ZAY DALE

3001 Wescoe Hall, University of Kansas || 1445 Jayhawk Blvd. || Lawrence, KS 66045 || zdale@ku.edu

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Academic Positions

Assistant Professor of English Literature, University of Kansas — Fall 2025-present

Faculty Affiliate, African American Studies — Fall 2025- present

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Education

PhD **University of Notre Dame** **May 2025**

English Literature

Dissertation: *The Aesthetics of Literary Violence in Black Literature*

Committee: Mark Sanders (chair), Francisco Robles, Cyraina Johnson-Roullier

BA **San Francisco State University** **May 2018**

English Literature

Research Interests

Black Radical Tradition; Aesthetic violence; Twentieth Century Literature; The Novel; Modernity; Metaphysics; Phenomenology; Textiles; Slave Narratives; Literary Criticism; Black Cultural Theory.

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Dale, Zay. "Fiber to Flesh: Textiles and Black Resistance in Slave Narratives." *Humanities*. Vol. 15.2 (January 2026): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.3390/h15020022

Dale, Zay. "Who Sees Ghosts? Metaphysical Blackness in *The Hairy Ape*." *Eugene O'Neill Review*. Penn State University Press. Vol. 46.1 (March 2025): 45-56. https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/2/article/954293

Dale, Zay. "Black Radical Aesthetics of Violence and the Resistance of Being in Gwendolyn Brooks' *Maud Martha*." *The Comparatist*. University of North Carolina Press. Vol. 48, (November 2024): 57-69. <https://doi.org/10.1353/com.2024.a940109>

Editor-Reviewed Articles

Dale, Zay. "Improvising Survival: Black Junior Scholars and the Politics of the Classroom." *Profession*, Modern Language Association. Forthcoming Fall 2026.

Dale, Zay. "Black Flesh and the Refusal of Capture in Ryan Coogler's *Sinners*." *Soapbox Journal for Cultural Analysis*. Fall 2025, online.

Dale, Zay. "Ethereal Fabric: Exploring Textiles and Black Existence in America." *ASAP/J*. Johns Hopkins University Press. Summer 2024, online.

Book Chapters

Dale, Zay. "Violence in Mid-Twentieth Century African American Literature." *The Cambridge History of the African American Novel*. *Cambridge University Press.* (Forthcoming).

Dale, Zay. "The Essence of the Black Man: An Exploration of Black Masculinity through Double Consciousness in *Native Son*." In *Reimagining Black Masculinities: Race, Gender, and Public Space*. Editors: Dr. Mika'il Petin and Dr. Mark C. Hopson. (Lexington Press), November 2020, pp. 129-137. (In Print).

Book Reviews

Dale, Zay. Review of Anna Arabindan-Kesson, *Black Bodies, White Gold: Art, Cotton, and Commerce in the Atlantic World* (2021). *Journal of Midwest Modern Language Association*. Volume 55, Number 1, Spring 2022, pp. 153-156. <https://doi.org/10.1353/mml.2022.a913844>

Public Facing Essays

Dale, Zay. "Studying Sean O'Casey and Negro Spirituals in the National Library of Ireland," *Europe in the World*, Nanovic Institute for European Studies. (Fall 2023).

Articles In Preparation

Dale, Zay. "Corrupt Black Flesh."

Books In Review

Dale, Zay. *Regenerative Blackness: Black Skin, Flesh, and Being* (edited collection). *Bloomsbury Press*. (In review Fall 2026).

Articles In Review

Dale, Zay. 'Sing for us a Negro Spiritual': Black Radical Irruptions in Sean O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*." *New Hibernia Review*. (In review Summer 2026)

Monographs in Progress

Black Radical Aesthetics of Literary Violence 1896-1956
Fiber to Flesh: Textiles and Black Existence in American Slave Narratives

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Select Fellowships and Grants

2026-2027	Shirley Cundiff and Jordan L. Haines Faculty Fellowship, University of Kansas
2025	Fostering Research Expansion in the Social Sciences & Humanities Grant (FRESSH), Dean's Office, University of Kansas
2025	Research Intensive Course Grant for "Black Bodies in British Literature," Center for Undergraduate Research & Fellowships, University of Kansas
2025	Northeast Modern Language Association Grant (NeMLA)
2024-2025	Nanovic Institute for Global Affairs Graduate Fellowship, University of Notre Dame
2024	Graduate Teaching Fellow for London Global Gateway, University of Notre Dame
2023	Frazier Thompson Research Award, University of Notre Dame
2023	Justice Graduate Fellowship, University of Notre Dame

2022	Faculty Fellowship for Westville Correctional Facility, Holy Cross College
2022	Fred Wilkins Graduate Student Award, Eugene O'Neill Society
2022	International Network for Comparative Humanities Travel Grant, Princeton
2022	Irish Seminar Fellowship, University of Notre Dame
2021	Initiative on Race and Resilience Research Grant, University of Notre Dame
2020-2025	Presidential Fellowship in Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Notre Dame
2018	Debra Plousha Moore Scholarship, San Francisco State University

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Select Conference Presentations

Chair and Presenter, "Black Flesh and Corruption," *Modern Language Association* (MLA), Los Angeles, CA. January 2027.

Organizer, "Microperiods and Metanarratives," *Modern Language Association* (MLA), Los Angeles, CA. January 2027.

Invited Speaker, "Improvising Survival: Black Junior Scholars and the Politics of the Classroom," Critical University Studies Seminar, University of Kansas. October 2026.

"Disruptive Soundscapes: Black Voice, Irish Modernism, and the Transatlantic Exchange in Joyce's "The Dead," *Modernist Nationalisms Conference*, University of Oxford. September 2026.

Organizer and Chair, "Regenerative Blackness—Skin, Flesh, and the Future of Being," *Northeast Modern Language* (NeMLA), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. March 2026.

Invited Keynote Address, "Corrupt Black Flesh," English Graduate Student Symposium, University of Notre Dame, February 2026.

"Black Aesthetic Violence and Political Dissent in *Native Son* and 'The FB Eye Blues,' *Modern Language Association* (MLA), Toronto, Canada. January 2026.

Invited Speaker, "Fiber to Flesh: Textiles and Black Existence in American Slave Narratives," *Kansas African Studies Center Ujamaa Colloquium Series*, University of Kansas, Fall 2025.

"Mobility, Violence, and the Flâneur Figure in Richard Wright's *Native Son*," *Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association* (PAMLA), San Francisco, CA. November 2025.

Invited Speaker, "Teaching Afrofuturism in Prisons," *Annual Sturgeon Symposium: Expanding Speculative Horizons*, University of Kansas, October 2025.

"Spasmodic Ruptures: Black Radical Laughter and the Resistance of Being," *Northeast Modern Language* (NeMLA), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. March 2025.

"Obscured Horror: Blackness and the Nonhuman in Jordan Peele's *Get Out* and *Nope," Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association* (PAMLA)*,* Palm Springs, CA. November 2024.

"Literary Improvisation and the Philosophy of Black Aesthetic Violence," *Antrim Literature Virtual*, Harvard University. October 2024.

Invited Guest Speaker, "On the Violence of Textiles and Black Skin," *Costume Institute of the African Diaspora Conference*, London, UK. July 2024.

"Black Radical Aesthetics of Violence and the Resistance of Being in Gwendolyn Brooks' *Maud Martha*," *American Literature Association* (ALA), Chicago, IL. May 2024.

"On Darkness and Shadows in Alain Robbe-Grillet's *The Erasers*," *International Network for Comparative Humanities*. Princeton University, held in Strasbourg, France. Spring 2024.

Invited Guest Speaker, "My Experience Teaching Black Literature in Westville Correctional Facility." *The Graduate School* and *Center for Social Concerns*. University of Notre Dame. January 2023.

'You Got Ether in Those Clothes': Black Textiles and Radical Violent Irruptions in *Invisible Man*, *Midwest Modern Language Association* (MMLA), Minneapolis, Minnesota. November 2022. Panel Organizer: African American Literature.

"Who Sees Ghosts? Loss and Death of Whiteness in *The Hairy Ape*," *Eugene O'Neill Society International Conference*, Suffolk University. July 2022.

'Sing for us a Negro Spiritual': Black Radical Irruptions in Sean O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie, American Conference for Irish Studies* (ACIS), Virtual National Conference. April 2022.

"Black Bodies and Catastrophic Spaces: Reading *Their Eyes Were Watching God* as Climatic Injustice Fiction," Cornell University. April 2022.

Interviews

Invited Podcast Interview, "Fiber to Flesh: Politics of Textiles," *(Un)Box the Soap Podcast,* Spring 2026.

Teaching Experience

Courses Taught at the University of Kansas

English 205: Honors Literature Seminar (Fall 2026)

English 338: Introduction to African American Literature (Fall 2025, Spring 2026)

English 530: Modern and Contemporary Irish Drama (Fall 2026)

English 590: Black Bodies in British Literature (capstone course, Fall 2025)

English 569: Modernism (capstone course, Spring 2026)

Courses Taught at the University of Notre Dame

English Literature 24453: Black Aesthetic Irruptions in British Literature (London, Spring 2024)

Africana Studies 21994: Black American Horror Aesthetics in Literature and Film (Fall 2023)

Writing and Rhetoric 13300: Race and Identity in America (2021-2022)

Courses Taught at Westville Correctional Facility (courtesy of Holy Cross College)

English 101: Writing and Rhetoric: Race and Identity in America (Fall 2022)

Advising

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Committees

Maizie Ferguson (2026)
Ava Wollerman (2026)
Emma Goulding (2026)

Journal Experience

Advising Managing Editor for *Religion and Literature,* University of Notre Dame (2023-2025)

Managing Editor for *Religion and Literature*, University of Notre Dame (2022-2023), issues Vol. 55.2-3 and Vol. 56. 1

Peer Reviewer for Journals

Liquid Blackness: Journal of Aesthetics and Black Studies, *American Quarterly*, *South Atlantic Review*

Service Work

Elected to University Governance, Faculty Research Committee, University of Kansas (2027-2030)

Elected Advisor to the Department of English Chair, University of Kansas (2026-present)

Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of English, University of Kansas (2026-present)

Center for Undergraduate Research & Fellowship Reviewer, University of Kansas (2026)

Elected to the Executive Committee for 20th and 21st Century American Literature, MLA (2025-2029), **current secretary MLA 2027, chair of the committee for MLA 2028 Denver**

Center for Teaching Excellence Ambassador for the Department of English, University of Kansas (2025-present)

Study Hall Supervisor, Westville Correctional Facility (2022-2025)

Initiative on Race and Resilience Affiliate, University of Notre Dame (2021-2025)

International Network for Comparative Humanities Affiliate, Princeton (2021-2025)

References–available upon request.