**History Lesson**

Out of the belly of Christopher’s ship

a mob bursts

Running in all directions

Pulling furs off animals

Shooting buffalo

Shooting each other

left and right

Father mean well

waves his makeshift wand

forgives saucer-eyed Indians

Red coated knights

gallop across the prairie

to get their men

and to build a new world

Pioneers and traders

bring gifts

Smallpox, Seagrams

and rice krispies

Civilization has reached

the promised land

Between the snap crackle pop

of smoke stacks

and multicoloured rivers

swelling with flower powered zee

are farmers sowing skulls and bones

and miners

pulling from gaping holes

green paper faces

of a smiling English lady

The colossi

in which they trust

while burying

breathing forests and fields

beneath concrete and steel

stand shaking fists

waiting to mutilate

whole civilizations

ten generations at a blow

Somewhere among the remains

of skinless animals

is the termination

to a long journey

and unholy search

for the power

glimpsed in a garden

forever closed

forever lost

-Jeannette Armstrong