



I'm Colleen Snyder, a writer, speaker, and lifelong learner based in the mountains of Virginia. My work explores language, culture, genetic heritage, and the ways people find meaning, belonging, and connection across time and place. I'm especially drawn to small, independent projects and to learning as an ongoing, lived practice.

My path into this work began unexpectedly. During the pandemic, I discovered that I carry a rare genetic mutation that caused my gigantism. What began as a set of test results became a deeper inquiry into science, history, and identity, connecting me with others who share this genetic legacy as well as with researchers studying the condition. That journey led to my debut book, *In Search of Giants: The Quest to Find the Genetic Giants of Northern Ireland*, which explores the land of Irish giants, both living and legendary, and traces my effort to understand where I fit within that landscape.

Along the way, I reconnected with my Irish roots in ways I had never anticipated. I began studying the Irish language and found myself part of a global community of Irish speakers, a modern, online Gaeltacht stretching from Europe to North America and beyond. That experience deepened my interest in contemporary Irish culture, mythology, and the living presence of language.

Today, my work centers on essays, talks, and a series of small booklets inspired by Irish mythic figures, particularly women from Irish folklore. Through writing, workshops, and speaking engagements, I explore questions of identity, belonging, and what it means to begin again, especially later in life.

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Talks & Workshops

- In Search of Giants
 - Genetic heritage, Irish history, and storytelling based on my book.
- Genetic Genealogy as Inquiry
 - An introduction to genetic genealogy emphasizing context, ethics, and questions rather than consumer DNA results.
- Irish Language, Myth, and Belonging
 - A cultural talk exploring Irish mythology, language, and contemporary learning.
- Making Small Books
 - A hands-on workshop on creating booklets and zines through small-scale publishing.
- Writing 101
 - A reflective workshop for adults beginning or returning to creative non-fiction writing

Talks and workshops can be adapted for different audiences and time frames.

Speaking Engagements

- Royal College of Surgeons' Hunterian Museum, London
- U.K./Ireland Endocrinology Meeting, Belfast, Northern Ireland
- Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland
- Eton College Medical Society, Eton, United Kingdom
- Scoil Naomh Molaise, County Sligo, Ireland
- Handley Library, Winchester, Virginia
- Pittsburgh Irish Festival, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Maryland Irish Festival, Baltimore, Maryland
- Samuels Public, Manassas, and Potomac Libraries in Virginia

A full list of past engagements is available upon request.

Selected Media Coverage

- *The Endocrinologist* — "In Search of Giants: Finding the Genetic Giants of Northern Ireland" (Spring 2025)
- BBC News Northern Ireland — Video interview with Julian Fowler (May 2022)
- *The Winchester Star* — Book launch coverage (March 2025)
- *Northern Virginia Daily* — Samuels Public Library presentation (August 2024)

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