



Nordamerikastudienprogramm
Institut für Anglistik, Amerikanistik und Keltologie



Lecture Series

"Current Issues in North American Studies and Cultural Studies"

Winter Term 2013-14

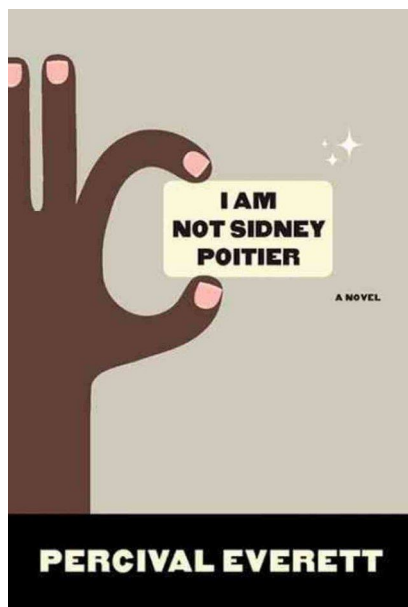
Christian Schmidt, M.A.

American/Intercultural Anglophone Studies, University of Bayreuth

"Postblack Aesthetics—'Redefining Complex Notions of Blackness' in Contemporary African American Literature"

Thursday • 9 January 2014 • 4:00–6:00 p.m.

Room 4 (3.002) • Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies • Regina-Pacis-Weg 7



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?

Christian Schmidt studied American Literary and Cultural Studies and Political Science at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and at Harvard University. He was a fellow of the DFG-*Graduiertenkolleg* "Cultural Hermeneutics: Perspectives on Difference and Transdifference" at Erlangen and is now a lecturer in American Studies and Intercultural Anglophone Studies at the University of Bayreuth. Currently, he is finishing his dissertation on "Postblack Aesthetics" in addition to working on a project on American country music.