

NO SNEAKERS? NO T-SHIRT? NO LID? NO SERVICE!

Want to make people think you are a **RADICAL** right now? **WEAR A NECKTIE.** And if you really want to be **SEEN AS A LOON**, toss on a **SUIT**, too.

MICHAEL HAINEY tries to understand current “dress codes.”

Recently, I was having dinner with two friends when one confessed he had been the victim of a somewhat strange public shaming.

“I went to meet some buddies for drinks at Soho House in Dumbo, and a dude who works there told me to take off my tie. I said, ‘Why?’ He said I was wearing ‘corporate attire,’ which was in violation of their dress code, and in doing so I was making other members uncomfortable.”

I laughed, thinking he’d made up the story.

“Wait!” my other friend said. “The same thing happened to me at Ludlow House a few weeks ago. They said my tie was ‘not the kind of look’ they want to have in the bar. That I was making members ‘uncomfortable.’”

I have to interject here that both of these guys, in terms of personal style, are not McKinsey tools in navy suits and crappy ties. To me, *corporate attire* means you look like Wilbur Ross, that cadaver that chews. Both my friends, on the other hand, are distinguished men of a certain age and definite style, a style I confess to have nicked from. They have a taste I admire, classic/writer chic/faded WASP: jackets from Montedoro, knit ties from Charvet, decades-

old button-downs from Brooks Brothers that someone like Margiela would try to copy and charge you 800 bucks for, crisp khakis from Filson.

And yet... in the current world, where all norms seem to be

under siege, my pals, who possess that rarest thing of all—true personal style (which also happens to include wearing a tie)—are told that their appearance makes people “uncomfortable.”

If you want to blow

people’s minds right now, it ain’t about wearing your sneakers and T-shirt to “disrupt” someone’s preconceptions at a pitch meeting. That’s so 2003, brah. Now it’s about busting out a jacket and tie. And, increasingly, this

seems true for the cool kids.

As Kim Jones told me last year before his Dior show, after a decade of dominance by streetwear, there is a generation of men for whom the suit and tie now appear to be new—and rebellious.

Curious as to the definition of *corporate attire*, I called Soho House. The rep I spoke with admitted that Soho is now as flummoxed as the rest of us when it comes to defining “bad style.”

“Look,” she said, “the suit has changed, and the way we view them has changed. Style is evolving, so just like everyone else, we are now evolving our dress code. What is ‘corporate attire?’ We’re trying to figure it out, too.”

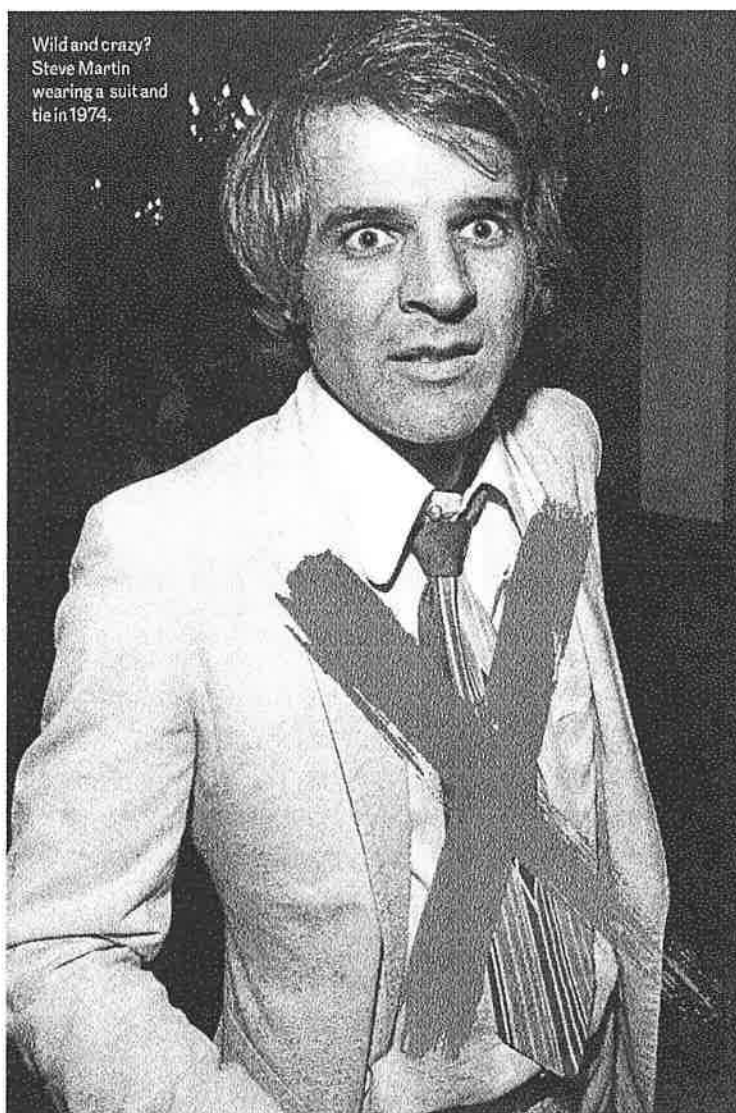
I asked if it’s a bit like pornography: “You know it when you see it.”

“Yes!” she said.

“Here’s the point: We don’t want a clump of six guys in suits, drinking. That’s not our vibe.”

It made me wonder what Soho would make of Andy Warhol, who had his own, rather corporate dress code—button-downs, repp ties, blue blazers. All of it worn, as my pal Glenn O’Brien once reminded me, because it was at the time the least-trendy way to dress.

“Andy Warhol? Dressed like that?” she asked. “Perfect.” ■



Wild and crazy?
Steve Martin
wearing a suit and
tie in 1974.