

JOWITA BYDLOWSKA

Author | Journalist | Speaker | Writing Educator

PROFILE

Polish-Canadian author, journalist and speaker whose work explores addiction, recovery, shame, mental health, sexuality, motherhood and human relationships. Author of five books, including the nationally bestselling memoir *Drunk Mom* (2013) and *Unshaming: A Memoir of Recovery, Relapse, and What Comes After* (2026). For more than a decade, Bydlowska has brought difficult and often stigmatized private experiences into public conversation through books, journalism, broadcast media, podcasts, festivals, lectures and workshops.

SELECTED MEDIA & SPEAKING

CBC Radio - *The Current*, 2026 - Extended interview with Matt Galloway on addiction, recovery, relapse and *Unshaming*.

Kobo in Conversation, 2026 - Featured conversation with Nathan Maharaj on shame, relapse and *Unshaming*.

rabble radio, 2026 - Featured interview on *Drunk Mom*, *Unshaming*, addiction and motherhood.

Planta: On the Line, 2026 - Extended interview on addiction, relapse, recovery and shame.

The Whisper Network, 2025 - Featured guest for "Unshaming Yourself with Jowita Bydlowska."

Blood Moon Radio, 2025 - Conversation about sexuality, shame, aging and speaking the unspeakable.

NPR - *Tell Me More*, 2014 - Interview with Michel Martin on alcoholism, motherhood, stigma and *Drunk Mom*.

TVO - *The Agenda with Steve Paikin*, 2013 - Television interview on *Drunk Mom*, alcoholism, motherhood and recovery.

Eden Mills Writers' Festival, 2026 - Featured writer presenting *Unshaming*.

TYPE Books, Toronto, 2026 - Public conversation with publisher Doug Pepper on sobriety, relapse, shame and *Unshaming*.

Flying Books - *Writing Sex*, 2026 - Creator and instructor of a sold-out public workshop on writing sexuality and explicit material.

University of Toronto - Invited talk for PhD students on memoir writing.

BOOKS

Unshaming: A Memoir of Recovery, Relapse, and What Comes After - Signal / McClelland & Stewart, 2026

Monster - Anvil Press, 2024

Possessed - Rare Machines / Dundurn Press, 2022

GUY - Buckrider Books / Wolsak & Wynn, 2016

Drunk Mom - Doubleday Canada, 2013; HarperCollins Australia, 2013; Penguin USA, 2014

SELECTED WRITING

Fiction & essays: Work has appeared in *The Walrus*, *Hazlitt*, *The Fiddlehead*, *Queen's Quarterly*, *subTerrain*, *Maisonneuve*, *The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *ELLE Canada*, *Chatelaine*, *Salon*, *Today's Parent*, *Lenny*, *CBC* and other publications.

GRANTS & CURRENT WORK

Recipient of multiple grants from the **Canada Council for the Arts** and the **Ontario Arts Council** supporting literary work. Most recently awarded Canada Council for the Arts funding for *How to Love an Addict*, a book-in-progress examining addiction from the perspective of the partners, parents, children, siblings, friends and others who love people with addictions.

SELECTED ANTHOLOGIES & CRITICAL WORK

More Than a MILF: Sex and the Aging Female Body, ed. Robyn Diner, 2026 - creative nonfiction addressing sexuality and middle age.

Devouring Tomorrow: Fiction from the Future of Food, eds. Jeff Dupuis and A.G. Pasquella, 2025 - "Marianne Is Not Hungry."

Secret Sex, Dundurn Press, 2024 - "Praying Mantis."

Best Canadian Stories 2022, Biblioasis - "Mother."

Best Canadian Stories 2017, Biblioasis - "Funny Hat."

She's Shameless: Women Write About Growing Up, Rocking Out, and Fighting Back, eds. Stacey May Fowles and Megan Griffith-Greene - "Losing My Virginity."

Critical study: Bydlowska's writing is examined in Dagmara Drewniak's *Figura domu: Szkice o najnowszej anglojęzycznej literaturze emigrantów z ziem polskich i ich potomków w Kanadzie* (Jagiellonian University Press, 2022), a scholarly study of contemporary Polish-Canadian literature.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Bydlowska's writing has been taught at Canadian universities, including Toronto Metropolitan University and Athabasca University, and has been the subject of scholarly study of contemporary Polish-Canadian literature.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Writing, editing & mentorship - Private writing mentor, editor and manuscript consultant working across fiction and nonfiction.

Experience includes book-length ghostwriting, developmental editing and ongoing mentorship of emerging writers.

Teaching & workshops - Previously taught creative writing at Toronto Metropolitan University and OCAD University. Has led independent workshops and talks on memoir, fiction, short stories, dialogue, research, sexuality and writing from lived experience.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Shame, disclosure & unshaming - Published and public work examining shame, secrecy, disclosure and the experience of being witnessed by others.

Addiction, recovery & relapse - More than a decade of published work and public conversation about alcoholism, sobriety, relapse and recovery.

Motherhood, postpartum depression & maternal expectations - Published work examining motherhood, postpartum depression, addiction, and the cultural expectations placed on mothers, particularly the shame created when lived experience conflicts with ideals of the "good mother."

Writing difficult material - Experience writing and speaking about stigmatized subjects including addiction, motherhood, mental illness, sexuality, jealousy, betrayal and failure.

Memoir, fiction & storytelling - Professional practice across memoir, novels, short fiction, essays, journalism, editing, ghostwriting and teaching.

EDUCATION

Master of Journalism (MJ), 2004

Ryerson School of Journalism (now Toronto Metropolitan University), Toronto, Ontario

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, 2000

University of Western Ontario (now Western University), London, Ontario