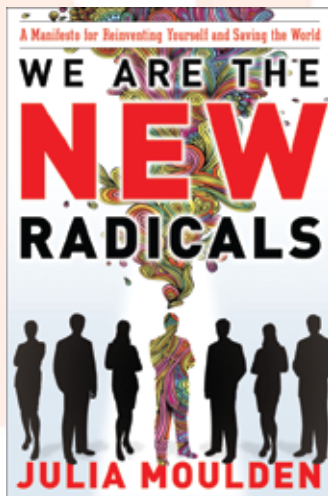


Views from Local Talent

By Gloria Hildebrandt

This time, we feature three recent noteworthy books by authors and photographers who live, work or have their roots in Escarpment lands.



We Are the New Radicals

By Julia Moulden

Once upon a time, **Julia Moulden and I were in the same grade** at Limehouse Public School. I admired her writing even then, and remember an impressive Centennial Year project she created about the prime ministers. We also attended Georgetown District High School together. Julia went on to build an impressive career as a speechwriter for prestigious clients. A few years ago, a painful divorce jarred her into changing her life.

In a special interview with *Escarpment Views*, she explained “I wasn’t sure I wanted to do the same thing for the next 20 years. I began to reflect on the idealism of my youth, and wondered if I could find a way to connect that young woman with the mature professional I’d become.”

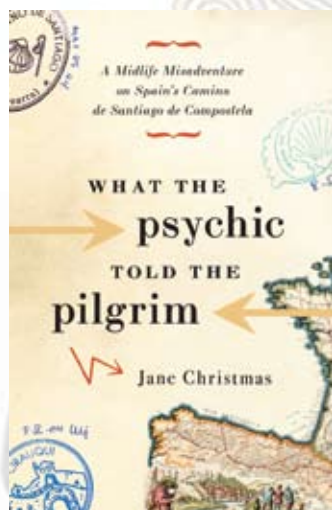
She began interviewing people she admires, and came to identify them as “new radicals,” or people who realize that how they earn their living can become the way they give back.

We Are the New Radicals is a book of short profiles of inspiring people who are saving their chosen parts of the world. Examples are Jamie Kennedy, who champions local farmers and products, and Mary Gordon, founder of Roots of Empathy, a classroom program that prevents bullying by teaching empathy and caring.

Julia is now based in Toronto, but **she tells us** “Growing up with a close connection to nature helped me appreciate the natural world as something precious, and not just another consumable. We could **see the Escarpment from our living room** window and it looms large in my memory.”

We Are the New Radicals contains worksheets to help readers determine how they might develop into a new stage of their own lives. The Web site wearethenewradicals.com offers an online community and more information.

McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 2008, \$24.95



What the Psychic Told the Pilgrim: A Midlife Misadventure on Spain's Camino de Santiago de Compostela

By Jane Christmas

Hamilton writer Jane Christmas gives an eye-opening account of hiking the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, an ancient pilgrimage

route that covers 800 km of varied terrain in northern Spain and takes about one month to complete.

In an interview with *Escarpment Views*, Christmas explains “What initially attracted me to the Camino was the concept of making a spiritual/religious pilgrimage, and the Camino de Santiago was constructed as a route leading to the shrine of James the Apostle. I also liked the idea that the Camino, in its 1,000-year history, has created a network of hostels and simple path-side cafes that cater to the pilgrim traffic. The route itself swings through some charming medieval towns and cities as well as through woods, and meadows and wide, vacant plains.”

What’s astonishing is how overpopular the route is. Christmas writes of floods of pilgrims competing for bunk beds in the *refugios* or pilgrim lodgings. Hot showers aren’t guaranteed. Breakfasts can consist of a piece of stale baguette and reheated coffee. The route is so crowded that spiritual reflection would seem to be impossible.

Ironically, Christmas lives close to the Bruce Trail, but **she admits to Escarpment Views** that she wasn’t totally aware of the Trail before she began training for the Camino.

Although **she’s now working on hiking the entire Bruce Trail**, it won’t be all at once because, as she tells *Escarpment Views*, “It’s not hospitable toward long-distance trekkers like me who do not and will not camp.” She observes that European culture is built around walking and public transit, and adds that on the Bruce Trail, “A judicious and respectful use of conveniences like hostels and rest stops would go a long way to creating a culture of walkers in this country.”

Her book may make you appreciate the stillness that can be experienced on the Bruce Trail, but it is an entertaining tale of middle-aged

women seeking meaning in life while battling overcrowding, blisters, lecherous male pilgrims and line ups for *café con leche*.

Greystone Books, 2007, \$21.95



Niagara Escarpment: A Photographic Journey from Niagara Falls to Tobermory

Sandy Bell, Vic MacBournie and John MacRae

Terrific views of lands close to the Niagara Escarpment fill this book. All were photographed by Sandy Bell, Vic MacBournie or John MacRae, who met in a photographic club in Burlington and went on to form The Spirit of Nature, which works to **protect natural areas**.

Large, full-colour photographs completely fill about 106 of the over-sized pages. Text is minimal, only serving to identify and explain the subject of each photo. **Joan Little, former chair** of the Niagara Escarpment Commission, has written an introduction that provides a comprehensive description and history of the Niagara Escarpment and efforts to protect it. This is fascinating reading in itself, but together with the photographs, makes a compelling case for the claim that these lands are of **worldwide significance**.

James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 2006, \$55