

## The John Grierson Keynote: Critiquing and reflecting

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To begin this conference by remembering John Grierson feels exactly right. In his career and in himself, John combined the qualities that we, as LAS practitioners, would most like to bring to higher education: a passion for teaching, combined with a critical perspective; and a commitment to developing

a collaborative community around our work. We can only hope to do these things with the gentle humour, and sense of proportion, that his colleagues remember in John. This conference has been dedicated to examining the progress we have (and have not) made, as a professional community, over the last ten years, and the ways in which we would like to consolidate and advance our position. We have been invited to reflect critically on all aspects of our work and on our institutional roles and relationships; and we hope to emerge with an association, a name, and a journal. The process of debating these matters over the last year or so has revealed dissatisfaction with the identities assigned to us by our institutions, though it has not produced unanimity about the identities we would prefer to project. The concerns expressed have been less about the work we do than about the ways that others perceive it. In this address, I would like to explore the implications of these discussions, for ourselves and for the

kind of association we want to take into the future.

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