

# Helen DeVitt Jones Invited Keynote Speech at AERA Sponsored by Texas Tech University: Dr Cheryl Craig Unveils ‘New Tools’ for Teacher Education Research

On April 26, 2025, the College of Education at Texas Tech University organized its annual Helen DeVitt Jones Teacher Education Keynote speech and Reception at the AERA Annual Meeting in Denver. Held from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Denver, the lecture—titled “Increasing Educational Impact: ‘New’ Tools for Teaching and Teacher Education Research”—drew over 100 in-person attendees and 47 online participants, the largest audience in the event’s eight-year history, according to the chair of the Helen DeVitt Jones Endowment Fund.

In her keynote speech, Dr Cheryl J. Craig helped uncover two methodological tools designed to deepen the reach and practical relevance of teacher education research. The first tool, serial interpretation, invites scholars to “look across” multiple single-case exemplars—ranging from teacher attrition studies to cross-site metaphors—to surface shared patterns and hidden discoveries that individual studies alone might miss. The second, the use of narrative, emphasizes a more intentional crafting of stories and metaphors—such as “the dragon in school backyards” and “butterfly under a pin”—to translate complex inquiry moves into insights that resonate with policymakers and practitioners alike.

Throughout her address, Dr Craig wove in reflections on her own research journey—from her Canadian doctoral work under Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly to urban reform partnerships in Houston—illustrating how these tools bolster both cross-study analysis and the mobilization of research findings in real-world educational settings. She described, for example, how serial interpretation of the China Study Abroad data yielded nine manuscripts uncovering teachers’ embodied use of digital tools, and how the use of narrative dimensions made public accountability in Texas classrooms.

Attendees from Pakistan, India, Switzerland, Germany, and across the United States spoke with enthusiasm about Dr Craig’s lecture. Dr Stefinee Pinnegar described it as “the most inspirational talk Dr Craig has ever given,” praising its combination of rigorous analysis and narrative depth. A faculty member from Pakistan observed, “I’ve attended dozens of sessions, but none linked research methods so directly to meaningful classroom change.” An early-career scholar from India noted, “Dr Craig demonstrated how to ground our work in the real-world experiences of the people we study.” Colleagues from Switzerland and Germany emphasized the global relevance of her approaches and plan to enact serial interpretation and conferring circles in their own research settings.

