

What I Do

by John Olson

When people ask what I do here is what I tell them: I take aim at the bank and strain to understand appliances. I cry and unite and slide and sow. I gossip and challenge. I rise from my slumber and grease the axles of my discontent. I run and grapple and sparkle and engage. I push and embody. I insist on pretzels and curl into a potato chip.

I argue with improbable zippers and hoist huge words of variegated meaning from the sugar of introspection.

I shout and control and talk and indicate. I stumble and float and sew catalogues of thought with the thread of analogy.

I secure the rope of my oaths and conk the heads of the dogmatic with the hammer of doubt. I wheel and stir and tremble and endure. I convulse and turn and despair and measure.

I display feelings of great witness and clasp the rails and try not to fall. I try to fit the social rhythms of the garden party. I do not succeed. I pack my bags and go.

I goad and skim and experience and bump. I plant flowers and trees and big ideas. I thunder and shine and signal and ooze. I grow into savage pugnacity and bite the air. I convulse and grab and purify and see. I furrow the earth and slap the buttocks of my mule. I sell books. I crack jokes. I trudge the winter streets of the soggy northwest and sigh and dip my bucket into a well of consciousness.

I trigger escape. I speed down the freeway. I perturb and cringe and glide and flood. I clutch and hunt and slop and sweeten. I nail my abandon to the air. I smack the ribs of a sawhorse with a lasso of misplaced time.

I mutate. I plant bombs of adjectives in perfectly good sentences. I tread the earth and try to harmonize with the motions of the planet.

I do the wash. I explode into light. I embezzle. I embarrass. I emboss.

I walk in circles dripping redwood and moss.

