

Stereotyping: the great American spectator sport

I need to clear up a little misunderstanding between myself and some of the ladies out there: It's come to my attention that some think I am a chauvinistic, unenlightened pig who derides women to make up for

narcissistic personality with cucumber envy marked by degrees of verbal flatulence—in short you're an arrogant big mouth who can't keep his opinions to himself—shall I type that up for you?" Now that's a professional artist at work.



Marvin Baker
Guest Columnist

I myself don't have a manual and Quick Books for billing purposes.

his own inadequacies. Nothing could be further from the truth, so I'd like to set your pretty little heads at ease. For starters, my favorite TV show, "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," stars a woman. Maxim—my favorite magazine—is dedicated to women. I even have a "Gloria Steinem for Playmate of the Year" T-shirt somewhere (although I think one of my ex-girlfriends may have swiped it). Hell, my ex-wife is a woman, in a cute she-demon sort of way. And another thing...

but I like to do what I can to help out whenever possible. To this end I've done a little cataloging of my own because, frankly, we can't always see ourselves as others see us. If you fit any of the following I am truly sorry:

Thesauriass: loud mouth. Known for intentionally substituting one similar sounding word for another to punctuate his derision ("I'm never going back to that tavern, they have that damn *teriyaki* singing every night..."). Loves anything that strays into his neck of the woods.

Sony Bono: owns every hi-tech audio/visual component known to man. Known for his PDA, HDTV, DVD, VCR, DTS, THX, UNIX, CPA, STD, MNBA and BMW. Loves porn since he's too strapped to date.

Y2quaker: speed freak with Internet access. Known for dismantling anything that can be broken down into more pieces. Only intact object in his home is the computer (but the case is missing). Loves www.gatesisabitch.com.

Green piece: first-time female crewmember on a global Save-the-Whales cruise. Known for boycotting tuna. Loves Keiko.

Rubber maid: veteran female crewmember on a global Save-the-Whales cruise. Known for freeing Willy at the drop of a hat. Loves tuna.

That's it for now. If they're still letting me do this come next week, I'll be delving into the hypocrisy of men and why we think our own daughters are beyond corrupting, while every other woman on this planet is fair game.

Feature

PBS' Roger Swain energizes vegetable symposium

ELISABETH MEYER
Staff Writer

Saturday's Vegetable Gardening Symposium drew about 300 people. They were attracted by the reputation of the speakers and the chance to talk with other gardeners.

Roger Swain, host of PBS's "The Victory Garden" and science editor at Horticulture magazine, headed this year's lineup, which also included more locally known folks.

Other presenters included Polly Gotesmann, who runs a community-supported agriculture farm in North Plains, Suzanne Ashworth, curator of Seed Saver Exchange, and Lynn Miller, a Sisters-area man who uses draft horses to farm.

The beginning of the gardening season coincides with the symposium well, says Bruce Nelson, a Horticulture dept instructor. "People are wired; they want to get back into the garden."

Most of the people who attend the day-long seminar aren't gardeners by trade, said Nelson. He estimates that only about 5 percent of attendees actually depend on farming for their livelihood. "These are recreational vegetable gardeners," he said. "And nationwide, gardening is the number-one hobby."

Still, the symposium is more than a light-hearted tip-swap session. Swain addressed many hot issues in agriculture at the symposium and in a special session with horticultural

students on Friday. In a question-and-answer time he called "the psychic gardeners' hotline," he fielded controversial and often very political queries about genetic engineering, biodynamic farming, hydroponics, population control and sustainable agriculture.

The symposium's appeal is the combination of practical advice and ecological and political awareness. Nelson estimates that one-third to one-half of the attendees have previously taken the symposium.

Swain's vibrant personality during the informal Friday talk also set the tone for Saturday. During the panel presentation, when audience members asked all four speakers gardening questions, his no-nonsense style dominated the discussion. When asked to comment on a doctor's advice against eating food grown near a highway, Swain replied, "I don't know where I'd go on this planet to be free of the backwash of civilization. Let's all...take naps, wear stretchy clothing, shoes that fit, and lighten up, okay?"

Swain stressed the difference

between significant risks and petty issues.

"One of the things I indulge in is going around the country talking about things that have nothing to do with gardening," he explained. "One of those is population control."

While he warned to the topic, though, Swain has hope that the population boom won't destroy the feasibility of small-time vegetable production. He commented, "I don't think it's useful to be pessimistic... Gardening is about people tending plants. Gardens make good neighbors."



ELISABETH MEYER / Clackamas Print

Roger Swain and assorted gardeners chat during lunch. The balmy weather drew many outside.

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