



Jeannette Christine Armstrong

Jeannette Christine Armstrong is a Canadian author, educator, artist, and activist. She was born and grew up on the Penticton Indian reserve in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley, and fluently speaks both the Syilx and English language. Armstrong has lived on the Penticton Native Reserve for most of her life and has raised her two children there. In 2013, she was appointed Canada Research Chair in Okanagan Indigenous Knowledge and Philosophy. Armstrong's 1985 work *Slash* is considered the first novel by a First Nations woman in Canada.

Armstrong is Syilx Okanagan. Her mother, Lilly Louie, was from Kettle Falls and belonged to the Kettle River people, and Armstrong's father belonged to the mountain people who lived in the Okanagan Valley. As an Okanagan person, the land is intrinsically part of her identity, and she is deeply connected to the land she and her relatives were raised on. Her paternal grandfather, Thomas James Armstrong was the Irish husband of her paternal grandmother Christine Joseph. Armstrong's maternal great-grandmother was Theresa Quintasket, paternal aunt of Mourning Dove (Christine Quintasket). In the Okanagan kinship system Quintasket was a cousin-aunt to Armstrong's mother Lilly Louie (Quintasket was first cousin to Armstrong's maternal grandfather). In the Okanagan kinship system she would be recognized as Armstrong's grand-aunt (the same word in Okanagan). Armstrong identified strongly with the book "Cogwea, the Half-Blood," written by Mourning Dove, one of the earliest Native American women novelists in the United States. Controversy has arisen as a result of misunderstandings about her claim of this Okanagan recognized relationship to Christine Quintasket aka Mourning Dove. Armstrong is best known for her involvement with the En'owkin Centre and writing. She has written about topics such as creativity, education, ecology, and Indigenous rights.

SUMMARY

An outline of the text "I Stand with you Against Disorder" is an article by Jeanette Armstrong appeared in YES Magazine.org on November 8, 2005. It was adapted from another book namely *Paradigms Wars; Indigenous people's Resistance to Economic Globalization*. In this Article, Armstrong deals with the consequences of Economic Globalization. She also points out to the issues such as the threat of deposition, privatization, and exploitation of resources. She declares solidarity with the protests against cultural imperialism and also expresses her loyalty towards all the indigenous tribal communities who are becoming the victims of privatization of land. She brings the idea of altering the prevalent paradigms of development by uniting the Okanagans. Jeanette begins the essay by introducing herself to the readers. She describes the geographical and cultural features of her land. The Okanagan native tribes belong to the northern part of British Columbia, known as the Okanagan Valley. She goes on explaining how the native people meet their livelihood and how nature, for instance, the river influences their daily lives. She points out that when she introduces herself to her people in her own language, it signifies her goals and objectives, and reflect her thoughts. Armstrong believes in the ability of the mother tongue to captivate their emotions and feeling as it is. She thinks that it is difficult to express themselves in English or any other language, like the way they are. She writes, "when we say the Okanagan word for ourselves we are actually saying "the ones 'who are dream and land together". She points out the identity crisis when one's mother tongue is replaced with another language. She says that the dream is the closest word that approaches the meaning of the word Okanagan. She describes themselves as the dream, memory, and imagination. Another part of the word refers to that 'tied into one or part of everything else'. She believes that it is the dream part of them, and this unity or togetherness forms their community. The

Okanagan tribes have a deep connection with the environment, to the earth and they believe that their body is earth itself. Their word for body literary means “the land dreaming capacity”. Hence their body is the realm of their dreams, hopes, and wishes. As an Individual, an Okanagan possesses the four selves; the physical self, the emotional self, the thinking intellectual self, and spiritual self and all these four selves are deeply connected to mother earth. The word that represents their thinking/ logic and storage of information literally means "the spark that ignites". She adds that the phrase means the other capacities they engage in when the action taken is directed by the spark of memory once it is ignited. The emotional self of Okanagan helps them to connect everything to their heart, as does the word mean. everything is connected almost as inseparable. In addition, she talks about how the educational practices in Okanagan make them disciplined by collaborating themselves with other selves. They strongly believe that one’s intellectual self must be attached to the heart in order to make him humane. Okanagans are taught that each person is born into a family and in a community. In other words, each individual is a social animal. This truth cannot be neglected in any way. The action of one individual affects all the members of the family and community. The word that refers to the relationship to others means 'our one skin' They share the flesh of many people who came before and many ahead of them. The foremost teaching of Okanagans is that, the community comes first, then family and then only comes individuals because they strongly believe that the existence is meaningless without family and community.