Art curator Thelma Golden has described postblack art as being “characterized by artists who [are] adamant about not being labeled as ‘black’ artists, though their work [is] steeped, in fact deeply interested, in redefining complex notions of blackness.” Using Golden’s critical framework, this talk will analyze how contemporary African American fiction explores, expands, and redefines existing notions of blackness through a reading of four novels: Trey Ellis’s *Platitudes* (1988), Percival Everett’s *Erasure* (2001) and *I Am Not Sidney Poitier* (2009), and Paul Beatty’s *Slumberland* (2008). Central questions to be discussed will include: What is a black text? What is a black author? What makes a fictional text authentically black?

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