

The WILDER WEST...

the Art & Wit of DAVE WILDER



Cowgirl Pin-up

Boot Shopping

My old hiking boots were shot, that's what started the trouble. I needed a new pair and, since I was in the neighborhood, decided to give this new mountaineering shop in Sedona a try. There was a dazzling array on the wall and I was drawn to a particular pair that looked strong but comfy. I flagged down a blonde sales girl with a spray-on tan. She looked a bit like an Oompa Loompa modeling for the REI catalog. "Do you have these hiking boots in a size twelve," I asked.

"Um, those are recovery shoes," she said. Her tone implied that I might be the stupidest person she'd ever spoken to. "For after hiking," she added, making an arching, after-type gesture with her hands just in case I found spoken language too challenging.

"Recovery shoes?" I looked down at the Dollar Store flip-flops on my feet. "Okay." I put the shoe back and grabbed another off the faux-stone wall, this time making sure it was an actual hiking boot. "How 'bout these?" I asked, "Do they come in a twelve?"

"Men's or women's?" she asked.

"Um... men's."

"I'll take a look in back."

She reappeared a moment later with a large shoebox. "Here we are," she said. "I don't have a twelve, but these are an eleven so they might fit."

No, I thought, they will not fit, but like a dolt I sat down and tried them on anyway. They did not fit. "Nope," I said. "Too small."

"Hmmm," she said, looking up at the wall of shoes. She plucked another style down. "This is a really nice boot," she said, "a Merrel. I have these in a ten-and-a-half."

"I wear a twelve."

"Just a minute," she said, "I'll be right back with a pair you can try on."

She disappeared into the back again and I bolted for the door. Sedona, I decided, makes people crazy. People move there because they think the mystical red rocks are going to solve all their problems. Then they discover that all their problems moved there with them and they end up having to get a job selling hiking boots. This often has the effect of making them even crazier. No sane person would believe that shoe sizes are negotiable.

Dave Wilder's art can be seen at:

<http://www.wilderarts.com>

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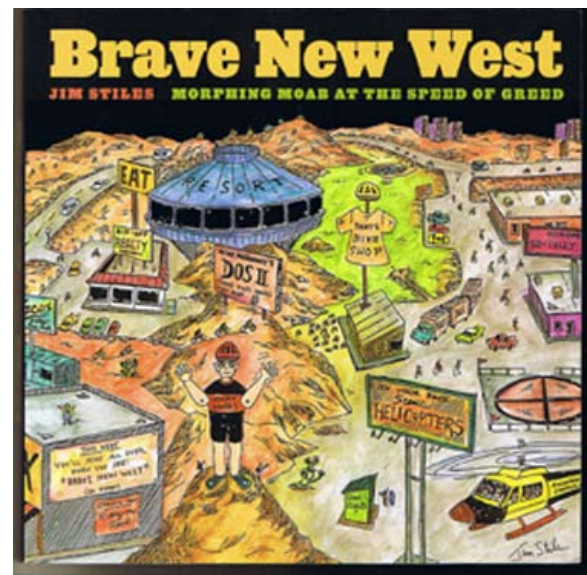
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