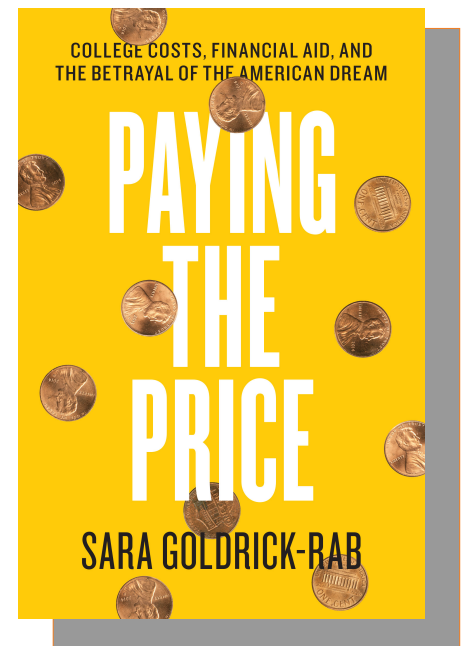


PAYING THE PRICE: College Costs, Financial Aid, and the Betrayal of the American Dream

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DISCUSSION GUIDE



1. How did you/ are you paying for college? How do the experiences of students in this book compare to your experiences? What are the key differences? What accounts for any differences?
2. Paying the Price describes a tension over the extent to which higher education is viewed as a public good (benefiting society) versus a private good (that benefits individual students). This tension figures prominently into how students are expected to pay for college today. What examples do you find of this tension in the book?
3. Financial aid policy aims to encourage students to not only attend college but also to complete their degrees. Based on this book, to what extent do you think financial aid policy is succeeding?
4. A major challenge students face in paying for college is the cost of their food and housing. To what extent to the evidence of housing and food insecurity among students surprise you? What are some ways you think it might be addressed?
5. Financial aid policy is designed by people far removed from student life, who have little idea of what it's like today—and that shows in everything from how complicated the process is to how poorly aid packages fit with what students actually need. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this contention? What evidence is there in support of your perspective that existing policies are either aligned or misaligned with students' needs?