

Professor Collett Tracey (1963-2026)

Professor Collett Tracey was an extraordinary teacher and mentor. Her colleagues, students, and friends at Carleton University mourn her passing and celebrate her life.

An Associate Professor in the Teaching Stream in the Department of English, Collett began teaching at Carleton in 1999. Her arrival in the Department was a return: she completed her M.A. in English at Carleton in 1994 (following a B.A. at the University of Ottawa).

She followed her M.A. with a doctorate in modernist Canadian poetry at the Université de Montréal. Her dissertation, "The Little Presses That Did: A History of First Statement Press, Contact Press, and Delta Canada, and an Assessment of Their Rise and Contribution to the Development of Modernist Poetry in Canada During the Middle Part of the Twentieth Century," was supervised by Professor Michael Gnarowski.

At Carleton, Collett was beloved by the students who took her first-year classes and her classes in Canadian poetry and fiction and modernist literatures. She was a decorated teacher: nominated twice for the TVO Best Lecturer Award, she received numerous Teaching Achievement and Excellence Awards from Carleton's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Collett was an enthusiastic mentor and friend to these same students, supporting and leading many creative writing initiatives, most notably In/Words Magazine and Press (2001-2019). At various points, In/Words was a literary magazine, a chapbook press, a writers' circle, and a reading series (as the latter, it was one of the founding series of VERSeFest, Ottawa's international poetry festival). Former student editors as well as poets who had early or first publications with the magazine have gone on to remarkable careers as writers, editors, and publishers in Canada.

Collett will be missed by her colleagues, students, and the many writers whose careers she supported and celebrated.

An evening of poetry in Collett's honour will be planned by Carleton's Department of English later this year.