



AERA 2020 Annual Meeting Briefing and  
Listening Session with Executive Director Felice  
Levine and President Vanessa Siddle Walker

March 11, 2020

**Vanessa Siddle Walker:** Evening, wherever you are. I'm going to take a minute. I'm Vanessa Siddle Walker, and I'm the president of AERA in this moment that we're all living in. I just can't begin to thank all of you for your interest. I was just talking with Felice to get the number of people who are on today, and we actually have more today than yesterday. Yesterday, we had over 500.

I think it just speaks volumes of the commitment that AERA members have. The concern we have for one another, and the ways in which we are thinking carefully about how to honor our professional responsibilities to make sure that our colleagues have the opportunity to present. To honor the theme opportunities that we talked about, to really be able to talk across different audiences.

And just the fact that all of you would take this time out of your busy day, to get more information and give ideas that we need to think about. I just want to tell you thanks.

Some things are already in place. They've come out from the AERA office. Felice has talked about them on a number of occasions. But I just want to give a quick summary, and then I'd like to devote most of the time to giving her the space to answer the questions that you have.

As all of you know, yes, AERA's doing a full refund. I think some people have asked about contributing their amount to AERA, and I think something is being put in place to do that. But you don't have to make a contribution, your full refund will come back to you. We're delighted.

I just have nothing but praise for Felice and her staff. And the ways of which they have taken this on, it's really unbelievable what they're doing. I'm not even sure how much they're sleeping.

But they have come up with a platform that allows all the papers, all the posters, all the roundtables to actually be able to be uploaded. And authors who wish to be able to be live will be able to present at the time of the meeting, that their meeting was scheduled. I think that's

amazing. The symposia all will now be able to go live. I'm delighted about that.

She will have Q&A corners. All that we wanted to do with disabilities, we can't put in place with the live programming, just because the platform doesn't allow us -- it won't be ready by the time we have our meeting. But the platform is being developed and ultimately, while everything won't be in real-time, it will be available shortly after the meeting.

She will, of course, have dedicated training for how to do all of this. And there will be all kinds of listening sessions so that you know what you need to know about how to get us through a virtual AERA. I'm very clear that we made the right decision, and I think we see it every day. And I'm also excited about all the possibilities for the ways we'll talk, in different formats and different ways.

So, one last point I want to make before turning it over to Felice and her staff, these listening sessions that she's created, I think, are important because they give all of us a way to hear how the office is thinking, how she's going -- (interruption)

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Hello.

**Walker:** -- and to be able to move forward. But I do want to emphasize -

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: It's just the -- it's the briefing.

Walker: Yeah, I think we hear you. Okay. It's okay. It's all good. But I think I want to emphasize that these really are listening sessions. She and her staff are moving forward at a pace that's beyond my imagination, to make all of this happen and make it happen on time. But do understand that when we do the listening sessions the goal is both to give you an opportunity to ask questions, but also to give you an opportunity to help Felice and the staff think about questions that we might not even have thought about.

So, we are co-creating this AERA meeting together. Thank you all for your patience, thank you for your willingness to come on, and thank you for all that you'll do to make it happen. I want to turn everything over to Felice now. As I said yesterday, you know we watch her go around to meetings. She just kind of flurries, hither and thither, as my mother used to say.

And we know she's doing something that makes it all happen, but we don't necessarily know what. We just know -- you know, it's happening.

As I said yesterday, I have a new respect for the amount of work that goes into our convening. And that respect has been even heightened further, Felice, as I've watched what you've done over these last three to four weeks. Even before we knew we had a full crisis, you were already starting to put things in place to make sure we could weather it.

And I also want to say, publicly, thanks to all the people on her staff who are making it happen. Council members, the AERA leadership is just expanding. So, thanks to everybody. I'm going to get out of the way. I'll be here, but let's let you get all of your questions to Felice. And Felice, let's turn it over to you. Thank you so much.

**Felice J. Levine:** Thank you. Thanks everybody for joining with us. I think that what Vanessa said is exactly what we want to create for the meeting, for this session. And in a way, these listening and exchanging sessions really begin to simulate. It's kind of like a precursor to what a virtual meeting is. We're all about us doing this together. The more input we can get, the better that those of us who are in leadership roles can invent.

We have real-time issues x number of days out, but that is not stifling, in any way, our way of trying to vision, and re-envision, and learn about what a virtual platform can do for us. Though we recognize, and appreciate, and understand this as scholars and students and researchers, what it means to work together in face-to-face networking and exchange and grab someone who you've never seen before. And you're talking to someone at your right or your left, and that's an opportunity that we'll all miss. And there's nothing that can substitute for that.

But we also realize that we are in a pandemic situation. We knew that that was -- all the science suggested that that was going to be the case when we took our decision-making step last week, with the executive board and the council, and ultimately, last Friday, communicated this to all of you. The World Health Organization has just indeed made that declaration. But we have been planning for several weeks the what-ifs of how do we do more for

all of us together that will not be possible in a viable place-based meeting?

I think that Vanessa gave you the highlights. You've probably seen some factsheets floating around. We do have this factsheet-- that went to everyone, but we do know that not everyone opens or sees all the emails at the same moment in time. This information is on the website. We're going to be unfolding other specific factsheets and a schedule for training and for preparation thoughts, so that all participants can work in our virtual space together.

But part of us planning for that, and planning for that well, really requires and necessitates both hearing from you; both what you worried about, I'm going to say in the middle of the night, but that might be different time zones, and early in the morning. And we want to -- as I said yesterday at some point in the session, I'm a member of our research community. But I do this every day.

Most of you do not do these kinds of things every day. So you should not -- both in this session and after this session, you should not worry about a topic for more than a few minutes without transmitting that either to the executive director box or the annual meeting box, so that we can aggregate those concerns, get you an immediate answer. And working with Tony Pals on my left, our Director of Communications and Robert Smith, Director of Meetings, who's just a fantastic partner in reinventing what we're doing together.

We met in a context of thinking differently about AERA and the annual meeting many years ago. And we did not anticipate this opportunity -- or this challenge, but it is an opportunity for all of us. So, with that, let me just kind of open it up for the Q&A. Hopefully, some have been posted. Tony's trying to kind of synthesize them. Some questions repeat themselves.

Not everything can be answered today. But in the span of this hour, for that which we can't answer today, we will be answering with additional factsheets. If you don't have the answer that was on your mind when you asked the question, then you'll have the two portals to email us, and we'll try to amplify in a way that'll be helpful for you. Tony?

**Tony Pals:** So we have a question about what the plan is for professional development courses.

**Levine:** Okay. So, we'll be announcing, actually, the professional development courses probably as soon as tomorrow. We've been working with the faculty and directors of those courses. We anticipate two things. One, that the annual virtual meeting, the first of its scope that we think will be held worldwide, will occur in real-time April 17 to 21.

On April 22nd, we will do the professional development courses. There will be no full-day courses. Those full-day courses will be half-day courses, meaning four hours, not eight hours. And we will be offering, I'll say, somewhere between seven or eight courses that look like, a) they have higher enrollment at this point; and b) kind of give a nice set of diversities of courses that were planned from the full set.

So, that's essentially what will be happening. Those who registered will be invited to continue to participate through their registration. Anyone can register. If anyone feels they really didn't buy into a virtual online course, they can ask for a refund as they will be able to do with their registration fees.

**Pals:** So we have a few questions about how papers and posters will be presented virtually.

**Levine:** Okay. So, actually, the fundamental part of this platform that we are using was designed and used in at least several scientific societies for poster presentations in place. Poster presentations, in our view, are essentially papers. So that what this platform is, is a web-based product that at annual meetings -- at least several and one quite large -- were vehicles at the poster gallery or the poster session that, through a web-based interface, instead of putting a poster on a board, that those who walk through the gallery will see the poster and see the individual.

So, we took that concept and are transforming this web-based product into essentially a paper gallery. And that paper gallery will permit each paper -- all accepted papers,

which are roughly seven thousand papers were accepted for presentation at the annual meeting. Those papers are either being presented at paper sessions, poster sessions or roundtables in the face-to-face mode.

Those individuals will each have an opportunity to participate in the gallery presentation. To upload their slides in about eight to ten templates that really have a lot of versatility, including uploading animation, uploading video. The presenting author will be able to upload a voice narration of their presentation that probably will run around six minutes or so.

There's many other asset features to that, including how the presenting authors, the social media that you may be on, the other forms of interaction you might be engaged in, that will hypertext link to the AERA Online Paper Repository where we encourage uploading the paper. Which will have a DOI and a URL -- DOI that makes your paper discoverable and findable -- as well as the gallery walk. And we will be asking each presenting author if they can be available, real-time, at the point of the scheduled time, which is the Pacific Time of the meeting.

Now, we realize we will be around the world -- Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, many different time zones. So, for those who cannot be available for Q&A, or for threaded discussion, at that time, we will be asking each paper presenter to select a time where they would be available for interacting, just as you would interact in a paper session, a roundtable or a poster session.

And that's kind of a maximum feasible opportunity. Anyone who chooses not to participate in the virtual conference will not be one of those seven thousand, but we will be able to accommodate every accepted paper in the virtual conference setup.

**Pals:** There's a question about whether preconference workshops will be accommodated.

**Levine:** And I would say that is a work in progress without yet decisions. When we discuss this as a council -- and the vice presidents will be conferring in a similar kind of call on Friday. We want to be attentive in a virtual space that we don't want to run for weeks. So,

that's why we've segmented the professional development as a post-meeting option.

How much earlier we start when many of the kinds of mentoring and capacity-building activities that divisions offer, and SIGs offer, can be done through similar modalities at other points in time. So, currently, there is no plan for a pre-annual meeting activity. There could be selected exceptions to that. But I think that we're, as a community, trying to be sure we can deliver the meeting and a select number of professional development courses.

And for these specialized pre-activities, both of divisions and SIGs, we had two calls scheduled with the SIG chairs and SIG program chairs. We're trying to work this out together. And given the capacity of what we're trying to do -- is at 36 days out -- my best guess is that we will try to work with those activities but have them programmed at different times of the year.

**Pals:** Is the deadline for submitting final papers changing?

**Levine:** The deadline, which is March 20th, will change. There'll be a little bit more latitude around that. We'll post that so that you have more latitude. But that latitude will not be April 16th, I can promise you.

That it will be -- in order to have the platform connect to the paper, connect to the metadata and connect to the schedule, so that someone looking at the schedule and the app, and all academic can see, we're going to need you to do that well in advance of the meeting.

But I suppose the good news, for those who were worrying about March 20th, is that you'll have more time, but not an overwhelming amount of time. But it won't be the 21st or 22nd. So, you'll have a meaningful amount of time, perhaps in the neighborhood of a week or so.

**Pals:** There are a few questions about whether or not SIG business meetings will proceed.

**Levine:** Yeah. We're going to talk with both our SIGs leadership and our Division leadership. I think what might proceed is some presentations at some of these sessions. But currently, all business meetings and all governance meetings will be scheduled by their unit.

So, we're not holding committee meetings. Those committee meetings -- let's say, the Journal Publications Committee that typically would meet for an hour and a half with the editors, and an hour and a half just as a committee -- those will happen at times appropriate to the agendas, and those will happen separately.

We recognize a lot goes on at the business meetings of the Divisions and SIGs, and I suppose that would be a loss this year. We need to work out, with our units, other ways of potentially communicating and featuring. Keep in mind that we'll be doing something like 40 concurrent symposia or special lectures, and presentation sessions at the same time with a staff of 30. And a dedicated staff in the meetings area of three, and many other technology experts including those that are operating our platform.

But we want to be sure we get the virtual content right. The authentication of having had the experience of participating in the meeting if you were, in particular, in the accepted program. And we've extended that to all of the invited sessions. And that's just a lot to chew. So, I anticipate that business meetings for Divisions and SIGs, like our committee meetings, will need an alt model, or an alt model with communication with your membership.

**Pals:** There are a couple of questions about how symposia will be handled.

**Levine:** So, the symposia will be for those -- as with the paper submissions, symposia -- or what we call sessions submissions, which typically are symposia. But there are times it might be a featured presenter with two or three commentators. So, the formats vary on the session submission, but we tend to use -- or our members tend to use -- the language of session submissions and symposia somewhat interchangeably.

All of those sessions -- with I think both -- those submitted and accepted in the open submission, and those invited, which are far fewer, are a number about 700 plus or minus. I'm looking to Robert to get a reverification of the number. Actually, we are hoping that they all go, so we can optimistically say that all organizers and participants are a go. They will be Zoomed in real-time, and then they will be recorded and offered and provided as a view-on-

demand product thereafter.

We're working with our platform provider that essentially had been an on-site poster platform, to be able to triangulate this into what we hope will actually be a singular experience. You open the page and it's, "Welcome to AERA 2020 Virtual Convening." And there will be the live broadcasting room and there'll be the paper gallery, and there will be a schedule of events that you can see live or as a post-production press.

**Pals:** There's a question about whether there's a need for online chairs and discussants at the time of a virtual paper presentation.

**Levine:** Yeah. That came up yesterday as well. And we'll put that in one of our factsheets. The paper presentations that will all be in the gallery -- roughly seven thousand among who choose to be part of the virtual meeting -- may -- will not need, I should say, a chair because those sessions will be -- the motif of those will be single paper presentations.

We will offer the discussants, and the paper presenters for those sessions, an opportunity for the discussants to comment on the papers they would've commented on in the Q&A mode or the threaded discussion mode. And I think that we would -- we have to think this through because it came up yesterday as a question. I think we would leave to the dual of the paper presenter and the discussant that would have been the discussant of that paper on a session, to decide whether to participate in the Q&A or threaded discussion, or whether for this year to opt out.

Because both will be available and could happen without us needing to moderate or know that in advance. If they participate in the Q&A, or post some comments in advance, that can be worked out between the discussants and the presenting author.

**Pals:** There's a question about whether the virtual meeting will be made completely public?

**Levine:** Yes. It is all registrants will receive a refund, unless they are positioned to make a voluntary contribution, which you will be asked whether you want a total refund or

whether you'd make a voluntary contribution.

After that, as we said in the announcement letter last Friday that went to all registrants and participants, this is an open access virtual conference. I will say not one that associations can continued to do what we do for our community and for our next generation of scholars, of course, year after year.

And I have my colleagues around the table and the virtual platform around the table, and the convention center is working with us. But this year, in appreciation about what we're trying to do together as a community, this is a special opportunity. And this opportunity is one that we really want to make maximally accessible around the world, Northern and Southern hemisphere, persons who might not have previously ever been able to partake and see who we are.

See who we are; not just what we know, but who we are and what we stand for. As a community of scholars that not only does research on education and learning at all ages and stages, but we also are an educative society that wants to push the envelope of what we can do. And this is a collective effort, so it will be an open access meeting, as the online paper repository is already an open access product to all of the fine work that you produce all year long.

**Walker:** Can I elevate that just one moment, Felice?

**Levine:** Yeah, sure.

**Walker:** You know, when I thought about all of us meeting in San Francisco, right, I had the idea of everybody -- not everybody, but lots of people coming to us who wouldn't normally come to us. But I did not imagine, at that time when we thought about power and possibilities, what's really available now.

When you think about all the community people and political leaders and schoolboard members, and just kind of all kinds -- you know, PTAs, just all kind of people. Who want to know what the research says about particular areas -- what the research says in particular areas. I think it is actually an opportune moment to figure out how to invite them into this space.

So, as someone said on the executive board, we're turning a challenge into an opportunity. And I really hope that all AERA members will get on board with thinking about -- I'm thinking about people that could not have come to San Francisco, but now I'm actually going to be inviting to log on during this time. And I hope others can too. I think that it's great, Felice, and I just wanted to elevate that point. Thank you.

**Levine:** And I would say that part of our ambition is in terms of this being a collective event was in the idea, when we first started envisioning this, to have communities of scholars and students, and policymakers and practitioners as we have seen with the Brown Lecture, meet in spaces where they could view and talk together.

Now, of course, we are now seeing that the best advice is to keep the number of persons in common space down to a very limited number. And that may change by mid-April. But we had hoped, in our vision of this, that schools and colleges of education, community groups, teachers in their school, would do this together and talk about what they've learned or what they haven't, and what we all should know, and give us feedback to you authors individually or in symposia. That collective kind of distributed, collective activity.

At the moment, the best advice is, as we all observe that institutions are closing -- some longer term, some more temporarily. They're going online or trying to use other assets that they have available. So, some of what we hoped would happen might not happen, although there's always opportunity for a joint Zooming of faculty and students at their local environment and watching together and having conversation.

So, we'll be actually having a phone call with our deans and heads of research institutions, early next week, to talk about, well, what can we do together? What can you, who are leaders of units, how can you participate with us in a way that will make more meaningful a virtual meaning?

**Pals:** Okay. There's a question about what happens long-term with materials that presenters upload? And will they have any say over what happens, how they view this in the

future.

**Levine:** We anticipate maintaining -- just as we maintain microsites, just as we maintain a centennial microsite, just as we had a national lecture series with a microsite, we anticipate maintaining this platform, because that is the tooth of the 2020 annual meeting.

So, there will not be an opportunity to post and remove. So, I suppose that anyone inhibited about participating at that level, should not post anything in the virtual paper center that they would not otherwise seek to make available on the platform.

I suppose it is not dissimilar from the sessions that we either have live web-streamed at place-based meeting, so you will need to essentially consent yourself in. And we'll make that very clear to authors that this is the meeting, and this meeting is a virtual meeting this year. And participating in the meeting, being authenticated as a participant in the meeting means you've decided to travel virtually instead of traveling place-based.

And, of course, anything that is in the online paper repository remains of your choice. All the metadata is there, the contact information. When the paper goes up, if you choose to put your paper in, it will triangulate. And remember that those papers that are shared as I used to, as an early career scholar, share my paper. And it was actually a requirement that you would bring 25 papers. And my little piddly paper sold for 25 cents in the paper room.

So, the online paper repository is that kind of asset. It's an open access asset. It's timed, date stamped, authenticated, and is signed a DOI. We do not consider it a publication, we consider it a paper in progress. So, when you have a publication, you can upload the information on the final publication. And the DOI or the other universal identifier, that is your final product.

But this remains your product and, of course, you, as paper presenters will have that decision-making as to whether you want to share your paper. I encourage it. It's the best way for you to have an authentic presentation that can be identified as yours and that authors must cite respectfully, really, as a responsible conduct under our ethics code.

**Pals:** There's a question about whether AERA can assist with reimbursement for

flight cancellation fees.

**Levine:** Yeah. We only wish we could. You could only imagine the encumbrances involved in AERA no longer having a place-based meeting with two and a half to three dozen contracts, large and small. And of course the cost of this free product, which is the creation of a virtual meeting.

So, we are refunding all fees. But part of how AERA operates as a scholarly society is the need for some modicum of revenue that we are foregoing this year. We are going to have very large new costs, and we cannot underwrite travel expenses.

There's no lodging expenses for those who made their lodging arrangements through us. We're returning all of the registration fees for those of you who wish them. I suppose we are posting -- or will be posting -- information about the ever and fast-changing decisions of the major airlines; that only in five days, four days, three days, one day, have become much more flexible, both about cancellation fees and about being able to reuse tickets for many other purposes, not just the destination of San Francisco.

So, we hope that you don't take a hit. We hope that only AERA is taking a hit. And I think that's just about the best we can do under this circumstance.

**Pals:** We have a couple questions about whether or not membership fees can be refunded, in particular, for students.

**Levine:** No, unfortunately not. We recognize, I suppose, the cyclical nature of some deciding to be members, of an association like ours and other associations, only the years they choose to go to the annual meeting. A membership in a society provides much, much more. And we hope that those of you who are members, who have been members, who will continue to be members, can see from this very act of what we're doing here that membership is a year-long dedication.

It's an investment in the journals that we deliver, including two open access journals. The professional development that we do, the programming that we do, the

representation and advocacy for the field that we do, the staff that's employed by this association, quite a small staff relative to the size of the association.

And as difficult as it is to potentially recognize that there are some who perhaps join AERA only in the year they're going to the annual meeting, because it is lower in cost than registering as a member, it's not something that we as a community can afford to reinforce. And I suppose, in terms of the public good for our field, can really reinforce in that way that doesn't show some commitment to becoming good, of what we as an association do for every member and for the field.

So, it's something we just could not begin to do, or even be able to unravel who are not continuing or past members, are only members because they're coming to the annual meeting, unless it's a discounted aggregate cost. We love the discounted aggregate cost. It's one of the benefits of membership, but it is not the sole benefit of membership. And I hope that those on the phone that -- well, on the dial-in and on the Zoom -- who have understood it more that way, I certainly appreciate that. We, as a staff and as a council, appreciate that.

But it isn't something that we can reinforce as a way of doing business, because that would mean that the only thing that counted for an association like ours was running a meeting. And that would, of course, be a far easier task than operating all of what we do on behalf of the field and every member in the field.

**Pals:** So, related to this, how's this change affecting the association's financial?

**Levine:** Well, we're alive and well. When it's open, the consequences are we are not sure in terms of whether we see this as both a worldwide disease and as close as we can come to an act of something, sometimes called an act of God. But we would hope that they're -- all of the Gods that one might recognize are more -- are warmer and supportive than bringing the coronavirus to us.

There's the obvious cost of returning all registration fees. Although we have no cost, there's a net revenue that is one of the major revenue streams of every scholarly and

scientific association. The basic and fundamentals of the revenue stream, coming from the meeting, the revenue stream coming from publication and from membership. That's the fundamental resource base of research societies.

Ours have always been rather affordable relative to our peers. We're going to keep it that way. And we have the resources to weather this storm. But weathering the storm will also mean significant curtailments and reductions on some of the kinds of things that we might plan to do. So, we hope that the ultimate additional liabilities, of course, will be as close to zero as we possibly can make them.

And we just see this as a year in which the revenue stream that an annual meeting provides doesn't exist, and we'll get through it together. That's why we're asking for voluntary contributions for those who are well-positioned to do so. And we're going to ask some of the larger organizations and entities, and part of the community of what makes our field go, to engage in some sponsorships that will also help us further come out as whole as possible.

**Pals:** There's a question about the awards ceremony and the Fellows Breakfast, whether there will be some virtual form of them.

**Levine:** Yeah. The Fellows Breakfast will not take place. The Fellows for 2020, who have already been announced, will be honored and part of the recognition at the breakfast in 2021. We haven't quite thought through whether the awards ceremony -- which was going to be reinvented this year into a warm and dedicated plenary session -- we haven't yet thought through if we should be working it through that way, or whether we should honor the award winners also rolled into 2021. Because there is something that's very special about place-based recognition, that may not be as readily reproducible as our central lectures that we'll be giving this year, including our presidential address.

I know that Vanessa's been giving quite a lot of time to how her motif of the presidential address might be appropriately transformed for Zoom communication. So, we don't know the answer to that question yet. It's in our count, but it may be rolled over.

And that's really a decision that Vanessa and I need to just think through more in terms of the pluses and minuses. And we'll be talking with our vice presidents, who are essentially 12 members of our council, about that particular issue. I think it's on Friday of this week.

**Pals:** We have a couple questions about whether or not metadata will be available to track the views downloads.

**Levine:** Views and downloads?

**Pals:** Yeah, views and downloads in the repository.

**Levine:** Yes. Metadata are in the paper repository. All the metadata for every presentation have been in the online paper repository since we introduced it in -- Bidyut, 2008 or '09?

**Bidyut Acharya:** '09.

**Levine:** '09. So, all the metadata -- and you can go in and take a look. Actually, we're going to spiff up the interface so that -- because we expect -- to the extent we can. And we'll definitely do it as a post-production product because we expect much more users of this interface.

But all the data are there. It's been an open access product for several years, a number of years. It was open access to all registrants and participants before, but now it's totally open access. And we introduced DOI, assigned the DOI numbers to the papers that are in the online paper repository.

But the metadata is accessible. The metadata tagged to each presentation, will be available for all of the assets that are part of the original conference. And what I mean by that is, just as if someone withdraws a paper for a place-based meeting in January or February, in March, and they are not presented at a place-based meeting, their metadata does not reside in the online paper repository because they withdrew from the meeting.

We had to treat the online meeting as if that's our place. We're creating an online

place, so the metadata will correspond to all of those who participate and are presenting at the online virtual meeting this year. Just think of it as a satellite and that we're all part of that satellite together.

**Pals:** We have a question about whether it would be mandatory for symposia presenters to participate.

**Levine:** We are going to ask each chair and organizer to determine whether participants are participating. We will need to get some guidance that if it is one presenter in a symposia that, by design, are trying to be much more interactive around a subject, if there's one or two instead of five, six, seven, eight. That has the same problem that it would have if we were in a place-based meeting, and 800 of us went to San Francisco and all the rooms were empty or had one chair.

So, we're going to have to set some guidance. I suppose not everyone would need to opt in. But we will need, and I will set, a critical threshold of participation that in order for that symposia to be a go, just like anything else live or folding, we would need you at -- just like our annual meeting, we knew -- not only did it have many, many implications of transmission of disease, but we also knew this meeting was not going to be realistically a go. Because the best council and advice would be not to travel.

And if that's the case, it could not be realistically a go in a place-based environment, and similarly for symposia. Some, we hope -- we hope most will be a go, and we're providing for that. But some will not be a go, and I suppose some paper presenters will choose not to use the gallery walk.

But I hope from what you've heard, and what you will learn on our website and in some of the training opportunities and the factsheet, we did not wish to have a worldwide disaster. But we are going to create a worldwide win for the educational research community.

So, we hope those of you who are inhibited about these modalities kind of go for the gold with us. Because, if we do it together, you each individually will benefit. Collectivity

will benefit. Our communities will benefit. If I can give you a bit of a confessional here, I actually don't like speaking in front of large groups. So, I'm speaking to over 500 of my colleagues, and I'm having a really good time because I'm not watching 500 people texting; and I'm kind of wondering what the heck they're saying, kind of yawning and nodding off.

So, I'm hoping you're all with us. And for those of you who are more inhibited about this dynamic, who are really master teachers or much more experienced and savvy with live interaction, give it a go. Because it's kind of the reverse of what I'm more comfortable. Give it a go, and let's kind of see if we can make it happen. And we hope for maximum feasible participation.

**Walker:** Can I weigh in?

**Levine:** Yes.

**Walker:** So the laughter between myself and members of council, and the executive board, people I've gotten to know over the year very well, and just wonderful colleagues, the laughter has been that I would be the one in the position to preside over virtual conference. Because everybody who knows me knows I hate little red flags; I hate things that ding and call my name and whatever.

And yet, I have to say, I am growing increasingly excited about the possibilities here. I think this will be a way of bringing in more voices in ways we really could not have imagined at all, and I'm excited about that. I also want to take a minute and give a shoutout to our doctoral students.

**Levine:** Yes.

**Walker:** Because, you know, again, I don't tweet, so I don't know how this stuff works, to be honest. I'm trying to figure out how to retire, exit. I just thought I'd throw that out there in case anybody cares. But last evening, I was getting all kinds of text messages from the materials that were going out between and among our doctoral students. They are enthused from this, they're on it. And I just think there are a lot of possibilities here.

The one thing I miss though today, Felice, in this conversation that we had available yesterday, that I can't see all -- we don't get to chat and talk to each other while you're talking. And so, we don't know -- you know, yesterday people were tuned in from around the world. But now, I feel, disconnected to everybody. So I don't know where you all are from, but welcome to my basement office, you know, into our fancy new Convening Center at AERA.

But I just want to echo Felice to say, that I think the training sessions that will be provided, I think the possibilities here are really enormous. And even if you're a person like myself who would not necessarily be automatically drawn in that direction, I think now you could be -- maybe.

**Levine:** I think that -- Robert just made the point that he thought I should further underscore; and the success of what we're doing is a collective project. So, why I emphasize that, we want maximum feasible participation and want to help and enable that.

Because if this virtual conference is to be what we dreamed that it can be, it does mean that member presenters, nonmember presenters, early career scholars, graduate students, the invited poster sessions where AERA includes our minority fellows and our chief of learning fellows, and awardees from our NSF grants program and other of our activities, those are going to take place in this virtual reality.

And of course, those individuals might choose to participate or not. But their participation will make so much more rich, this virtual meeting really being a learning community and a sharing community. And it really depends upon all of us doing this together.

We knew the meeting would not even be -- as our letter last Friday said, there was no way to fool ourselves into thinking that we could be in a place, and that the meeting would be anything like what a meeting is aiming to be. And we don't have that direct face-to-face exchange, and group opportunity, and networking and crowdsourcing in a way that, of course, we will be able to have in 2021, we hope. But we're hoping to create that through everyone joining with us.

**Walker:** And one other point I just might add, something Felice said earlier. We are educators, and I think we are in a wonderful educative kind of moment for our nation and for the world. So, I think, as we try to honor our professional commitments to our scholars, to make sure that we have the opportunity to engage around ideas so that we can go forward and do really good ideas, do good research over the course of this year. Because we have been enabled by the work that our peers have done and that they've given us feedback on. I think all that's important and we have to do that for each other.

But this is, for me, a moment of thinking about how we can set the stage for other organizations who likewise need to figure out what to do with theirs. So, I think it's an educative moment. I'm sorry my phone is ringing in the background. We've got time for perhaps one other question, I think, Felice.

**Levine:** We do. We have maybe a couple more anyhow. We have about six minutes, so let's take two more maybe.

**Pals:** Okay. What evaluation will AERA conduct in this virtual format to see what could be continued into future conferences?

**Levine:** Well, those are probably somewhat separable issues, although some host virtual conference survey is -- let me put it this way -- not unlikely. You know, we have been doing surveys, this would need a dramatic redesign. And we need to think through the way we have done those surveys is, within hours after the closing session you would get a survey in your email about your experience. And we had also specialized surveys around sessions.

We clearly want to get the feedback. We want to know what is going on. And we need to think through, I'm going to say, the do-ability and the affordability of having that. But we anticipate some -- if not on the afternoon of the 21st -- some post-meeting survey. Now keep in mind -- this is the researcher in me -- that we know who -- or we believe we know who's at an annual meeting because they registered, and they participated.

We will know who's participating, but we actually will not know who's viewing;

although we can potentially, I think -- as I'm saying that, we can potentially develop at least a portal where those could self-report that they viewed. But our survey, itself, could only be to those who participated. We could reach out to the registrants who did participate, and hope that they viewed, and hope for others reporting.

So, I expect we'll do something like that. But what I know, what that experience has been, we anticipate making benefit of that experience in any number of ways, to think through what that might mean for ways of transforming, and expanding, and reinventing our place-based conference. How that might shape other things that we do in regional and local kinds of meetings. For example, AERA has and was committed to having, and it's been very successful, to have a national lecture symposia series that we conducted in 2016 and '17 and sought to resume in '19.

And we decided with our virtual conference center that we have just opened, which was intended to be both place-based and virtual; even though we do aspire to go to the museums and the public libraries, and the other public places that we went to in six different locations, for this year as we are unfolding our virtual conference center, and our place-based conference center, we're going to have satellite sites.

So, similarly, this experience will add to our thinking enormously. And will change, just as we altered the Brown Lecture because of these national lecture series. We're going to learn tremendously, not only about the annual meetings.

So, when I parse the question into saying we will undoubtedly have some form of post-meeting survey, that won't be dispositive, but you will contribute and have an opportunity to contribute ideas. Not just about the annual meeting, but what we've learned together about things that might shape or reshape other opportunities that we either currently provide or might be able to offer much faster than we recognize, with the changing technology and capacity, and platforms, in our command.

**Walker:** I think we probably will not have time for an additional question. But I

do want to thank you, Felice, for the amazing way you've engaged all the questions for two consecutive days. Thank you so very much. I also want to say to all of those who are still online, that I can see that there are a number of questions that were sent that you didn't get answers to today.

I want you to know that every question is being taken on by the staff. It's being compiled, and at some point you should get an answer to that question. So, nothing's being thrown away, even if your particular question didn't get asked or answered. Thank you to everybody for taking the time to be on. Felice, any final statement?

**Levine:** No. I want to just go out with thank you. This is really helpful to us and we hope helpful to you. Continue to give us feedback through the executive director email box, or the meetings email box, because we take it seriously and see this as a co-creation opportunity. So, thank you. And thank you for sticking with us.

**Walker:** Absolutely. Thank you guys so much, and I want to underscore what Felice said. We really are in it together. So, we'll see what happens. Take care. Everybody have great days, night, afternoon, evening, whatever it is in your world. Take care. Bye.

**END OF MEETING**