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The Elephant in the Room: Understanding Barriers to Students' Articulation of Diversity

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ABSTRACT

A scholarship competition designed to foster classroom discussion and introspection about diversity had few participants despite its cash prize. This paper explores undergraduates' view of the project via focus groups and reveals surprising depth in students' answers to the question of why students did not participate. Analysis uncovered emergent themes related to emotional discomfort with diversity in general and self reflection in particular. Implications include the conceptualization of "diversity," teaching methods, and instructors' professional development.

KEYWORDS

Undergraduate, Diversity, Higher Education, Cultural Competency

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