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The IDEA Book Club and TIGERS ADVANCE: Bringing Faculty and Staff Together to Discuss Equity in Higher Education

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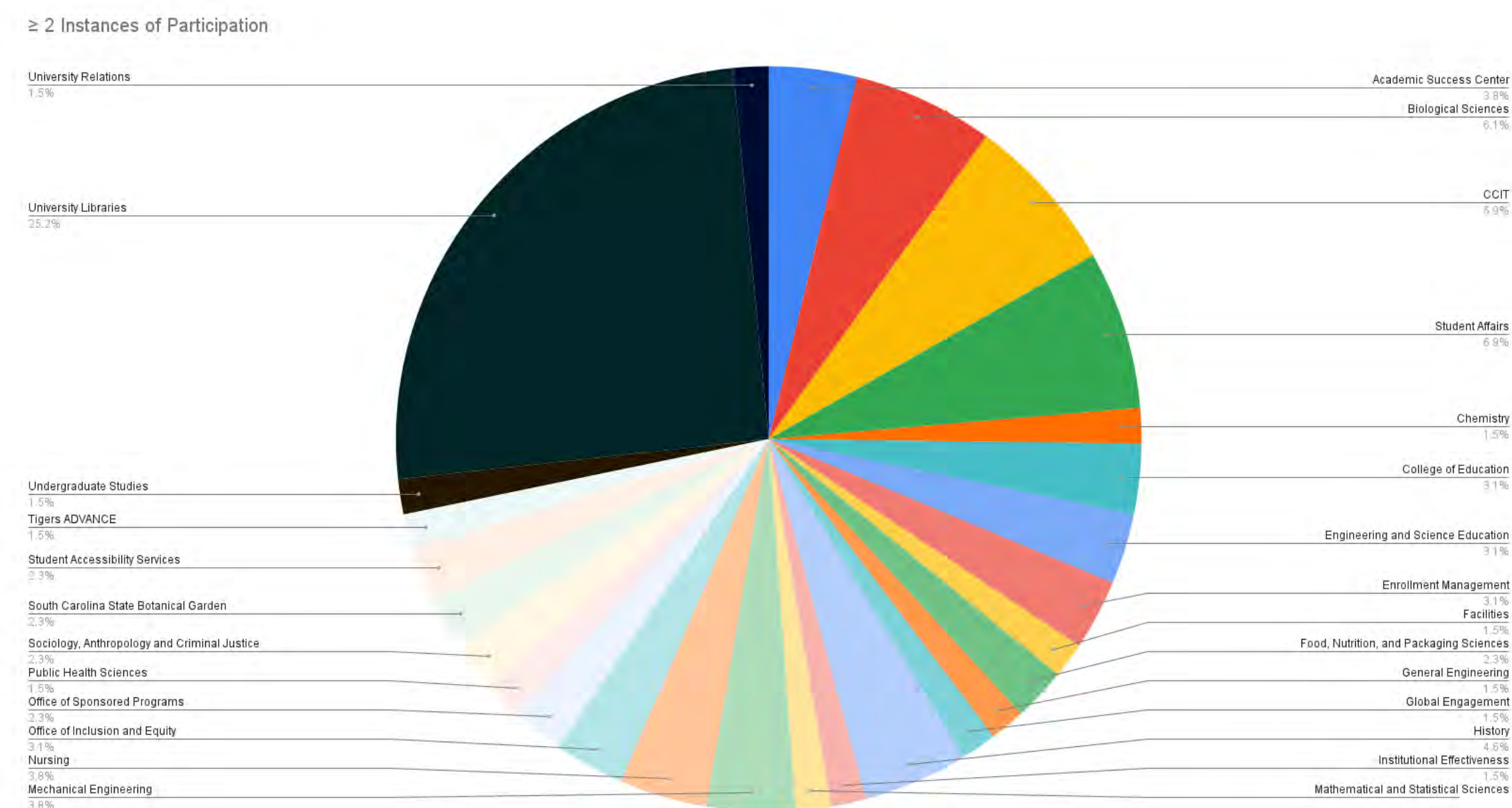
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Book Club Background

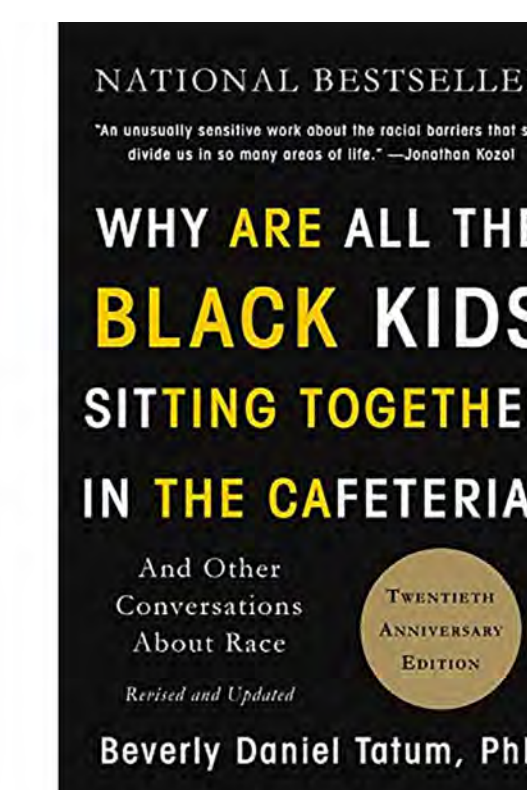
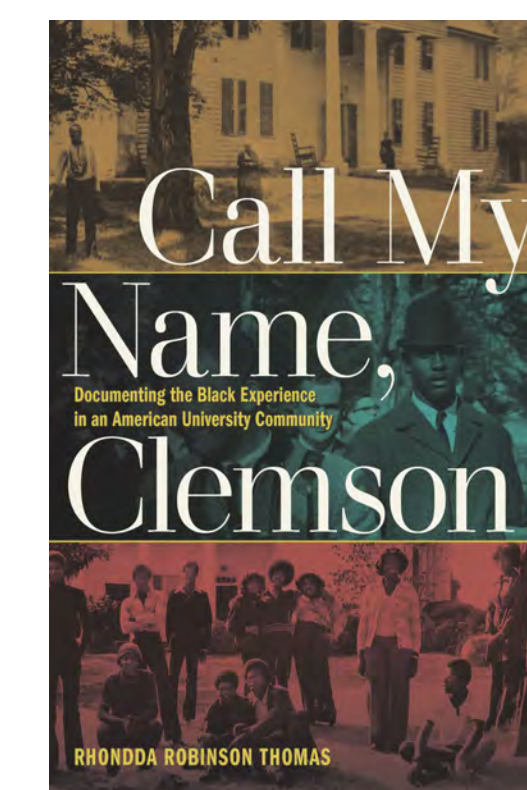
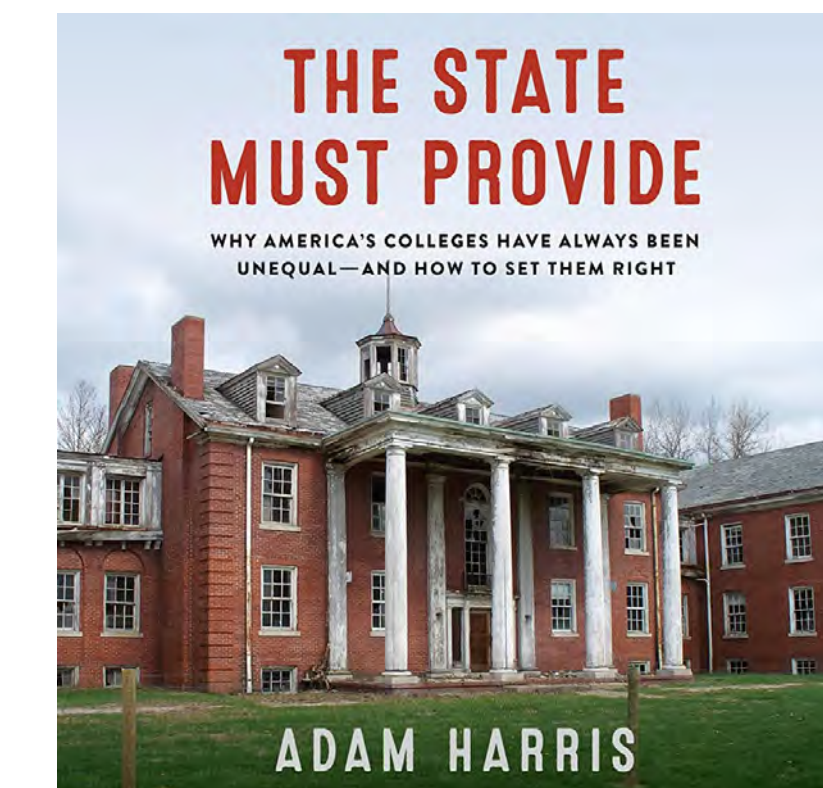
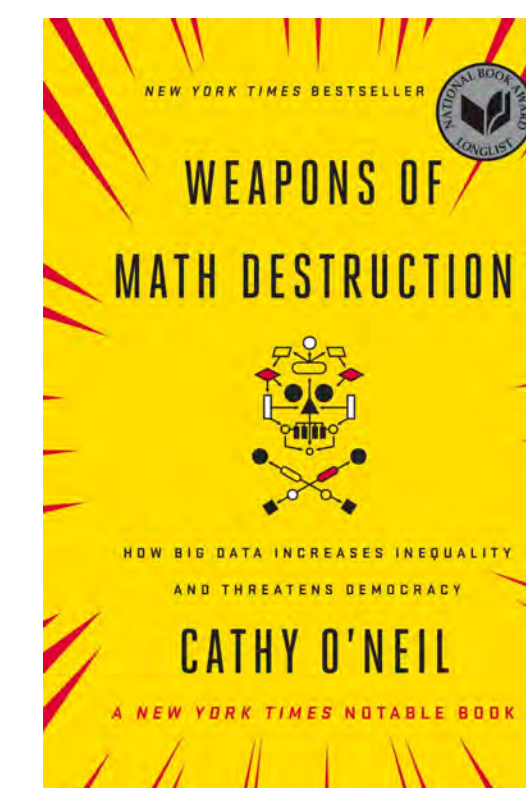
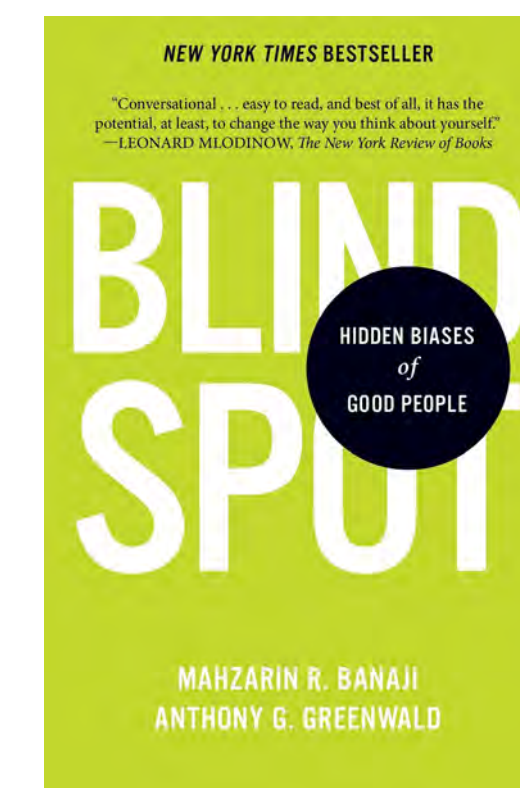
- Established in Fall 2019 as the Diversity Education Brown Bag Book Club by former Director of Diversity Education, Moryah Jackson and Interlibrary Loan Librarian, Renna Redd. Spring 2020 name change to IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Awareness) Book Club
- Employee-targeted, informal group to discuss shared reading during the lunch hour
- Free books supplied to limited number of participants so that they could physically interact with the text, take notes, and share the book with others.
- Sponsoring groups were the Office of Research Compliance, the Office of Inclusion and Equity, TIGERS ADVANCE, and the University Libraries
- Semesterly cost of books averaged \$300 and shared among sponsors.

Who Attended?

- 158 participants (93 unique) signed up for six IDEA Book Club group reads taking place over six semesters from Spring 2020 through Fall 2022.
- 49.4% were staff, 47.5% were faculty, 3.2% were students
- 54 unique areas of Clemson University have been represented (as provided by attendees through RSVP form)
- Areas with the most representation: Academic Success Center, Biological Sciences, CCIT, History, Mechanical Engineering, Nursing, Student Affairs, University Libraries



What Did We Read?



Takeaways

The purpose of the IDEA Book Club is to raise awareness about the things that shape our worldview and shape higher education without us necessarily realizing - like the unconscious biases we all have or the algorithms that "predict" (often inaccurately) who qualifies for a mortgage or who is more likely to be incarcerated. Histories - known and unknown - as well as systems - acknowledged and unacknowledged - also influence the work we do in higher education. Through reading and sharing thoughts about a series of common texts and information sources, Clemson University faculty and staff are able to create a shared syntax and expand our collective awareness of the complexities within higher education in South Carolina and the United States.

The Future

Thanks goes to Moryah Jackson, Margaret Ptacek, Keshia Boyce Williams, Megan Palmer, and Alydia Sims

Spring Semester 2023 was the first without an IDEA Book Club. Facilitator burnout, the library flood, and employee turnover in sponsoring entities were all contributing factors to this decision. If this initiative is to continue, financial support for purchasing books and volunteer co-facilitators from outside of the Libraries are required. Title IX and indigeneity in higher education are potential future topics of exploration. There is also interest in holding additional group reads of *Call My Name, Clemson*. If you would like to keep the IDEA Book Club going through financial partnerships or volunteering your time as a facilitator, please contact Renna Redd at rennar@clemson.edu.