

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A Forum on the Past, Present, and Potential

Futures of Nontheatrical Media Studies

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16 – 9:00 PDT/ 12:00 EDT/ 16:00 UDT

Register at <https://nontheatricalforum.eventbrite.com>

The English-language term “nontheatrical” has long been used to connote modes of “difference” — in form, function, and exhibition contexts — from dominant commercial media cultures. Recent scholarship has drawn attention to a capacious body of historically neglected works in many understudied genres (such as educational film, industrials, and science films) and developed a variety of interdisciplinary interpretative frameworks to make sense of their meaning.

As this burgeoning subfield continues to grow, the “nontheatrical” label has become inadequate to represent the global community of scholars and archivists working in the field.

With an eye towards renaming the Society for Cinema and Media Studies’ “Nontheatrical Film and Media” Scholarly Interest Group, this forum invites participants across disciplines to assess the explanatory value and — just as importantly — the limitations of the SIG’s “nontheatrical” name. What more nuanced and inclusive terms might better represent the complexity of objects, approaches, and politics that animate the study of nontheatrical media? How would renaming the SIG allow us to move beyond the fields’ linguistic bias towards English-language scholarship? How might renaming the SIG invite scholars of digital media to consider the value of nontheatrical and useful media as an explanatory framework?

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