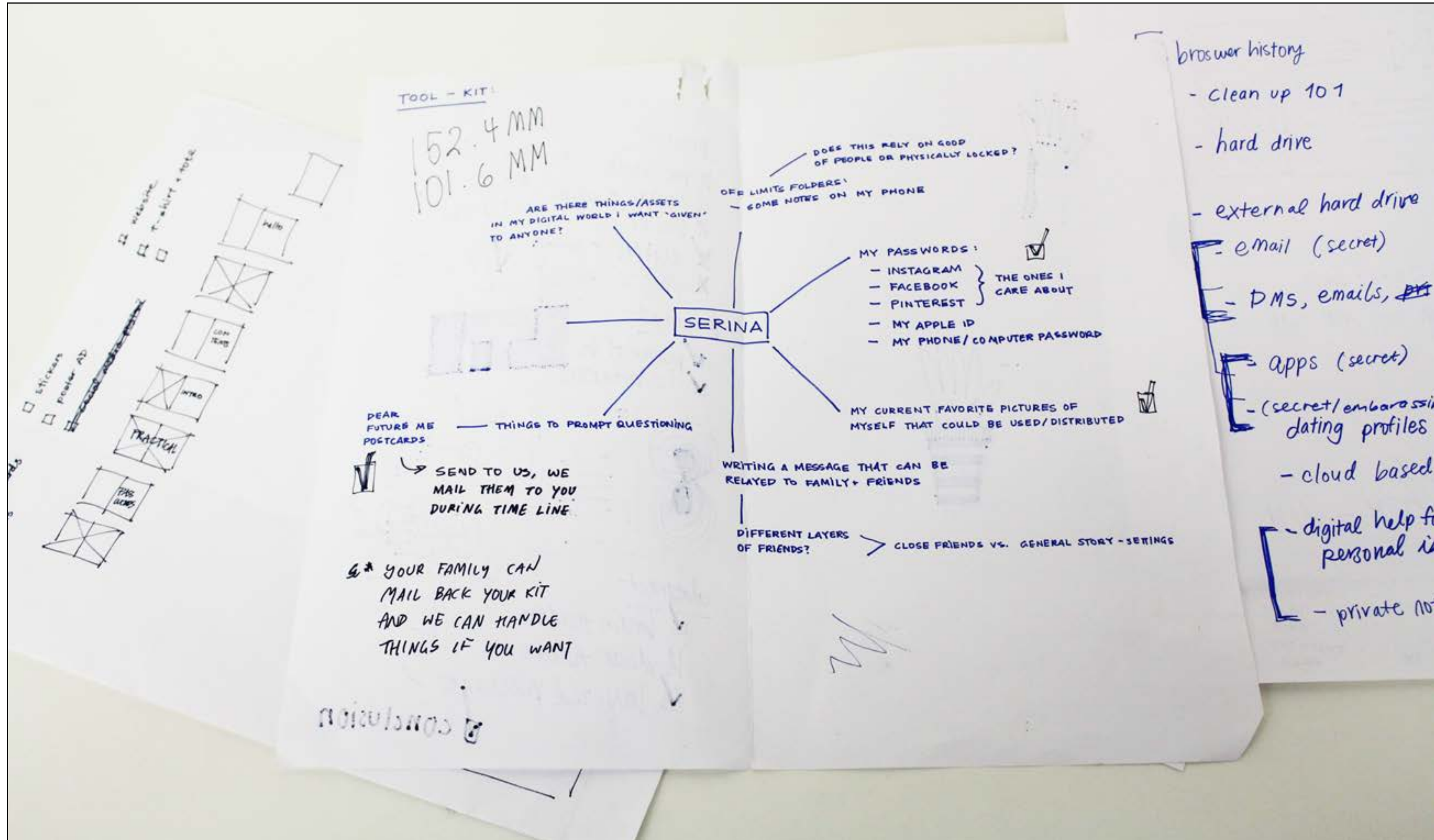
CREATING STORYBOARDS

Exploring the situation through scenarios

- Trying to see how my brother's death would affect me in a tangible, "real" way vs. a more digitalized way
- Trying to understand the nuances and differences between the feelings a physical momento brings vs. a digital
- Wondering how aesthetic changes the interaction (digitally drawn or everything done digitally)



Description: Two digitally drawn scenarios



Description: Making mind map to see what is important to ME to see in a booklet guide, ideating booklet content

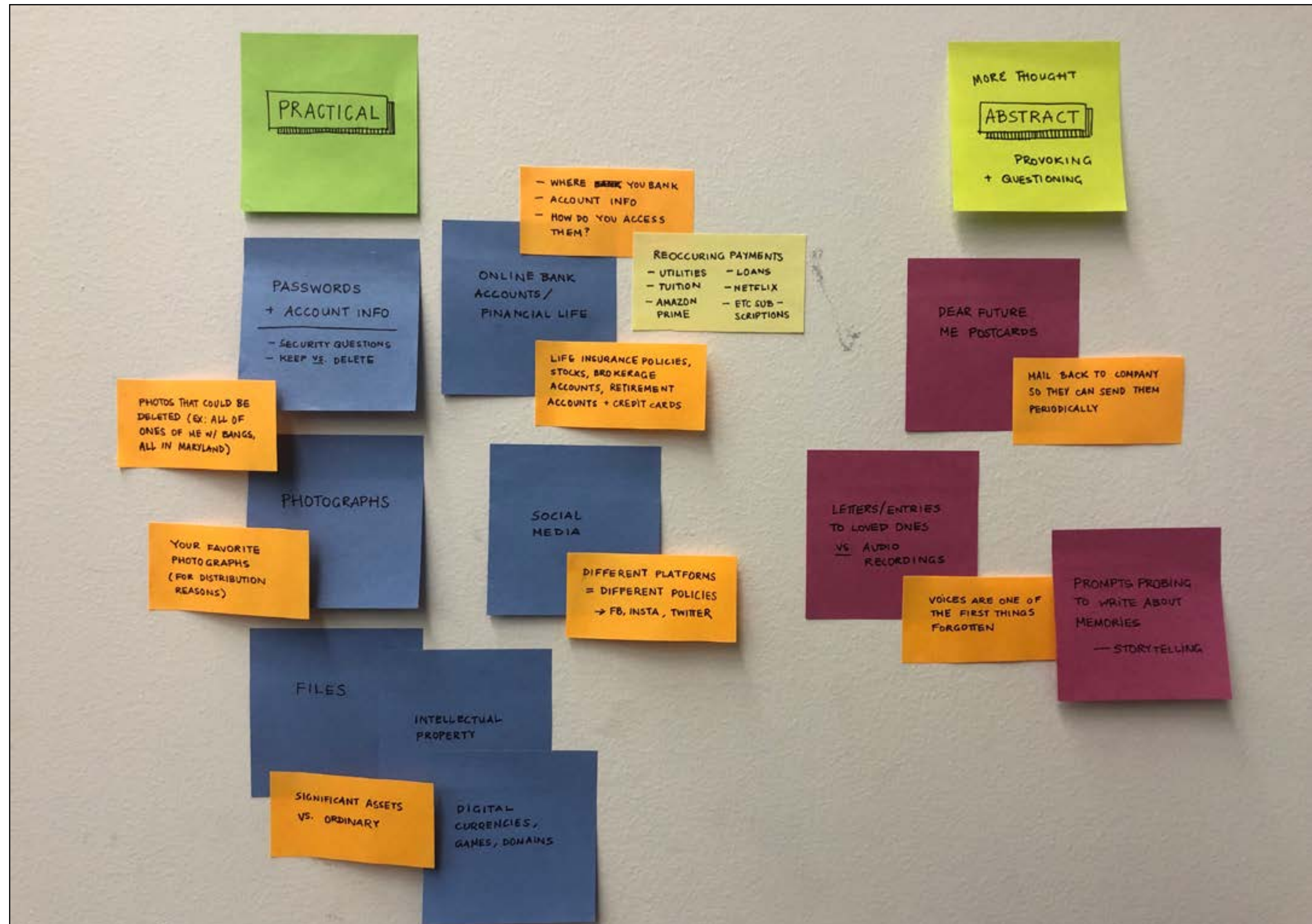
ORGANIZING CONTENT

Trying to organize all separate thoughts into a specific order and break them into their respective categories

- 3 layers: practical, personal and philosophical
- Each layer is meant to serve a different purpose and involves a different amount of engagement



Description: My "to do" while making the content inside booklet



Description: Creating categories and things that need to be covered within those chapters

TEST PRINTING, MATERIAL TESTS

- Wanted to experiment with different textures or materials to elevate the look of the book
- Transparencies used as separator pages between practical, personal and philosophical sections
- Vellum used to create a more dream like effect and play around with layers
- Inserts within booklet are smaller, printed on a rougher paper and are staple bound to give it a different feeling than the overall book (because the information in it is more didactic)
- Envelopes in booklet are a combination of vellum and a chrome heavy weight paper
- Originally printed as a saddle stitch booklet, but switched to perfect bound, held by glue bound with a bare spine



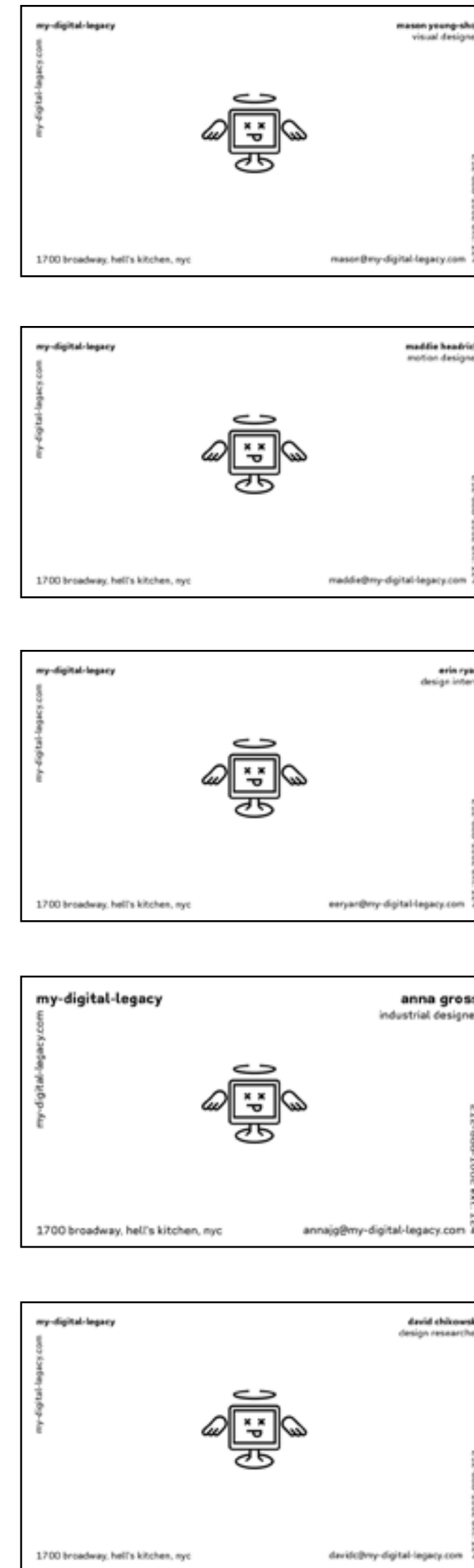
Description: Test prints, material test prints, insert test prints

FINAL

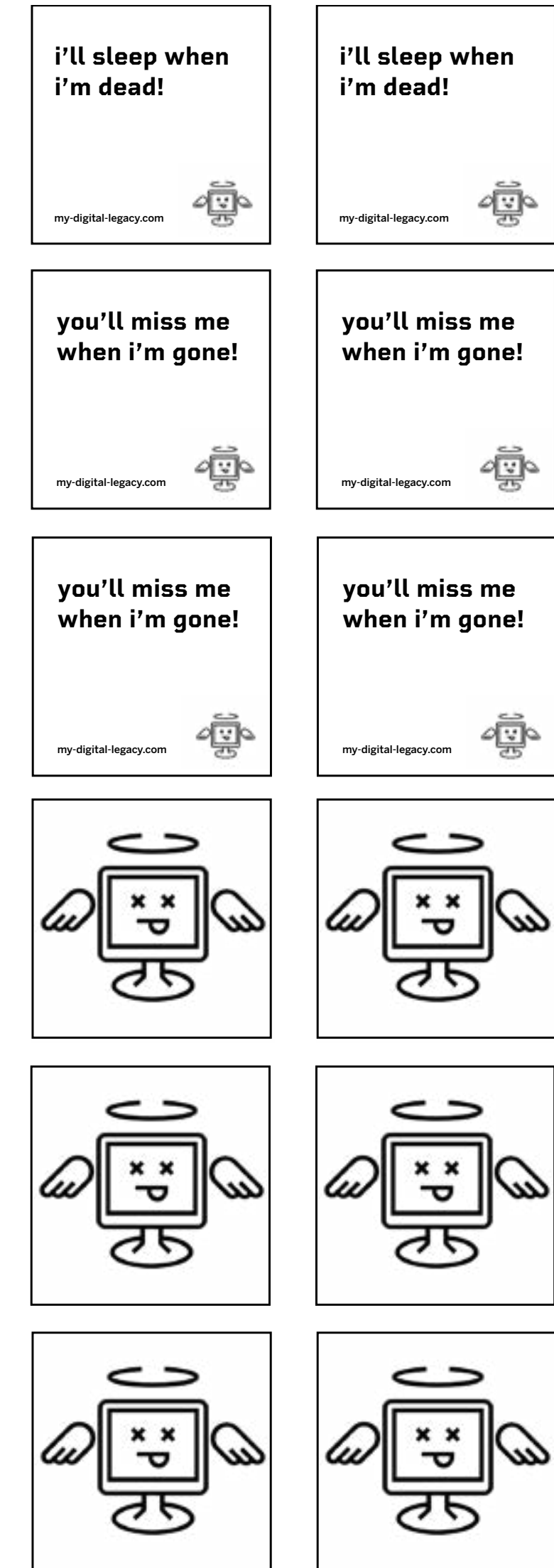
*professional studio lighting photos will be taken post-senior show



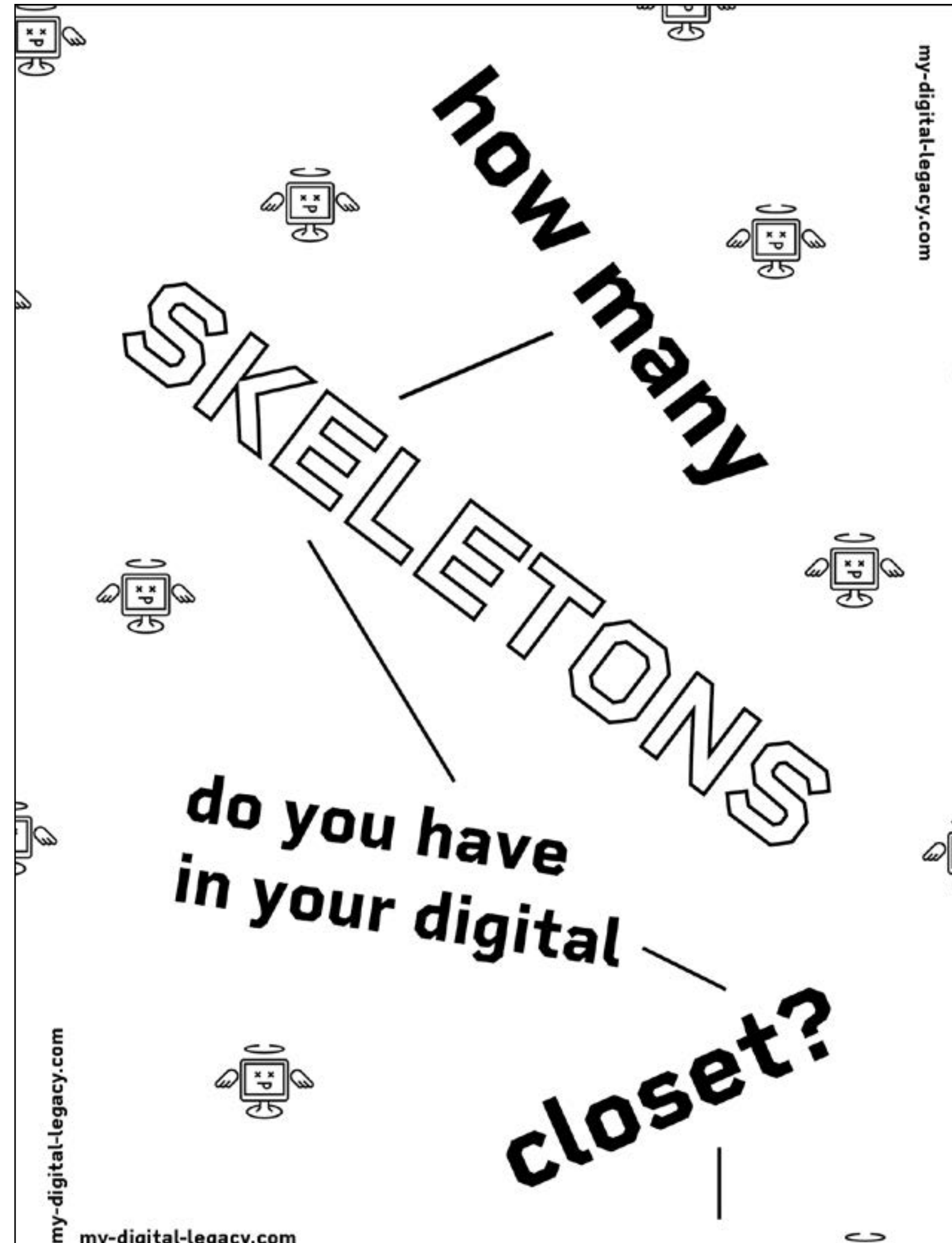
Description: Letterhead



Description: Business Cards



Description: Stickers



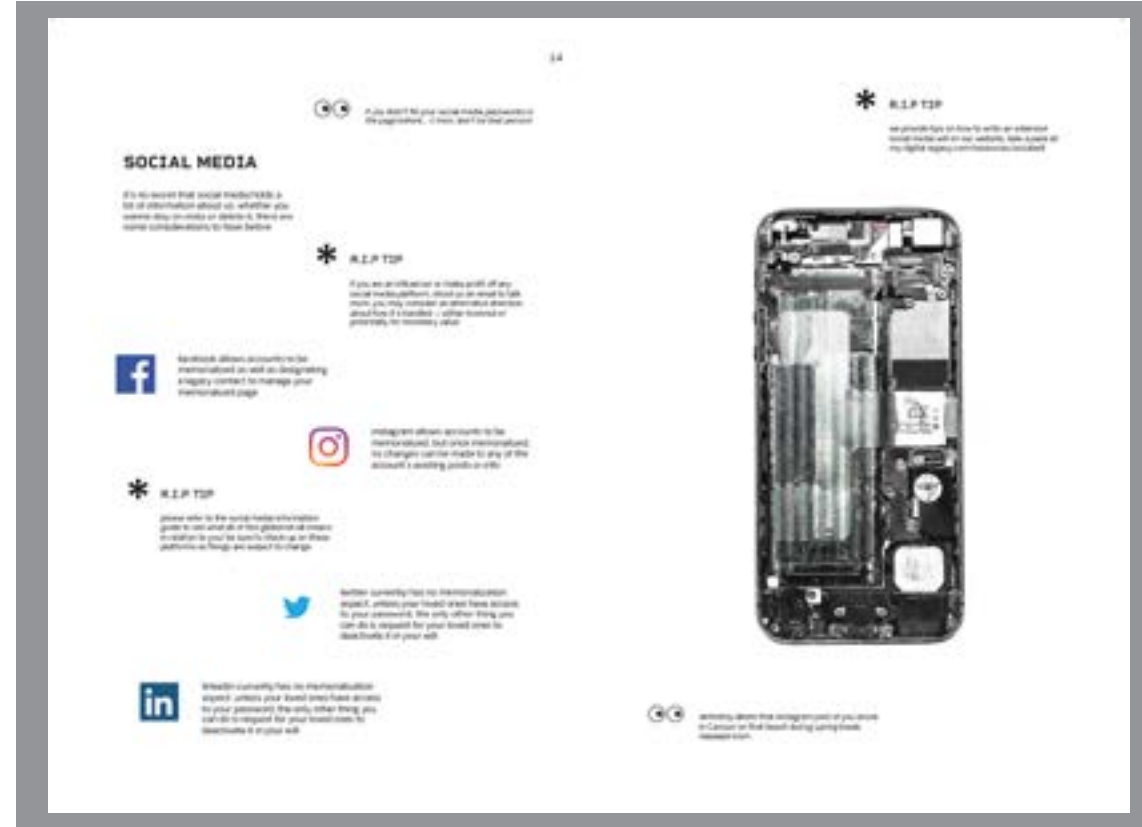
Description: Poster duo

Description: Thank you coupon

01



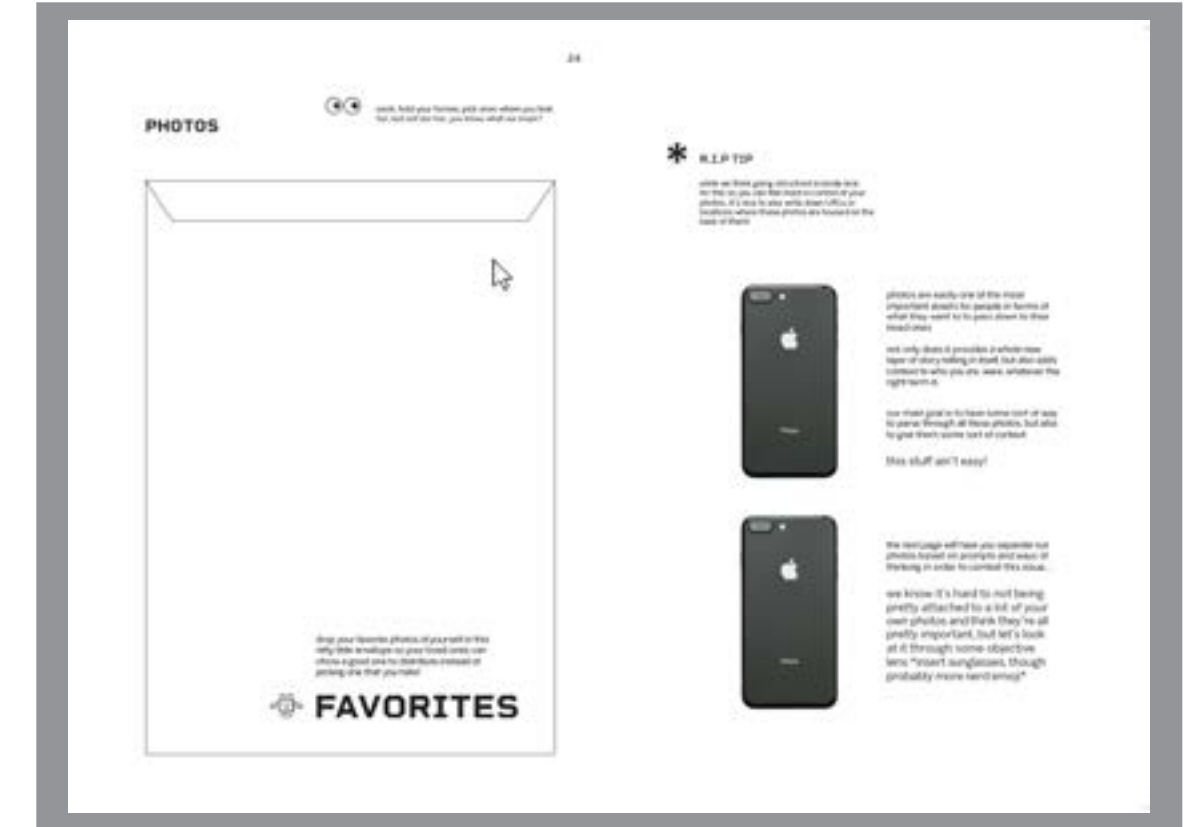
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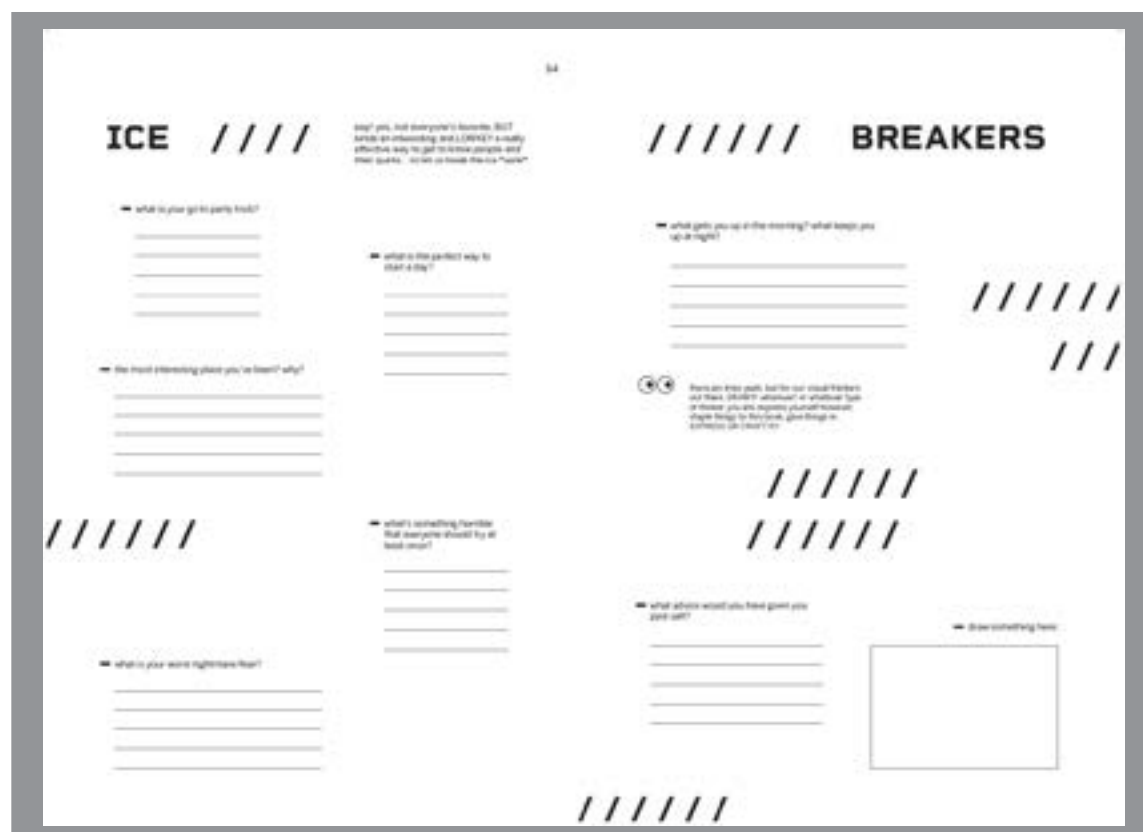
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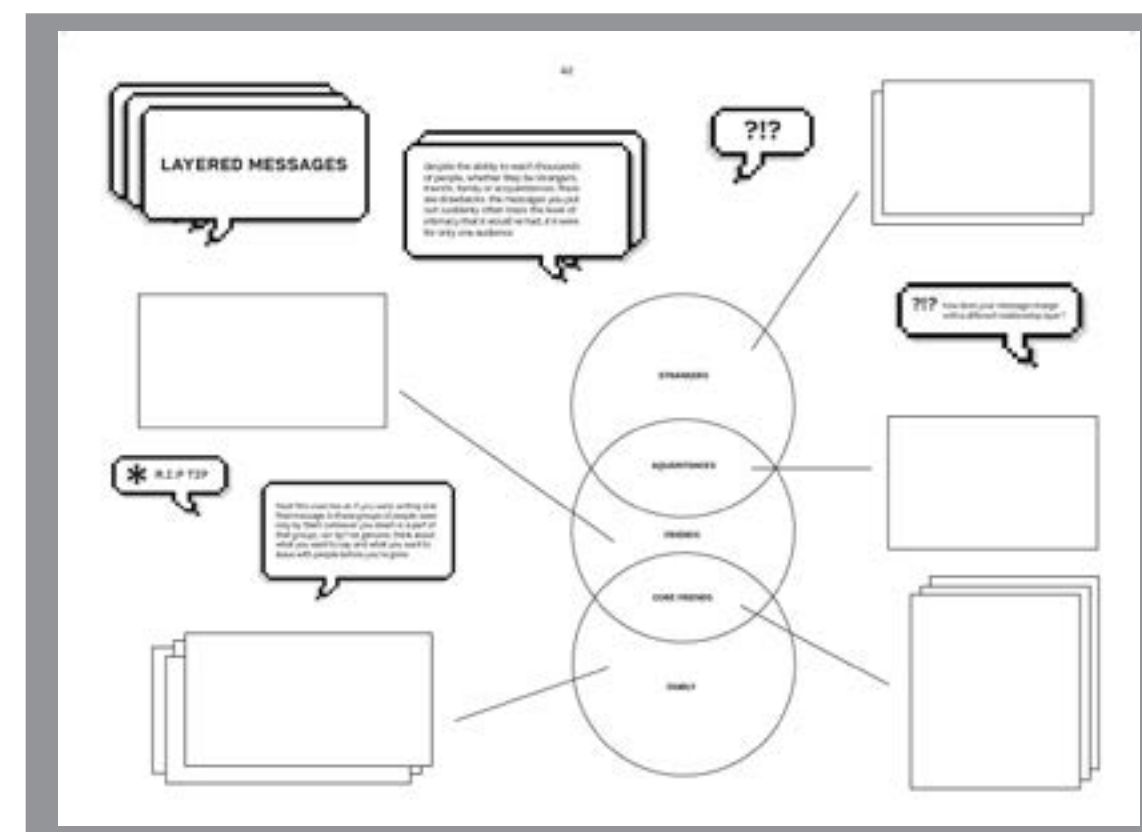
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07



08



SENIOR SHOW DISPLAY

Featured on the “death table”

- two poster back to back
- postcard advertisements
- business cards
- letterhead
- thank you coupon
- 3 separate copy design stickers
- booklet
- t-shirts (not pictured, they don't fit on the table)



Description: Senior show display

CLOSING STATEMENTS

My process of working usually is:

Initial idea

Light research

Ideating

PLAN PLAN

Make

FINAL

My process of working this time was:

Initial idea

Light research

MAKE, MAKE

Ideate

MAKE, MAKE

FINAL

HOW HAS MY PRACTICE CHANGED?

- A making process is great — it gives the room to continually explore, but gives insight within each iteration... especially useful since it was those early stages that helped me solidify a tone of voice, an aesthetic, and a purpose/goal.
- Putting the viewer into a world is an effective way to make something believable and real
- The emphasis that design can take shape in many different forms, whether that be something meant to be self-reflective, critical commentary, etc.

THANK YOU.