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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN
FACULTY OF FASHION AND TEXTILES
EMBROIDERY**

DOC UMENTRY
AN ANALYSIS OF THE DR. MARTEN BOOT
BY
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**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of History of Art & Design
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in
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INTRODUCTION

A practical, wearable, thick soled boot, designed as orthopaedic footwear is not an obvious conquering hero in the fashion stakes, let alone an essential item to grace countless wardrobes. However, the Dr. Marten boot has become a part of the style landscape as with the American jean 'the Levi 501'.

This thesis intends to discuss and analyse an object that is not only an item of fashion and a cult object, but one which has attracted an abundance of attention from many avenues in life, throughout the 1960's up until today in the 1990's, from the working class to the modern day slave to fashion. The object which has transcended class and has become a high fashion item is the Dr. Marten boot and it is an object for discussion within the thesis.

Through the years, the Dr. Marten boot has become so familiar to the everyday man, woman and child of society that it has picked up the commonly known 'Doc' and the abbreviated 'DM's' as two of its terms of reference.

This thesis presents selected avenues of today's popular culture and practicality for work wear, focusing on the Dr. Marten boot. In choosing this subject, one developed a clear critical point of view of a 'common object' rarely historically discussed in literature but referenced more particularly in the everyday media, such as newspapers and magazines. Therefore my information was found in contemporary newspapers and magazines such as 'The Independent' and 'The Mail on Sunday';

'The Independent' and 'The Face' magazine. Other related literature includes Juliet Ash 'Chic Trills', Dick Hebdidge 'Sub-cultures, the Meaning of Style' and Dewan Sudjic 'Cult Objects'

Chapter one discusses how this boot form, evolved from a skiing accident in the 1940's to being an orthopaedic requirement in Germany, to its adoption by the shoe manufacturer's Griggs & Co. under licence. The chapter looks at the establishment of the Dr. Marten label in the 1960's when the Dr. Marten boot was initially manufactured for the working class man. This chapter will also assess the subsequent adoption of the boot by various sub-culture groups in the 1960's and 70's.

Image and fashion are assessed in the second chapter in relation to the Dr. Marten boot. Image will be discussed in association with the Dr. Marten boot and how it differs from that of popular culture. The working image of the boot is referred to, selecting those boots worn by the Gardai and postperson.

The original Dr. Martens and their imitations are assessed in chapter three. This chapter discusses why imitation Dr. Marten boots are sold and the market for these boots.

In the fourth chapter the role of Dr. Marten boot in relation to retailing and advertising is discussed. A general and focused look at the retailers levels of awareness and involvement in the promotion of a product such as the 'Dr. Marten' boot. The chapter will also assess the manufacturer's Griggs & Co. advertising tactics in the 1960's up until today in the 1990's.

The final chapter assesses the post-modern woman from the 1960's to the 1990's. The chapter will examine the woman's movement in the 70's and 80's, the feminist issues concerning woman's dress and the punk woman in

relation to the Dr. Marten. In the 1990's, Griggs & Co. collaborated with the 'Red or Dead' company to design a pair of high heeled Dr. Martens specifically for women. The role of the high heeled Dr. Marten referring to the Lady Dr. Marten will be examined.

This thesis presents a boot that has created a large market for itself in contemporary society from its specialised creation in the 1960's to ^{its} their adoption into mainstream fashion.

Chapter One

The Birth of the Air Wair Dr. Marten boot.

Sub-culture Adoption in the 60's and 70's.

The birth of the air wair Dr. Marten boot in the 1960's, to their adoption by sub-cultures such as the skinheads and punks in the 70's are discussed in this chapter. To begin the chapter we take a trip back to the 1940's and Dr. Klaus Maerten, who developed an orthopaedic boot for walking, after an accident he had in Munich, Germany. This chapter will assess Griggs & Co. a footwear manufacturing company in Wollaston, Britain, who brought Dr. Klaus Maerten's boots to fame, Anglicising his orthopaedic boot into the well known 'Dr. Marten' boot. The Wollaston vulcanizing companies that Griggs & Co. acquired control of in the early 1960's will be discussed all of which manufacture components, making up the Dr. Marten boot, also the working class market Griggs & Co. aimed to sell the Dr. Marten boots to. Finally the adoption of the boot by the skinheads and punks in the late 60's and 70's, which gained an abundance of attention at that time and even to-day.

The chronicle begins in Munich in the late 40's. It was after Dr. Maerten's foot accident in 1946, that the problem of nursing such an injury led him to design and construct, with the technical skills of his student friend Dr. Herbert Funck, a pair of special orthopaedic boots. Using old tyres to begin with, they made soles by trapping air in compartments, so constructing air cushioned soles.

"By the mid 50's, 'Dr. Maertens' shoes and boots were selling well throughout Germany, mainly in ladies styles (as they continue to do) but

Maerten and Funck could see the potential for the product across Europe and the whole world, a potential they could not develop without the help of other manufacturers in other countries", (Griggs & Co., Profile, p.4).

Towards the end of the 1950's Dr. Maerten and Dr. Funck researched and travelled to a number of footwear companies around the U.K. in order to see methods of production which could be adopted for mass production.

They focused on Griggs & Co. a footwear manufacturing company in Wollaston, Northamptonshire, Britain. Griggs & Co. had tackled their competitors in Wollaston, who had established their own type of 'tuf' boot. Griggs & Co. founded their own rival plant producing vulcanized rubber soles. The 'tuf' boot was a new type of boot, produced in Britain for the working class man. In a remarkable development, Bill Griggs together with another Wollaston bootmaker G.W. & R. Shelton persuaded all other Wollaston companies to form a Wollaston vulcanized Co., a co-operative equipped with new moulding machinery to make vulcanized soles.

This initiative enabled the Wollaston companies to keep up with the 'tuf' competitors, but Griggs recognised that the companies were only reacting to an existing challenge, not setting their own.

When Bill Griggs heard about Dr. Maertens success and his desire to licence production in the U.K., he was amazed that most *'British footwear companies seemed not to be interested, they regarded the product as a short lived gimmick and had, apparently learned nothing from Britton's own*

*innovative success*¹. (Griggs & Co., profile, p.5).

Dr. Klaus Maerten and Dr. Funck were so impressed by the strategy of Wollaston vulcanizing that they offered Griggs & Co. the patent. Griggs & Co. Anglicised their name and called the boots 'Dr. Martens' and their soles took the name 'air wair'.

As mentioned earlier Griggs & Co. had been producing vulcanized soles from the mid 1950's with the Wollaston vulcanizing co-operative, Griggs & Co. continued this process and the famous Dr. Marten air cushioned soles were constructed. The air cushioned soles are made of a special granular poly vinyl chloride (PVC) compound mixed by Wollaston vulcanizing. The process of vulcanizing is to treat rubber with sulphur. In fig.1; (iii) is the moulding machine for the air cushioned soles. The rubber is combined with sulphur, put into the mould, under heat and pressure to improve elasticity and strength. The compound is heated to around 170⁰ and injected into steel moulds seen in fig.1; (iii). The uppers are always of leather in a wide variety of finishes with a stitched PVC Z welt. In fig. 2; (iii), the soles and upper part of the boot are being melded² together. In fig. 2; (iv) the stitched PVC Z welt is sewn to Dr. Marten boot. The finished product is a substantial boot that is hardwearing, flexible and resistant to oil, fat, acid, and alkali.

"It takes just one hour and five minutes to make a pair of Dr. Marten boots from around two and a half square feet of leather. The company uses around 600,000 sq. feet of animal hide a week producing boots up to size fifteen". (The Sun, July, 1993)

¹ G.D. Britton 'tuf' boot dominated the footwear market in the late 50's early 60's

² Meld - to merge, making soles and uppers of boots become one.



fig.1: (i) Bill Grigg's footwear entrepreneur, in Wollaston, Northamptonshire, Britain.



1: (ii) Griggs & Co (1960's) Cutting machinery, each machine cuts out a leatherpart of the Dr. Marten Boot.



1: (iii) Griggs & Co. Moulding Machinery.



ADVERTISING
THE ATTENTION OF
A BROAD AUDIENCE
BEING LOST, AND
IT WILL BE THE
BEST ADVERTISING
IN THE WORLD



The process of manufacturing Dr. Marten boots at Griggs & Co. is different to those previously constructed in Germany. Dr. Maerten and Dr. Funck designed and constructed their orthopaedic boots using materials like thread fabric, similar to what tyres are made from. The process they developed was slow, so they sought the opportunity to mass produce their boots, and in doing this they chose Griggs & Co. because they were impressed by Wollaston vulcanizing.

The Company Griggs & Co. had been established for many years before taking on the Dr. Marten label. The Company was founded in the 1900's and by the 1950's a third generation of Griggs had inherited the business. The 1960's brought a fourth generation of family members, Bill's son, Max and Ray's son Peter, joined the company.

The first Dr. Marten eight hole boots went on sale in the UK., April 1st 1960 at two pounds. The colours they were produced in, were black and cherry red. The standard colour black was considered suitable for heavy durable working boots. In fig. 3 the original eight hole black Dr. Marten, are made up of five components. Each Dr. Marten has one vamp which covers the front section of the boot. The vamp is moulded by a machine. A range of Dr. Marten boots and shoes are manufactured with a metal toe cap, which gives extra protection.

In both fig. 1 (ii) and fig. 2 (i) each leather section of the Dr. Marten boot has been cut out by electric machinery. In fig. 1 (ii) we can identify the tongues and vamps, each machine cutting different parts of the boot. The boot has two quarters on each side and one tongue, which runs from the vamp to the top of the quarters. The back strap runs down the back of the boot to the air cushioned sole which is joined to the uppers by the Z welt stitching in fig. 2 (iv).

fig. 2 (i); Griggs & Co (1990's) machinery for cutting leather parts of the Dr. Marten boot.



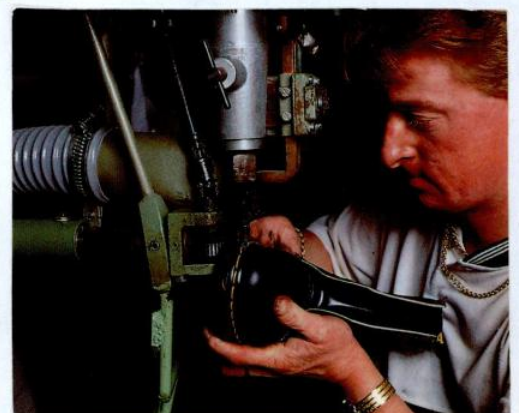
2 (ii); Ox blood leather.



2 (iii); Sole and upper, melded together after boot has been glued.



2 (iv); Stitched PVC Z welt





ALAN JAMES
TIONS OF THE
RECORD, 1977
- WITH 100
RECORDS - P. 10



VERY FLEXIBLE, HARD WEARING,
ANT TO OR. 100, 100, 100, 100
OR 100, 100 - 100 TO 100
ALL 100, 100, 100, 100
EXTREME, 100, 100, 100, 100
BUILDING IN SUCCESS
100, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100

The success of the 'air wair' brand in the 1960's led to the expansion of Griggs & Co. who gradually took over Wollaston vulcanizing and all the remaining six Wollaston companies, who manufactured components for the Dr. Marten boots. The companies were Siptimus Rivett, Humphrey & Smart, George Denton, Bayes Brothers, Phillips Brothers and GW & R Shelton. These companies manufactured the laces, the components for safety footwear, compounds and moulds, for all Dr. Marten's soles and insoles and Phillip's Brothers were the group's wholesale operation.

"Most of these subsidiaries still operate as separate, semi-autonomous profit centres and now undertake contract production for other members of the group, as well as producing and marketing their own ranges".(Griggs & Co. Profile, p.8)

"Griggs & Co. decided to market the boots not as an orthopaedic item but as part of an all purpose working boot".(Spencer, 1986, p.57)

These boots were manufactured with bouncing soles protected by the vulcanized acid and alkali resistant PVC compound. They were created for fools *"who could rush in where lesser attired angels feared to tread"* (Spencer, 1986 p.57).

From the early 60's through to the late 70's Dr. Marten wearers were mainly working class men and British youth cultures like the skinheads and punks. The 'massive welt' and lace up style of the Dr. Martens were worn with combie jackets, jeans and shirts by the working man. These clothes very much reflected the occupation of the wearer, the working man is not interested in following fashion trends to work, they seek comfort, practicality and durability in the clothes they wear.

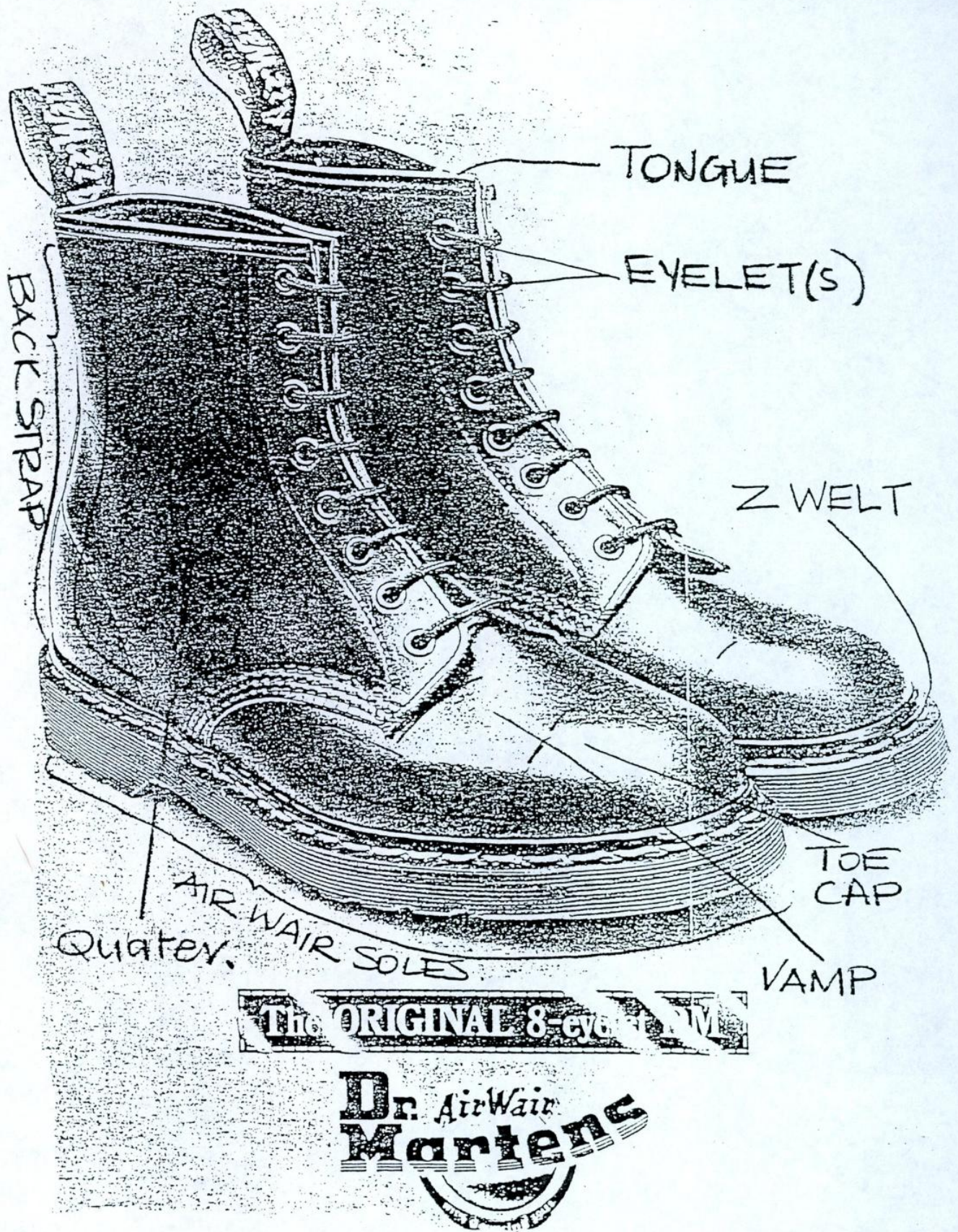


fig 3: The original 8 eyelet Dr. Marten Boot.

Sub-cultures like the skinheads and punks in the 60's and 70's all expressed themselves eloquently in their language of clothes. The original skinhead look appeared in Britain in the early 70's among working class teenagers. It featured cropped hair, Dr. Marten boots, combie jackets, Ben Sherman Shirts and rolled up jeans. Skinheads and Dr. Martens soon became inseparable.

"They fetishised them, polished them obsessively, truncating their trousers to reveal design details - the neat pull on tag, the piping around the ankle, the laces wound around the top and tied off droopily at the sides". (Spencer, 1986, p.57).

In the language of clothes, the skinheads style was a demand for attention. They aimed to gain the highest form of attention through their dramatic clothing. They sought attention from their parents, teachers, social workers and the welfare state, all whom seemed uninterested in their welfare.

It was necessary to go to these extremes to gain a reaction, as the street costume of the 60's and 70's were already outrageous and with youth styles acting against the conventionalism of their parents.

The skinhead's image was intended to arouse disturbing and conflicting emotions to the society at that time. People were unaware of what they were acting for or against. They soon became known for their protesting and gangs. *"As Dick Hebdidge states - 'these are our unknown continents, like the jungles our Africas'".* (Hebdidge, 1988, p.25).

The Dr. Marten boots became the focus for emphasis by the skinheads. The boots created the 'image of menace' which was more symbolic than actual.

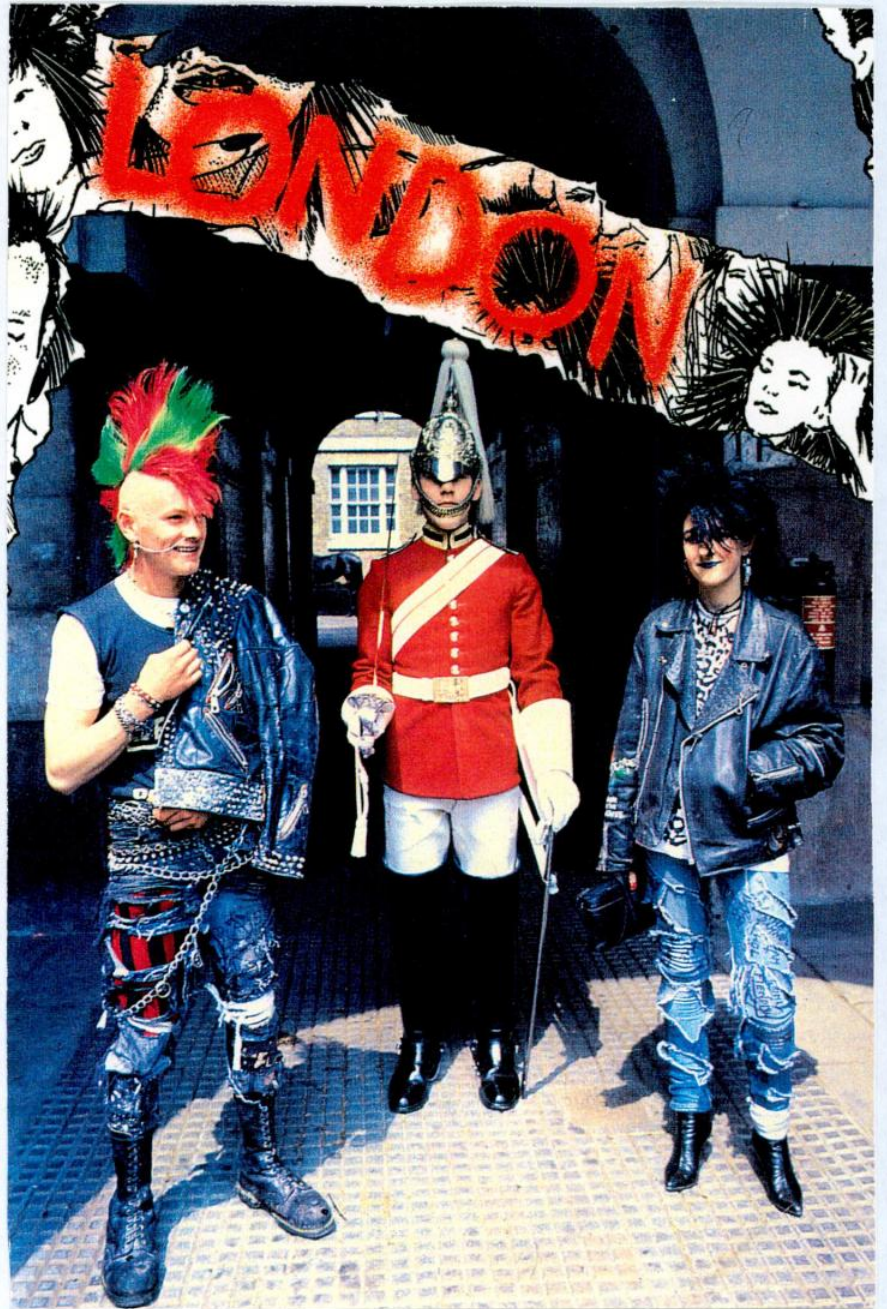


fig 4: Note, 14 hole Dr. Martens, which are part of the punk image.
They reflect the unkept look as they are unpolished and uncared for.



In analysing why the skinheads chose Dr. Marten boots over other styles, it is important to look briefly at elements of clothing which were adopted by other sub-cultures. In Britain in the mid 1950's the 'Teds' first appeared. They stole what was considered popular dress at that time, from the upper classes. They wore drape jackets, velvet collars, drainpipe trousers and crepe soles or 'beetle' crushers. The teds became

"associated with delinquency, thuggery and cosh boys...Magistrates told youths who appeared before them for some petty crimes to go home and burn their teddy boy appeal". (Wilson, 1989, p 165).

In the mid 1960's, when the band called the Beatles first appeared internationally wearing their collarless suits, their drainpipe trousers and beetle crushers.

"Their outfits were perceived as dangerously radical....because they announced that Paul, John, George, and Ringo did not intend to behave like responsible grown ups...childish privileges of noisy play and free impulse release" (Lurie, 1981, p.169). The 'beetle boot' if not an unmanly shoe, it certainly was not an aggressive shoe, portrayed by the group at that time in the mid 60's, worn with collarless suits, created a cleancut image such as that of the Beatles.

The 'images' associated with the beetle boot and the Chelsea boots were non aggressive, smart and with it. This cleancut image was a world of crew cuts and beetle boots and short back and sides with Chelsea boots.

"During the 1960's and early 1970's male political opinion could be estimated on sight by the lengths of the hair and side burns (female hair, to the relief of many women, was less communicative)" (Lurie, 1981 p.168).

Hair styles and clothing reflected your attitude to life *"hair had*

become so important symbolically, that a smash hit musical comedy HAIR was devoted entirely to celebrating it" (Lurie, 1981, p.169).

The skinheads were not looking to create a clean cut image, their demanded attention and Dr. Martens became associated with this 'image of aggression'. The way they wore their clothes, their shaved heads, truncating their trousers to reveal their boots. The skinheads became connected with violence, protesting, gaining attention, and because of this

"many young men for whom it had been almost essential as a working boot abandoned it and turned to timberland style footwear which had no anti-social connotations" (McDowell, 1989, p. 218).

In the early days the skinheads enthusiasm for Dr. Martens was not widely welcomed in Wollaston, Griggs & Co. headquarters

"We were mildly embarrassed by it actually. My grandfather got a telephone call from the Daily Mirror newspaper demanding to know why we were continuing to make Dr. Martens" (The Ind, Sept. '93, p.33).

David Hemingway of 'Red or Dead' recalled when he was eleven years old, several of his friends and himself went to see Blackburn Rovers play a match. The police made all of them line up and confiscated their laces from their Dr. Martens, so that they were unable to kick anyone.

The punk look appeared in London in the late 70's, influenced by groups like the skinheads. Their image, like that of the skinheads, was a demand for attention, but their initial tactics were to shock. They cropped their hair into a fuzz and dyed it unnatural colours, such as red, yellow and blue. Punks wore black leather jackets, chains, rusty razor blades, safety pins, dustbin bags and even old tampons. The punk look was intended to arouse disturbing and antagonistic emotions, originally

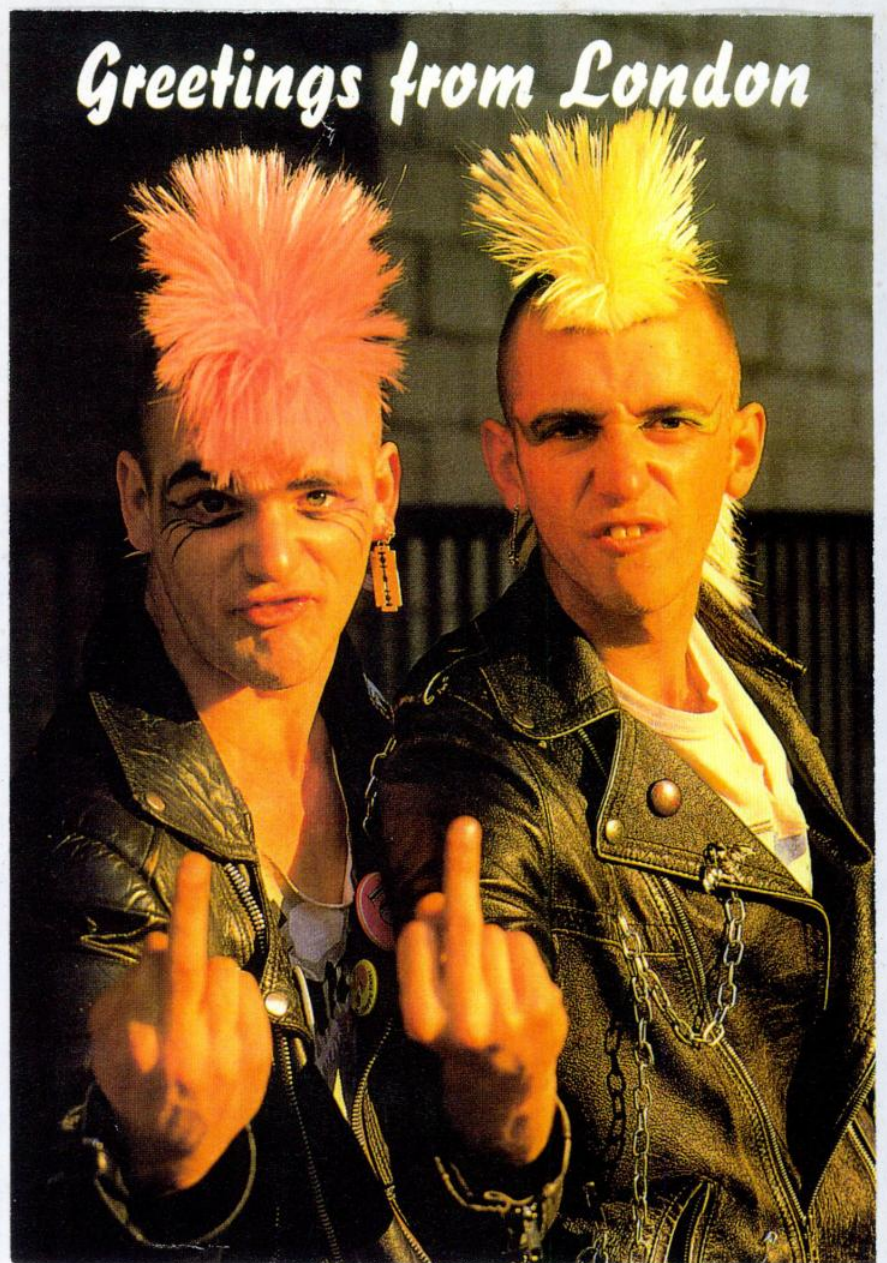
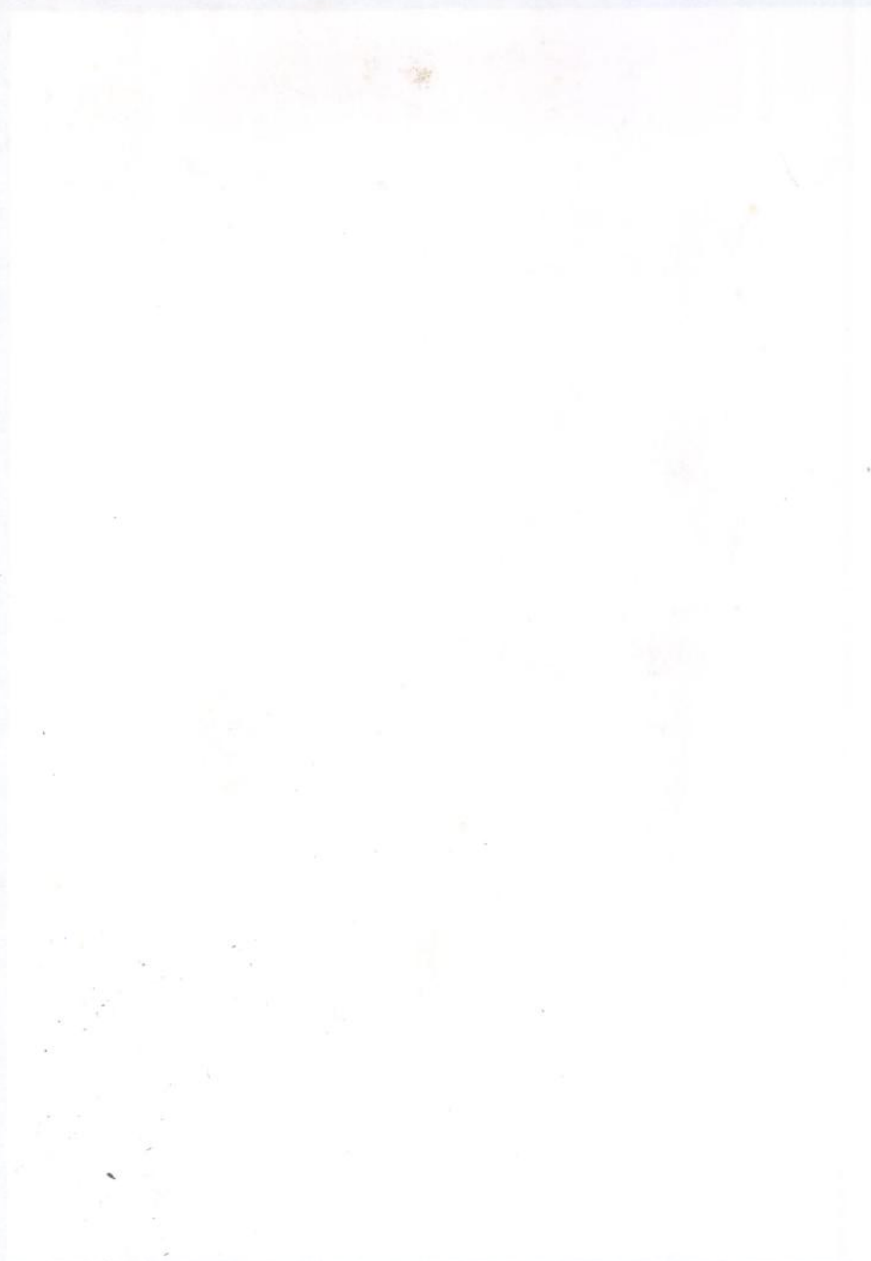


fig 5; The Punk image, cropped and spiked hairstyles, leather jackets, chains....



among working class youths, and was soon taken up by middle and upper class youths.

"Punks created an alienated space between self and appearance by means of these attacks on their own bodies; this was truly fit wear, for the urban dispossessed, constructed out of the return of the material world". (Lurie, 1981, p. 196).

The punk group was the only postwar culture grouping to fully have integrated women, which will be discussed in a later chapter. With the punk 'image' in the late 70's and their following, the Dr. Martens gained a reputation of being part of a revolting and rebellious uniform, a non clean cut image, unlike that of the beetle boot and Chelsea boot.

The 1960's brought the birth of the 'air wair' Dr. Marten boots, which Griggs & Co. intended for the working class man. Griggs & Co.'s competitors had established the 'tuf' working boot, which was on the market with the Dr. Marten boot. After the Dr. Marten boots adoption by the skinheads, the 'tuf' became another mainstream work boot. The Dr. Marten boot had taken a different avenue, gaining attention from the skinheads. The skinheads adoption gave the Dr. Martens a new lease of life, they became a different type of boot not a workboot, but a walking boot, part of a rebellious uniform. If the skinheads had not adopted the Dr. Martens, the boot would not have survived the lifespan of the 'tuf' boot, just another mainstream working boot. The boot gained more attention in the late 70's with the punks image, the unkempt look different to that of the skinheads. The following chapter will continue to assess the skinhead and punk 'image' in relation to the Dr. Marten boot, also discussing the working image and the fashionable image focusing on the Dr. Marten boot.

Chapter Two

The Dr. Marten boot.

Image...Fashion...Working Image.

The Dr. Marten boot and its relationship with image and fashion from the 1960's to the present day, is assessed in this chapter.

The first cult movements referred to are the skinheads and punks. Also discussed is the adoption of the Dr. Marten boot into main stream fashion in the 1980's by a 'trendy' retailer in London, Wayne Hemingway. The 'working image' and its association with the Dr. Marten boot selecting the Gardai and the postperson as focus, for this discussion.

By the early 1970's the Dr. Marten boot had established itself as part of the skinhead 'image', an 'image' intended to arouse disturbing and conflicting emotions. The skinhead's created their image, by wearing clothing that was associated with the working class man. However, they subverted the items of clothing that they adopted by truncating their jeans to show off the massive welts and laced up style Dr. Marten boot, also shaving their heads to create a rebellious 'image' of defiance against society.

From the late 1960's until the end of the punk era in the late 1970's, sub-cultures like that of the skinheads and punks wore Dr. Martens which added to their 'image', gaining a rebellious reputation and a non clean cut image. The sub-cultures associated with the Dr. Marten boot, did not inhibit Wayne Hemingway establishing his stall in Camden Market, London, in the early 1980's, selling customized Dr. Marten boots. He customized the boots by cutting away leather, *"embellished the boots with safety pins, stringing them with coloured laces and cutting away the toes to reveal the hard steel caps underneath"*. (Elan, Sept. '93, p. 19).



fig 6; The subculture groups of the 60's and 70's - The skinheads and the punks.



Wayne Hemingway changed the look of the boot that was associated with the skinheads and punks, to a more fashionable image. Around 1985 the *"Fashion faded for the Dr. Martens and sales were halved from 40,000 to 20,000 forcing Griggs. Co to shed 200 jobs"*. (The Sun, July '93). Griggs & Co.'s diminishing sales figures did not prevent Wayne Hemingway from continuing to sell Dr. Martens at his stall in Camden Market, because he had found a niche for his customized Dr. Martens, which started around 1984 when the *"body-conscious fashion was in"*. (Elan, Sept. '93, p.19), and the Dr. Martens were very much part of this fashion. Tight little dresses with fine Italian shoes, was the style of the day, *"but that didn't fit the anti-fashion mood that the British were in... a pair of Clod Hoppers on the end of a fine silhouette might work"* (Elan, Sept. '93, p.19). Suddenly everyone wanted to wear Dr. Martens with dresses and as Wayne Hemingway said *"we were the only ones selling them...we couldn't get the money in the till quick enough"*. (Elan, Sept. '93, p.19).

The Dr. Marten boot gained a new fashion status, following Wayne Hemingway's success in the mid 80's, and out of this success Griggs & Co. developed a loose partnership with Wayne Hemingway. A curious association was fostered between the manufacturers and the stall owner, that is, a large company who had established itself from its mass production of Dr. Marten boots with that of a stall selling the boots in Camden Market. Griggs & Co. supplied Wayne Hemingway and his wife with D.M.'s for catwalk shows and the *"Hemingway's ensured that the footwear maintained its street cred supremacy"*. (Elan, Sept. '93, p.19). It was a success, Wayne Hemingway sold Dr. Marten boots from his London based chain of funky fashion stores he had developed called 'Red



fig. 7; The style of the 1990's. Long dresses, short tops and Dr. Marten boots.



or Dead' in the mid 1980's, stores in Camden High Street, and Neil Street in London, with their headquarters near Wembley Stadium in North London.

By the late 1980's, *"Japanese tourists made pilgrimages to London to stock up on Doc Martens"*, (Tredre, Sept '93, p.33). The Dr. Marten boot acquired a 'Britishness cult' like the Burberry trench coat, they were objects associated with Britain. They gained mass appeal, with 'Red or Dead' selling 50,000 pairs a year to young customers who set many of the trends on the High Street.

Designers such as Richmond and Cornejo customized their boots, *"adding shoe jewellery and encouraging women to wear them"* (Tredre, Sept. '92, p.33). Fashion designers chose Dr. Marten boots for their catwalk collections, either to enhance or create a different feeling to their clothing collections. These designers, by adding jewellery to Dr. Marten boots created a glamorous look to the boot, they were creating their own form of customizing.

Top models such as Naomi Campbell in fig. 8; and Kate Moss have worn them, because of their association with the fashionable and trendy. Models such as these, wearing Dr. Martens, of course created indirect advertising for Griggs & Co. by modelling and being photographed for magazines and the media.

The skinhead and punk 'image' faded after a decade, because their subversion of working class clothing and the Dr. Marten boot became acceptable, the image they developed submerged into fashion in the 80's. From the 1980's onwards, Dr. Marten wearers could be grouped as those who were 'slaves to fashion' and the 'working person'. These slaves to

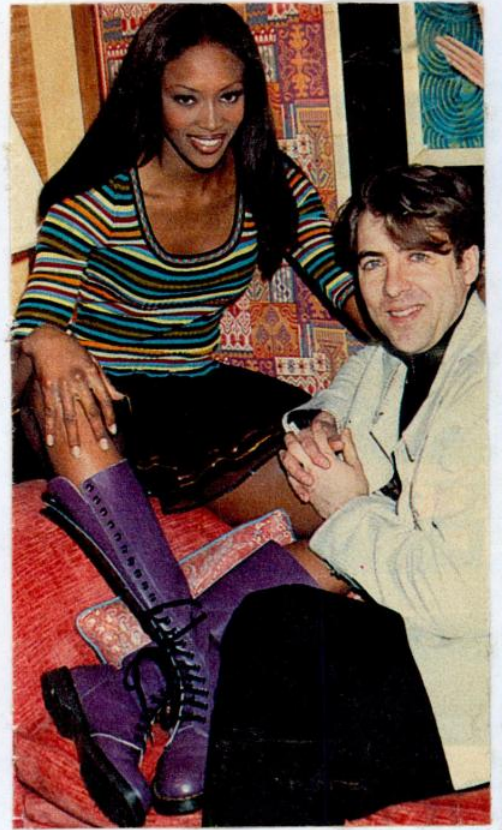
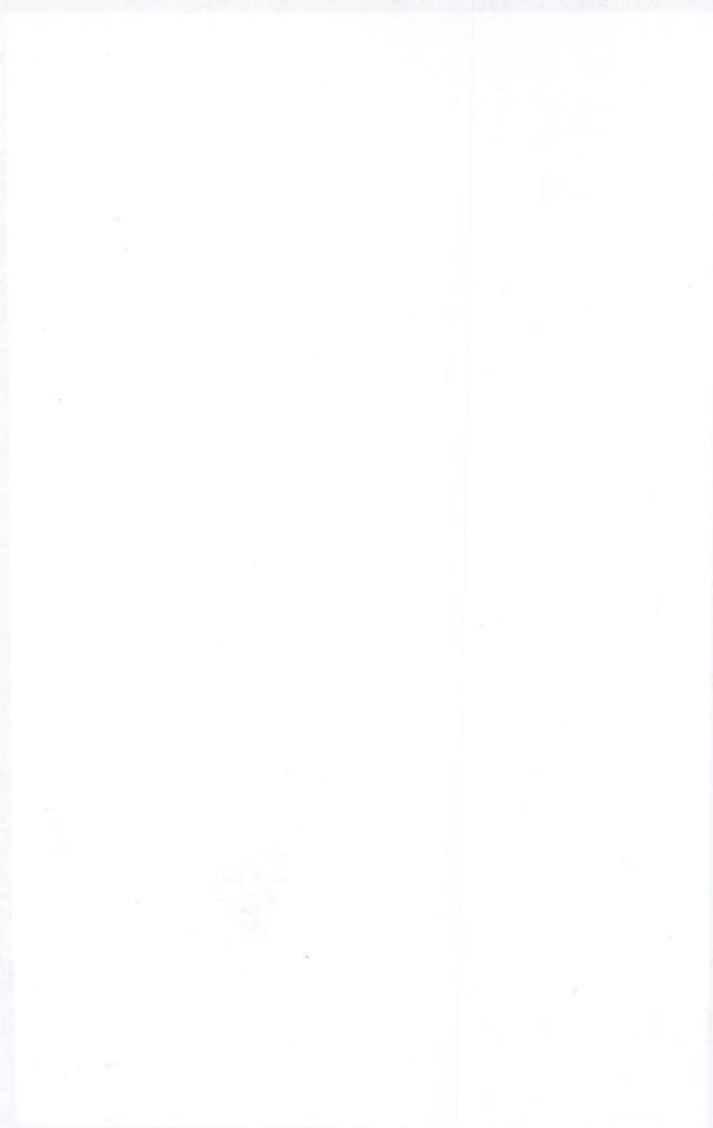


fig. 8; Naomi Campbell wearing 20 eyelet purple Dr. Martens.



fig. 9 Black Dr. Martens spray painted gold. Wore with stripe tights, cut jeans and a long dress.



fashion are those, who followed slavishly the fashion trends of the 1990's such as the grunge look. They wore floral dresses, Dr. Marten boots, skirts, jumpers, everything was worn big and sloppy. Wayne Hemingway built his business 'Red or Dead' from trendy youths who wore customized Dr. Marten boots. Their code of dress ranged from the grunge look to the student's style of dress, jeans, jumpers and Dr. Martens.

People developed their own 'fashionable' images and often these images were the same as others, such as the grunge look and like that of the skinheads who created their unmistakable 'image'. Parallels exist between the skinhead's 'image' and the fashionable 'image' such as the grunge look. The skinhead's 'image' was deliberate, they were demanding attention because they came from a working class background. The fashionable image, such as the grunge look, could be a demand for attention, but without the sinister demands like that of the skinheads.

The Dr. Marten boot in relation to the skinhead 'image' and the 'fashion image' have been looked at. The 'working image' associated with the Dr. Marten has been established for over four decades. Originally manufactured as a working man's boot, *"by the mid 1960's, Griggs was struggling to keep pace with demands although the D.M. was still considered a product for working men rather than the fashion conscious"*. (Tredre, Sept. '92, p.33).

Among the working persons who wear Dr. Marten boots are builders, construction workers, Gardai, police, postperson and nurses. Two sections of the work person chosen for this discussion are the Gardai and the postperson both types of workers that wear Dr. Marten boots. In a interview with Garda Scannell, when questioned about his reasons for

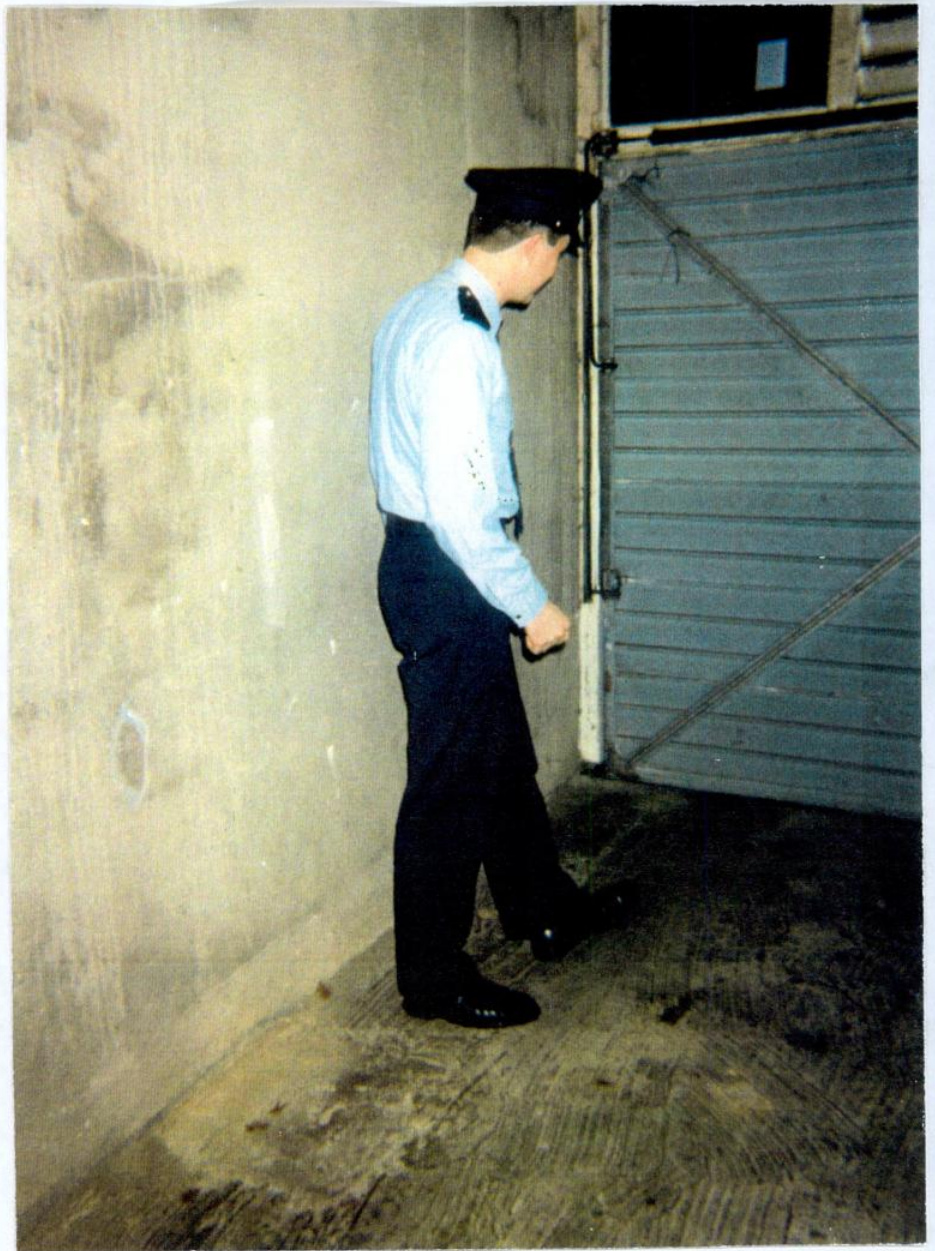


fig. 10; A Garda in full uniform wearing three hole Gibson.



wearing Dr. Martens, he maintained that *"They are sturdy, strong, comfortable and are acceptable as part of the uniform"*. (Garda N. Scannell, Dec. '93). and because of this the Dr. Marten boot has always been acceptable as part of the Gardai uniform. The styles of Dr. Marten the Gardai wear are limited *"We generally wear the black gibson type Dr. Marten with toe cap"*. (Garda N. Scannell, Dec. '93). The Dr. Marten boots worn by the Gardai are not worn because they are fashionable but because they are comfortable working boots. It is important that they are comfortable because of the nature of the job, which entails a lot of walking and running on the job *"they need good grips and must be waterproof for wet weather"* (Garda Scannell, Dec. '93). As well as being acceptable, the colour and style of the shoe is important, the colour matching their uniform and the style that gives protection is hardwearing and exhibits quality.

The postperson's occupation is somewhat similar to that of the Gardai, they too need strong, sturdy boots for working, walking and cycling through many weathers and conditions, comfort is also very important and their Dr. Martens must be black. *"In Britain the Post Office is the biggest customer of Dr. Marten boots, they buy 250,000 pairs every year to help the British postperson"* (The Sun, July '93). The dress code for postpeople are navy durable jackets, trousers and boots or shoes. Some postpeople do not conform to the code of dress regulations, as some have been wearing runners with their navy uniforms.

"Reebok's recent campaign called 'the Edge' depicts a row of postpersons all of whose trousers have been shredded by dogs, except for the ones wearing trainers.....while a survey by the Royal Mail showed that many young



fig. 11; Illustration from Sport 90, an exhibition about Design & Sport



postpeople had already voted in favour of trainers instead of their standard issue Dr. Martens". (Design Museum, London, 1990).

The Dr. Marten boot was initially established by Griggs & Co. as a working boot unlike that of the Reebok runner. The Reebok runner is a running shoe for sporting activities. The runner is a comfort shoe for running and walking, but they do not offer the protection as a boot such as the Dr. Marten offers. Perhaps Reebok runners will market as all purpose working runners. However, *"Unlike rivals Reebok and Nike, Griggs & Co. spend hardly any money on advertising Docs, Max Griggs says 'we don't need to go overboard on advertising, we've always had people talking about us - so why waste money on advertising?'" (The Sun, July '93).*

In America the Dr. Marten boots are selling unbelievably fast. *"Sales have doubled in twelve months. The British made boots are giving Nike and Reebok a kicking". (The Sun, July '93).* Perhaps this is Reebok's strategy to fight back at one of Britain's biggest buyers of Dr. Marten boots, the Royal Mail.

This chapter looked at three groups of Dr. Marten wearers, the skinhead wearers who created their unmistakable image by adopting the Dr. Marten boot, the fashion conscious wearers who hijacked the boot into main stream fashion and finally the 'working image' associated with the Dr. Marten boot. This chapter creates a different picture of Dr. Marten wearers, each group of wearer, have subverted the boot to conform to their code of dress, by customizing the Dr. Marten boot, fetishizing them and so on.

This chapter looks at a boot that has become so diverse, adopted by many styles and images.

Chapter Three

The Original Dr. Marten boot and its Imitations

The qualities of construction, durability, wearability and fashionability have all been encapsulated in the Dr. Marten boot. Each of these qualities has led to various imitations been produced of the boot in many forms. This chapter will discuss and analyse the reasons for these imitations, the growth of this sector in retailing and how much these imitations resemble the original Dr. Marten boot. In order to undertake this assessment, a number of samples of boots were analysed and compared. Using this comparison to discuss the merits of the original Dr. Marten boot and its imitations.

^{D.M.}
^ This selection undertaken for examination included a pair of bubble toe gibsons. The bubble toe gibsons were worn approximately for two years, they were worn as all purpose boots by a seventeen year old male, to school, entertaining, cycling, walking and other outdoor activities. The gibson's insoles had faded and they were worn to the sole of the shoe. The inside walls of the shoe were also worn away. The outer part of the shoes were very shabby, the worst for wear. The toe caps looked very tatty and grazed, where the toes moved at the top of the shoe, they were creased, puckered and bulging. The soles too were worn shiny and had no grips. Owing to their wear and tear and what remained of the soles, these gibsons would be incapable of keeping to the standards of a new pair of Dr. Martens, that being soles with good grips, comfortable and durable uppers, considering they have been worn for at least two years, as all purpose boots. One part of the gibson that remained unchanged was the construction. The boots did not fall apart, they remained intact. It was wear and tear that changed the shape and general

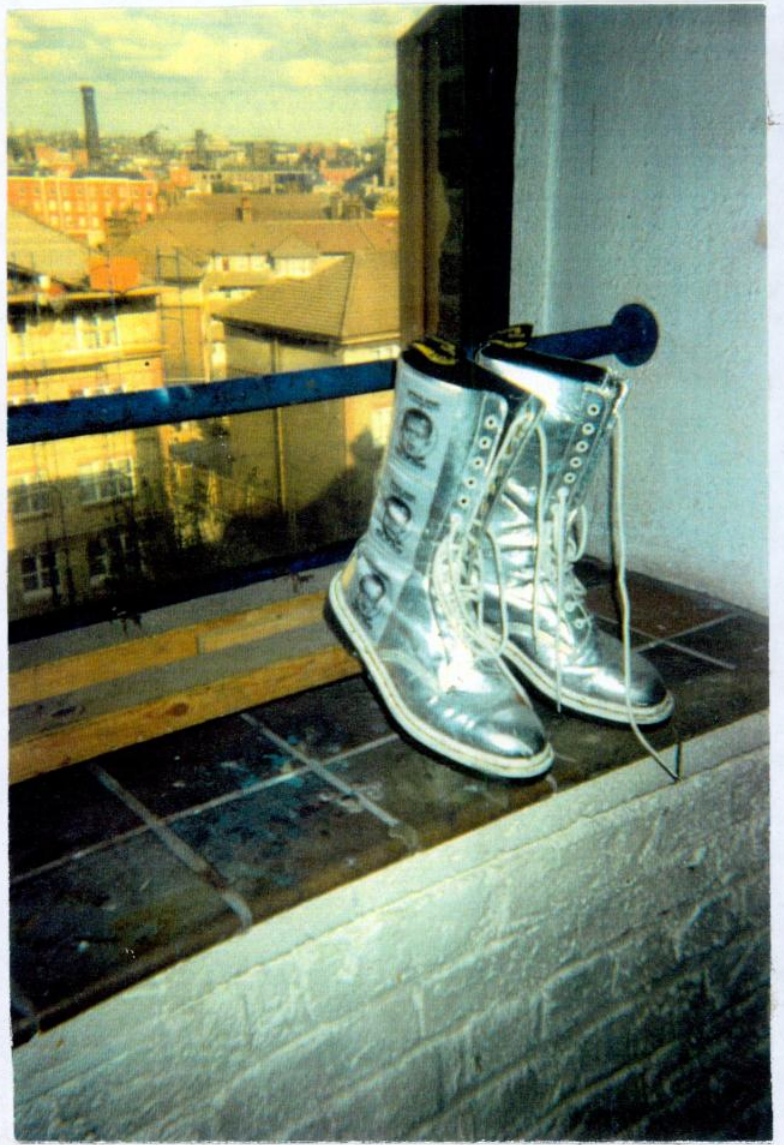


fig. 12; "Red or Dead" space baby silver 14 hole Dr. Martens.



appearance of the Dr. Marten gibbon. As with the Dr. Marten boots, the vamps were unchanged, not because they were made of imitation leather and mediocre soles, only what was naturally to happen.

The second pair of Dr. Martens examined that Griggs & Co. produced, had a different purpose in life, being of a limited edition, no more than two hundred manufactured and part of the 'Red or Dead' range. They were silver leather fourteen eyelet Dr. Marten boots with white laces. Three 'Red or Dead' space baby images were stitched along each side of the boot. The boots were hardly worn. Their soles were unchanged and their overall appearance looked up to date. Each applied panel had *"Red or Dead spring summer collection 1990"*. These boots would have been worn for a catwalk collection or as display boots, rather than mass market sales items. The boots were very dramatic and space like. The height of the boots from their heels was eleven and three quarter inches by eleven inches in length. They are not a boot many Dr. Marten wearers would wear. One found them extremely hot to wear because the height of their quarters restricted movement in the leg for walking. A novelty pair of boots with great character. These Dr. Marten boots were constructed the same as the ordinary Dr. Marten boot, with an extra long tongue and quarter.

In choosing to look at two Dr. Marten original boots one analysed their construction, durability and wearability. The two boots were constructed and manufactured with very different purposes by the manufacturers, Griggs & Co. The bubble toe gibbon is a non-customized boot manufactured for practicality, comfort, durability and a sense of fashionability, unlike the silver leather Dr. Marten boot.

In the 1980's *"Wayne Hemingway made a mint by matching Dr.*

Marten soles with every upper know to fashion (and a few more he invented for good measure). In the 1980's he sold everything from tasselled loafers to clear plastic 'space baby' boots many of which are still part of the 'Red or Dead' range". (Tredre, 1992, p.33).

Imitation Dr. Martens come in a variety of forms echoing many of the Dr. Marten range. It is often difficult to establish which is the authentic design and which is the imitation. When the imitation boot is compared with the original version it shows a variety of differences which do not appear initially.

As with the original toe cap gibbon examined these imitation boots too were worn by a young teenager as an all purpose boot. The insole showed 'original sargent peppers' stamped into leather. This selected pair were size six, black leather, three eyelet with rubber soles and yellow Z welt of stitching joining the soles to the uppers. These all purpose boots were worn to school, discos, mountain climbing and cycling and worn with jeans, school uniform and leggings. Until examined these boots appeared to be Dr. Martens, however, by examining these boots it appeared that the vamp of the left shoe has a small hole at its toe, where pressure from the toe had broken through the material and a hole developed. The quality of leather differed greatly to that of the Dr. Marten boots. It was harder, had a rough texture and felt like plastic, unlike the soft leather of the Dr. Marten boot. The material was a cheap man-made imitation leather. The shoes were worn down, smooth and shiny. The soles gave evidence that they were made in Spain through stamping.

The imitations were constructed the same as the authentic design with a vamp, quarters a tongue and a back strap. If a pair of imitations

were on a shelf with the original Dr. Martens, we would not recognise the difference. The quality of the materials used was inferior, the lace holes had rusted and the soles were made of a cheap imitation rubber.

In Dublin there are shoe stores that sell original Dr. Martens and those who would not sell imitations. Dariel Boyd, the Manager of DV 8 maintained that, *"we would not sell imitation Dr. Martens, because the brand is so established that the copies...no good...my customers are not looking for imitation Dr. Martens only the originals"*. (D. Boyd, Dec. '93). At 'Peggy's' stall owned and managed by Peggy Keogh in Parnell Street, Dublin, she sells imitation Dr. Martens because she finds that *"a lot of people cannot afford to pay the price of the original Dr. Martens and some parents buy them for their children when they return to school, unknowing that they are imitations...but also because they are affordable"*. (P. Keogh, Oct. '93). Peggy Keogh sells her imitation Dr. Marten boots for approximately £25.00, that is between £5 - £10 cheaper than the original Dr. Martens.

Dariel Boyd pointed out that *"there are expensive and cheap imitation Dr. Marten boots ranging from £25.00 to £40.00"*. (D. Boyd, Dec.'93). If there was a variety of imitation and authentic Dr. Martens on a shelf in a shoe store and the prices did range between £25.00 and £40.00, the ordinary customer looking for an original pair of Dr. Martens would look at the £40.00 pair, thinking that the original would be expensive, but they would be buying an imitation pair. Should people buy original Dr. Martens for children, when they will grow out of them and find boredom with them. As with the fashionable black leather jacket and Levi jeans, many young people buy them because of their long established brand name and the fact that they have acquired a certain status.

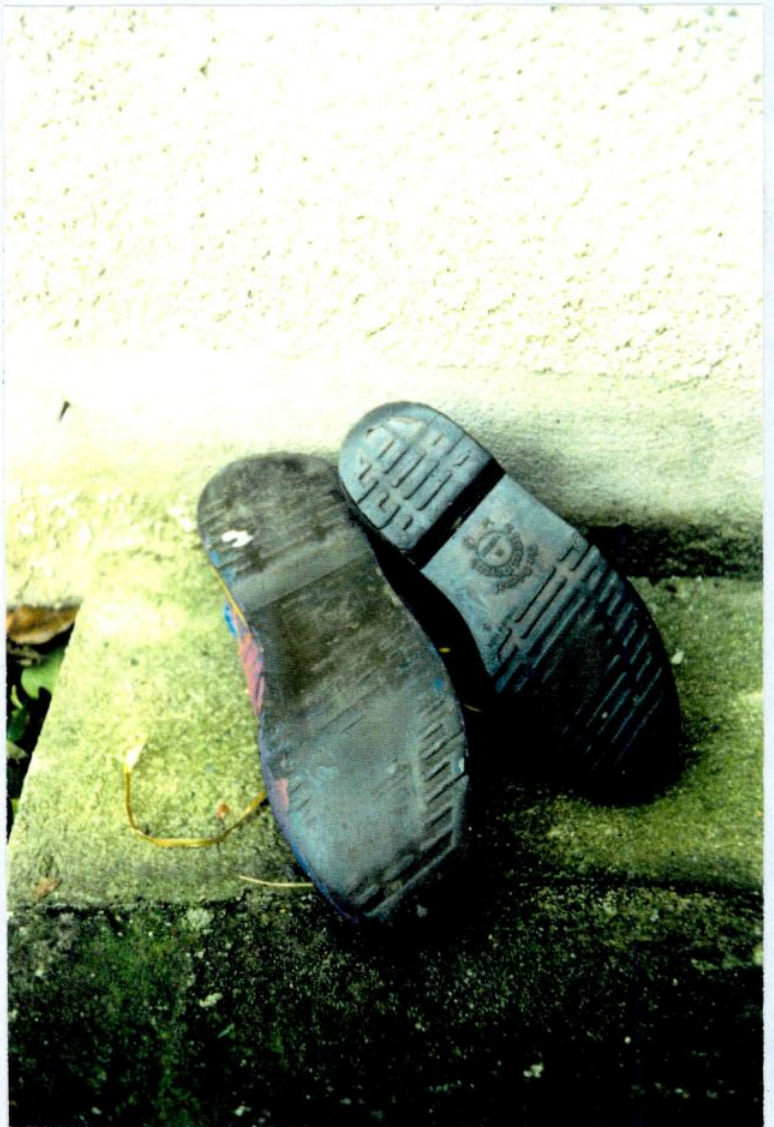


fig. 13; Sargent Pepper's (soles) and original Dr. Marten (soles).



Many markets and stalls throughout Britain and Ireland are selling more than just imitation Dr. Martens. The original Levi jeans and t-shirts have been imitated and sold for half the price of the originals. Popular brand names are being copied and sold to people who want the brand name but are unwilling to pay the original price, for the original article, so they buy a cheaper version that is half the quality of the original make with poor materials and no long lasting value. These familiar brand names are all copied because the imitators know that they will sell. They also know that they do not have to advertise, the name speaks for itself. The Dr. Marten boots that are imitated are gibsons, three eyelet boots, in blacks and cherry reds. They are imitated because they are the more popular Dr. Marten, selling to a cross section of customer from students to old age pensioners.

The imitation Dr. Marten are more available in markets and stalls to the older and younger person, because of their affordable price. The imitations are sold at a lot of stalls rather than shoe shops. People buy clothes and shoes at stalls because they are cheaper and affordable. People identify with the Dr. Marten brand, they know that they are durable, comfortable, and wearable, because of this and the status the Dr. Marten boot has established over the last forty years, the Dr. Marten boot has lent itself to being imitated.

In the late 1950's before the Dr. Marten boot had made a name for itself, the footwear companies around Wollaston, Britain were all manufacturing 'tuf' boots. A boot that had originally been designed by Britton in the early 1950's had been copied by several Wollaston bootmakers at that time. When the Dr. Marten boot had begun manufacturing in the 1960's the Wollaston bootmakers did not want to know about

them, *"they thought they were a gimmick"*. (Griggs & Co. profile, p.5). The tables have turned in the 1990's with the Dr. Marten label now being the one imitated.

This chapter assess a boot that has for over four decades proven itself in construction, durability and wearability and it is these qualities which have carried the name into the 1990's. The Dr. Marten boot has been produced in a variety of forms, since its first inception and has been subjected to a series of imitation models, the boot has created a universal status for itself, original only worn by skinheads and punks, now worn by students, Gardai, nurses and old age pensioners. The Dr. Marten boot, has become so popular and so known that it is being imitated. The name has established itself to the extent that imitators are imitating Dr. Marten boots with some being more expensive than the originals. This is ironic, when the original Dr. Marten boots were made for the working class man and now they are out of reach to some because of their price and perhaps even status.

Chapter Four
The Role of the Retailer & Advertising
in the Promotion of the Dr. Marten boot.

The role of the Dr. Marten boot in the promotion of the footwear retailer and advertising are discussed in this chapter. The chapter will look at the retailer and their job of understanding prevailing tastes and predicting prospective tastes. The assessment will be based on two footwear retailers in Dublin, Peggy Keogh 'Peggys' and Dariel Boyd, Manager of 'DV 8', both located in Dublin.

The role of the Dr. Marten boot in relation to advertising will be discussed and the manufacturers Griggs & Co. advertising of the Dr. Marten boot from the 1960's to the 1990's.

Additionally discussing the role of the Dr. Marten boot in advertising products in drink campaigns in the 90's such as 'Smirnoff Vodka' and a revision guide for students, 'GCSE Revision Guides'.

The retailer's duty in promoting and selling products to the consumer is a task of being aware of socio cultural connotations. As with retailers in many sections of the clothing and fashion industry they developed high levels of awareness and involvement in their business. It is the job of the footwear retailer to display the necessary shoes, clustering categories together according to the types of people who will buy those shoes, age groups, cultures and so on.

Shoes are objects that are easily categorised or classified i.e., size, make, function and gender. Compared to other fashionable items such as scarves or hats, for instance, boots such as Dr. Martens and caterpillars are easily classified together with court shoes and heeled shoes.



fig. 14; DV 8 Shoe Store in Temple Bar, Dublin 2.



'DV 8' Store in Temple Bar, Dublin, is a funky footwear store in a trendy part of Dublin, where hundreds of young people hang out in bars, pubs and restaurants. The store categorises all their boots and shoes together, selling a large proportion of Dr. Marten boots, caterpillars and many more. They are aiming to sell to the popular and high culture market. When the 'DV 8' store opened in the early 1990's in Dublin it was referred to as the 'Doc Shop', because of their large stock of Dr. Marten boots, but they sold many other boots and shoes such as 'Hobo' and 'Bonz' boots as well. Dariel Boyd did not want 'DV 8' to be referred to as just the 'Doc Shop' as he pointed out *"We are attacking a market not putting all our eggs into one basket"* (D. Boyd, Dec. '93).

'Peggy's' Stall so called after its owner Peggy Keogh, is situated in Parnell Street, Dublin. Her display consists of Dr. Marten boots, which take up half of her stall and a variety of styles of different boots and shoes, such as loafers and men's and women's dress shoes.

The retailer's job is to be aware of general tastes and anticipate forthcoming styles, but they are also immersed in a world of intense stimulation, because they are aware of what is being worn in the fashion world, new trends, styles in fashion also, and careful attention of consumer demands must be adhered to.

"The retailers social experiences with individuals in various facets of the fashion process in relation to shoes must likely contribute to the differences that existed between their own and the consumers assignments of meanings to shoes". (Solomon, 1985, p 138).

Dariel Boyd agreed that it is important *"to listen to our customers, we look to see what they are wearing overall and the types of boots and shoes they wear"* (D. Boyd, Dec. '93).

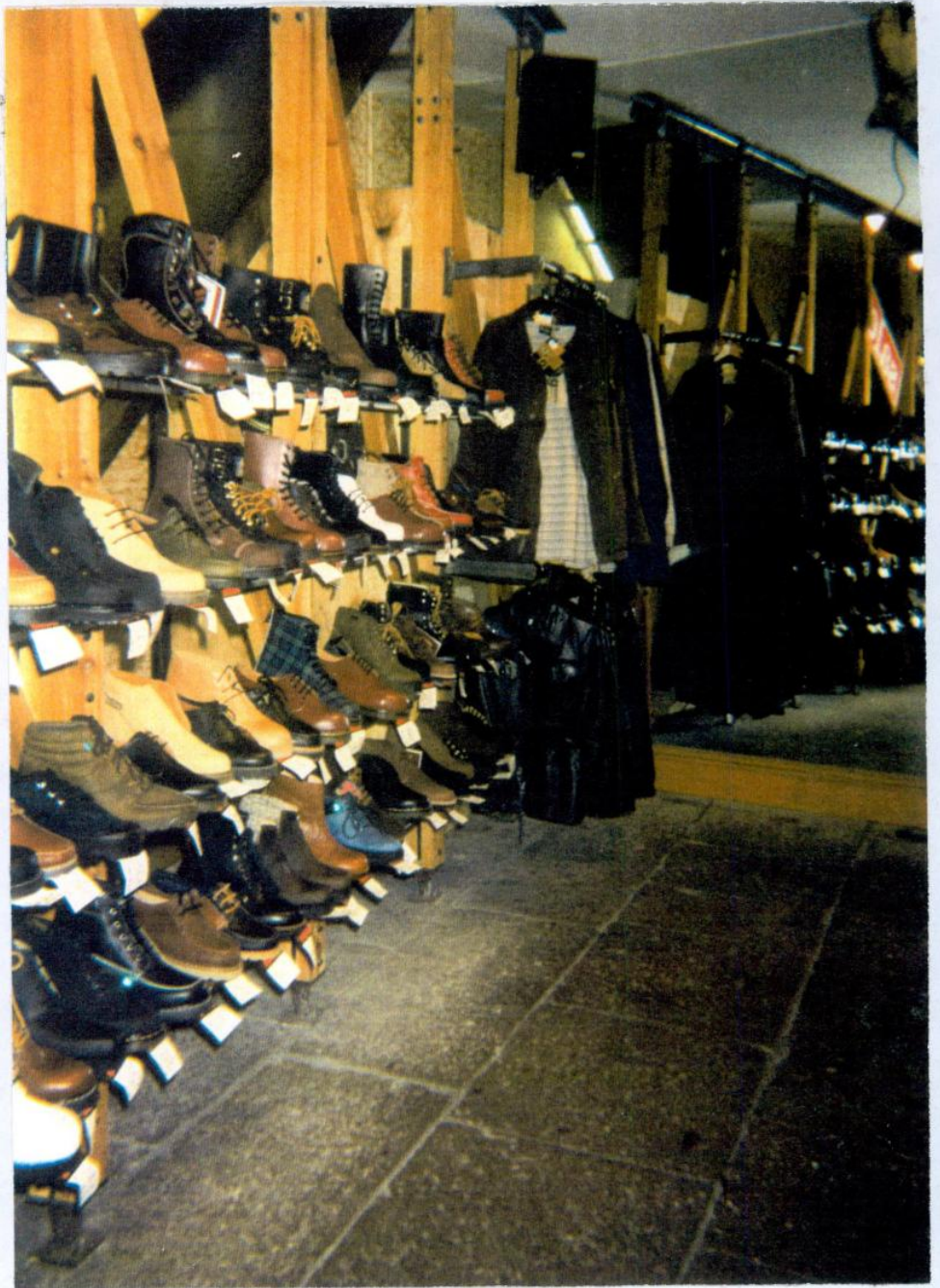


fig. 15; A Selection of footwear and Dr. Marten clothing
sold at 'DV 8 Shoe Store'.

Also, 'DV 8' Store last season launched a capsule clothing collection from the designers 'Red or Dead' to go with 'Red or Dead's' progressive range of boots and shoes and for the winter of 1993 they sold the exclusive range of Dr. Marten clothing which can be seen in fig.15.

In many shoe stores and department stores the *"higher a product is on the cultural continuum, the greater the amount of effort retailers must expend in creating its intended meaning"* (Solomon, 1985, p 128). In the case of 'DV 8' Store it was the opposite. Dariel Boyd displays all their boots and shoes together regardless of their price or prominence in the fashion world. Dariel Boyd said *"Our more expensive boots and shoes should get more attention on the shelves but they don't"* (D. Boyd, Dec. '93).

At 'Peggy's' Stall all the Dr. Marten boots are displayed together, while the more expensive Dr. Martens would *"gain more attention to the front of the stall"* (P. Keogh, Oct. '93) (refer to fig.20).

In some shoe stores, shoes may often be displayed in groups according to the tangible qualities, this includes elements such as colour and size, or indeed are often displayed based on intangible qualities such as youthfulness.

Consumer society and the growth of the Dr. Marten range of footwear catering for both men and women, has now led to a greater increase in tangible quantities in the Dr. Marten range, because greater styles and colours are available for men, women and children, colours and styles ranging from purples, velvets, floral, tartan and so on. A cross section of these boots can be seen in fig. 15. In 'Shelly's' Shoe Store in Oxford Street, London, their second floor is devoted to Dr. Marten boots and shoes. A 'mecca' for all Dr. Marten wearers. The boots and shoes in

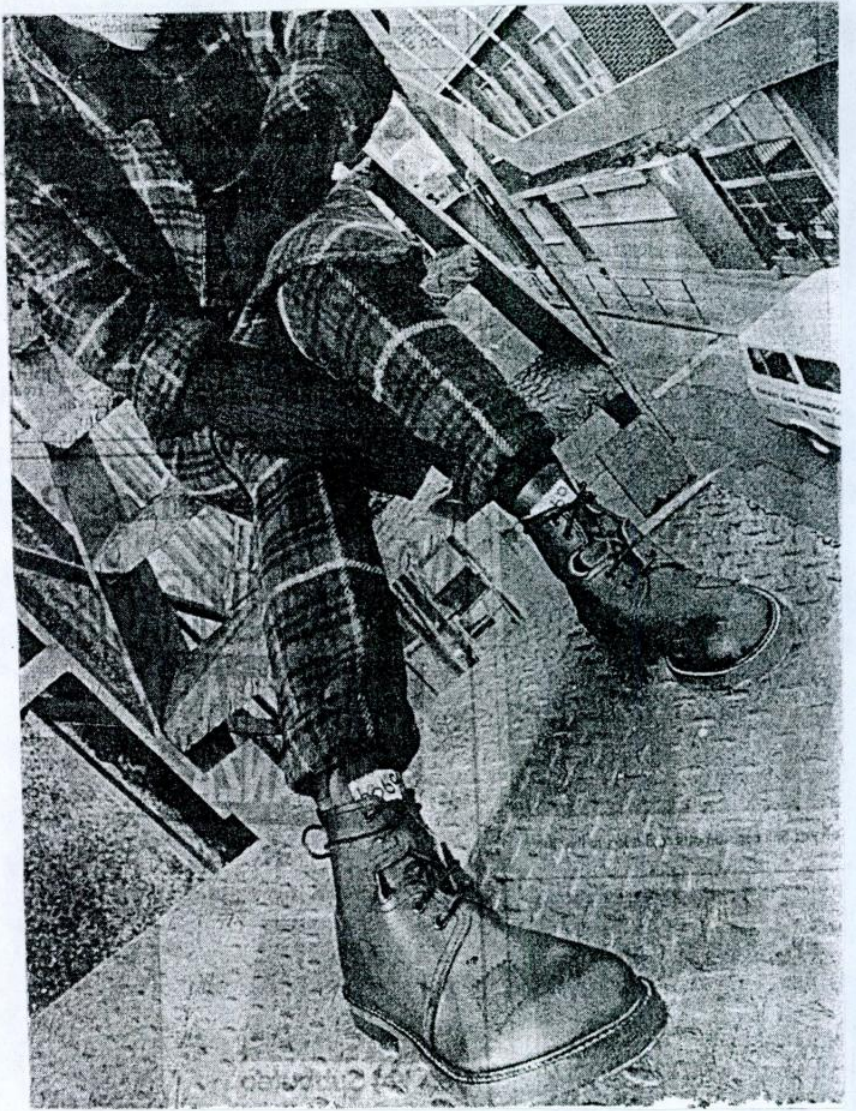


fig. 16; Black leather Hobo boots, worn with jacket, trousers, hat, Dr. Marten clothing, sold at 'DV 8'.



fig. 17; Shelly's victorian ankle boots worn with Dr. Marten clothing.

this store are not displayed by tangible or intangible qualities, as the shelves on that floor all have a variety of colours, patterns, styles and sizes of Dr. Marten boots and shoes. They range from children's Dr. Martens sizes 11-12 and adult sizes from 5-12. They display gibsons, eight eyelets, twelve eyelets together, in reds, tartan, blacks, velvets, patents, and so on. In the 'DV 8' Store, in Dublin, *"the basic Doc's are displayed together, such as the eight hole cherry reds and black Dr. Marten, while the other styles of Dr. Marten are mixed with caterpillars and Hobo"*. (D. Boyd, Dec. '93). See fig's. 14 and 15.

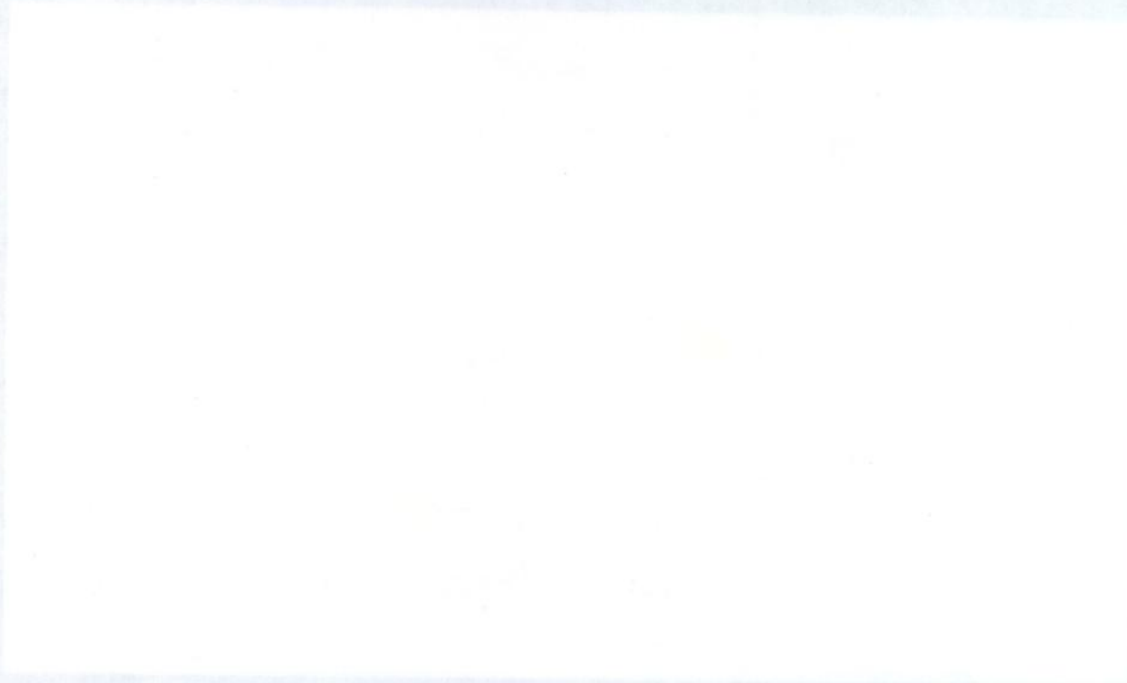
Shoes are objects that communicate non verbally and they can connote appropriateness for work and leisure and sexual attractiveness. Peggy Keogh sells Dr. Marten boots and shoes to a cross section of customers, a lot of her customers are looking for boots that are comfortable for work and leisure, her customer's range from students to Gardai, this reflects a large proportion of wearers of the Dr. Marten boot.

A new range of high heeled Dr. Martens went on the market last Autumn 1993, in order to corner some of the growing female market. However their level of popularity reflected in Peggy Keogh's opinion when she stated *"there was no call for them, if they were really popular I would buy them"*. (P. Keogh, Oct.'93).

The sales at 'DV 8' where the high heeled Dr. Marten was stocked show they were not that popular, selling only to niche customers, because they were so expensive, at £50.00 a pair. Dariel Boyd maintained that they *"looked nice on, but they were way too expensive. I think the idea is good and they could develop them further, with a variety of uppers"* (D. Boyd, Dec. '93).



fig 18: Peggy Keogh's stall in Parnell Street, Dublin around the 1970's.



In shoe stores such as 'DV 8', display artists are assigned to display the boots and shoes together. In many High Street stores, sales assistants arrange the boots and shoes in designated areas in the shop so that the customers will be attracted to such a display. In 'Zerups' Shoe shop in Dublin their Dr. Marten's display has one unit, which consists of a variety of Dr. Marten boots, such as cherry reds, blacks, purples, in three eyelet, eight eyelet and twelve eyelet. Their other boots and shoes were all displayed together, men's on one side and women's to the other side. A lot of styles of boots and shoes were clustered together. At Peggy Keogh's stall, no one assistant is designated to display the footwear. Each assistant on that day is in charge of having a tidy display and if so required re-organising the stall.

There are shoe stores and department stores in Dublin that do not sell boots like the Dr. Martens or caterpillars, such as outlets of Saxone, Clarks and Switzers. The reason given is that their customers expect and demand more than utilitarian value in shoes *"such stores carry shoes that are 'special' and early on the fashion cycle"*. (Solomon, 1985, p.12).

When 'DV 8' opened their store in Dublin, as pointed out before, they were referred to as the 'Doc Shop' because of their large selection of Dr. Marten boots. Up until that time, there was no trendy store such as 'DV 8' in Dublin, selling such a variety of boots and shoes, especially Dr. Marten boots and the new range of Dr. Marten clothing. Stalls such as Peggy Keogh's in Parnell Street, sold a limited variety of Dr. Marten boots such as Gibsons, eight eyelets and twelve eyelets. From the mid 60's Peggy Keogh's stall was promoting a limited selection of Dr. Martens to a certain clientele, such as the skinheads and school children. It was when



fig. 19; Peggy Keogh's stall in the 1990's



stores such as 'DV 8' opened in 1991 in Dublin, they attracted new clientele because of their great variety of footwear and they were available at a new trendy location in Dublin on the south side of the city. 'DV 8' caters for and sells to a young trendy clientele, while Peggy Keogh attracts a different type of buyer ranging from the working class person to the third level student.

'DV 8' store sells a variety of boots and shoes all of which are displayed together. They are selling a variety of boots, but their job is to market to a cross section of buyers, many of which only buy Dr. Marten boots. In a recent advertisement in the 'Evening Press' see fig. 16 and fig. 17. 'DV 8' advertisement of the new range of Dr. Marten clothing and all the outfits were modelled with Hobo boots and 'Shellys' ankle boots. 'DV 8' chose not to advertise Dr. Marten clothing with Dr. Marten footwear, allowing the wearer the choice of footwear.

At Peggy Keogh's stall she displays her Dr. Marten boots together and her loafers and dress shoes displayed side by side. The customer is not given such a variety of choices. Each shoe retailer develops his or her own way of promoting what they sell, either emphasising the more expensive stock, indicating what type of shop or stall they are and so on.

When new ranges of boots and shoes are brought on the market, Dariel Boyd is given a sample pair to put on the shelves by the wholesale company. The wholesale company allows footwear stores like 'DV 8' shelf time, to see how they would sell and if there is enough of a demand for them to place an order.

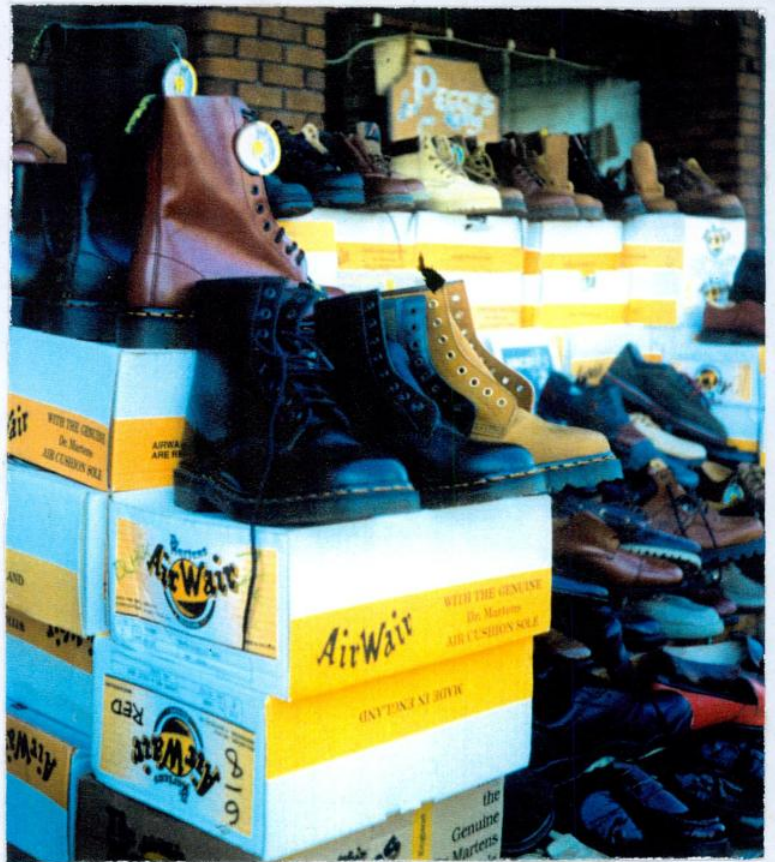
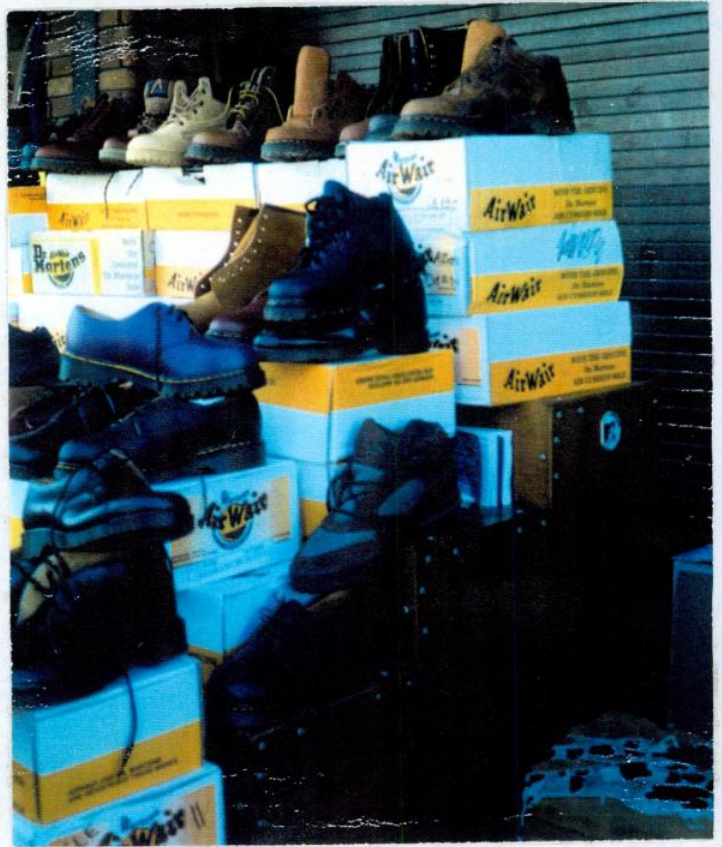


fig. 20; A selection of Dr. Marten boots sold at Peggy Keogh's stall.



The Role of Advertising in the Promotion of the Dr. Marten boot.

The company Griggs & Co. throughout their four decades manufacturing and selling Dr. Martens, have infrequently needed to advertise. Griggs gained an abundance of indirect advertising in the 70's when sub-cultures such as the skinheads and punks adopted the boot to go with their unmistakable image. The 1980's and 1990's, popstars, such as Madonna, Elton John and Pete Townsend were wearing them and Wayne Hemingway's clothing company 'Red or Dead' who captivated more attention with his new customized version of the Dr. Marten boot. Additionally companies used the popularity that the Dr. Marten's gained by using them as part of their advertising campaigns. A form of indirect advertising for Griggs & Co.

In the 1960's Griggs & Co. did not advertise to a great extent because of the attention they gained from the skinheads and punks. Griggs could not counter the attention because the skinheads and punks had already created a name for themselves, and their association with the Dr. Marten label. Griggs & Co. first advertisement for the original eight eyelet Dr. Marten boot was very simple, a pair of Black eight eyelet Dr. Marten. This type of advertisement would have been displayed firstly around Wollaston, in Northamptonshire and then throughout Britain in shoes and clothes shops that catered for the working class man.

With stars such as Mc Hammer, Madonna and Sting wearing Dr. Martens, from the 70's through to the 90's, they were constantly in the limelight. The Dr. Martens too have been seen on Stage in 'Joseph and his Amazing Coloured Dreamcoat' and Elton John's giant cherry reds were especially made for the film 'Tommy' in 1975.



The ORIGINAL 8-eyelet DM

Dr. AirWair
Martens

fig. 21; The original advertisement Griggs & Co used in the 1960's.



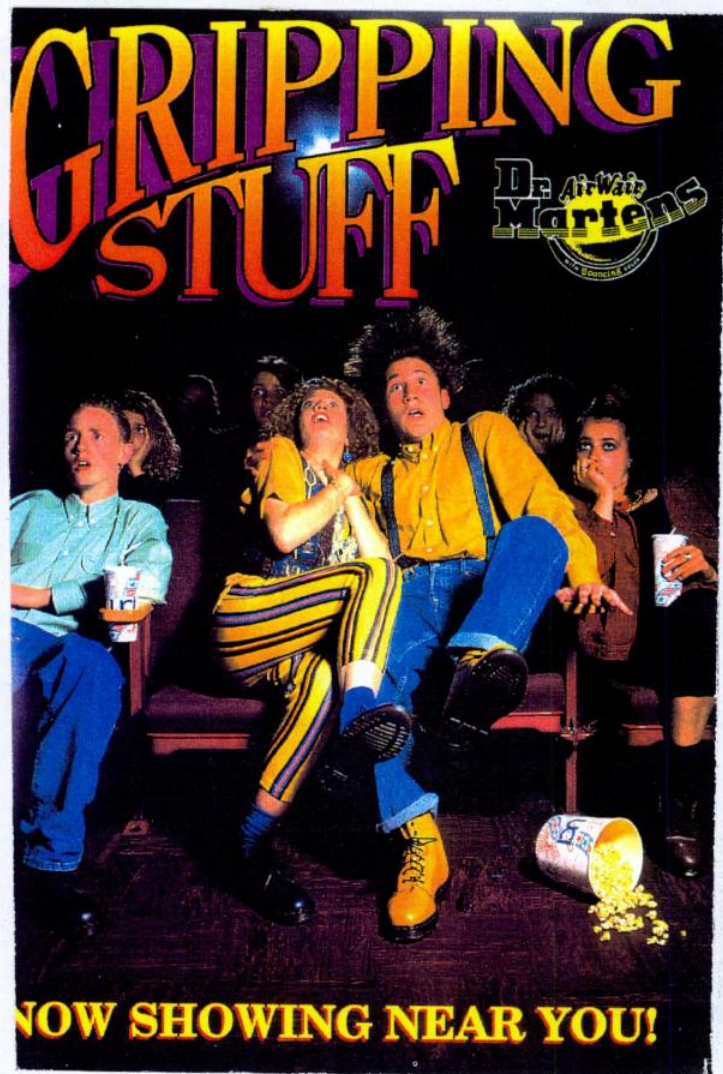


fig 22: 'Gripping stuff' Griggs & Co. advertising campaign in the 1990's.



In the 1990's Griggs & Co. advertised their new range of coloured Gibsons and eight eyelet Dr. Martens which can be seen in fig. 22, 'Grip-ping Stuff'. The advertisement portrays a group of young people at a UCI Cinema all totally agitated and hysterical, because of what they are watching. They are all wearing Dr. Martens ranging in a variety of colours, from yellows to greens. The young group look very well dressed wearing bold, bright colours like their Dr. Marten boots. A contrast from the first advertisement Griggs & Co. showed, now aiming at a younger audience, both male and female of a middle class upbringing, this shows a change in the consumer over the last 30 years.

Dr. Martens have become such a cult object or an object of instant recognition that not only are they seen in their own advertisements for Griggs & Co. but they have also recently been used in a number of promotional campaigns for different products. This study looks at two advertisements that use Dr. Marten boots to help advertise a product. The first advertisement is the Smirnoff campaign that began in October 1993. Their advertisement campaign has been used on billboards and in most popular magazines, such as 'More' and 'Maire Claire'. The first Smirnoff advertisement in October 1993 was a floating angel wearing Dr. Marten boots which are reflected in the bottle of Smirnoff. The choice of Dr. Marten boots to advertise a product is a utilitarian one, because they are a familiar boot, associated with the rebellious, the young, students, men, women and so on. Are Smirnoff advertising their products to the young, rebellious person? drink Vodka and you will float like an angel, and your Dr. Martens will not hold you down, or you will feel like an angel but deep down you are really rebellious and aggressive on the



fig 23; The Smirnoff Advertising Campaign, Oct. '93, one of a series of billboard posters.





fig. 24; The Smirnoff Advertising Campaign. Another billboard, magazine poster.



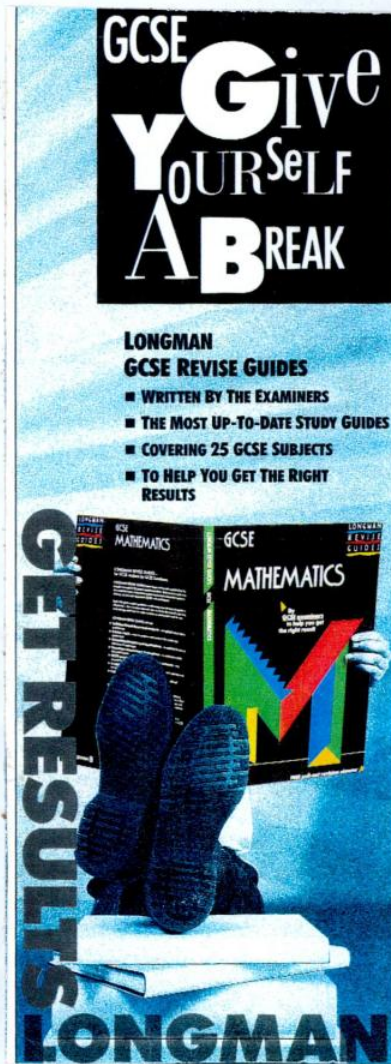


fig. 25; Dr. Marten soles being used to advertise Longman GCSE Revision Guides.



Shoes on a shoestring. Get £2 off any pair at Dolcis if you spend £20 or over. £5 off if you spend £35 or over.

MIDLAND LIVE!CASH
490340 000012345678
J LIVINGSTON
40-00-00 987654321 1 01/91

THE ACCOUNT.
Readies at the ready. A LIVE!CASH account gives you interest on your money and 24 hour cash at over 3,000 cash dispensers. Open a LIVE!CASH account and you'll also get discounts at Rank and Cannon Cinemas, The HMV Shop, Hennes, on the Braun Linear 266 Shaver and any Apollo Mountain Bike at Halfords. If you're aged between 14-20 ring free for details on 0800 400 466. Just £10 is enough to open an account!

MIDLAND
The Listening Bank
MEMBER OF THE MIDLAND GROUP

fig. 26; Boots (other than Dr. Marten's) used to advertise a bank account.



outside, many meanings can be taken from this advertisement. Smirnoff in their advertising campaign have also used the image of the statue of liberty and a crocodile, images and things that are universally recognisable for both young and old, objects that have become icons, because they are familiar to the everyday man, woman and child.

The second advertisement the 'Longman GCSE Revision Guide', portrays a pair of Dr. Marten boots in which we only see the soles, holding up an extra large GCSE mathematics book. The first thing one notices was the soles of the boots and then the GCSE book. The trendy reader wears a pair of Dr. Marten boots. In this advertisement students can identify with it, they can associate with the image of the Dr. Martens on the table. Also the advertisement is a form of indirect advertising for Griggs & Co. Dr. Martens are not the only type of footwear to advertise products. In another advertisement for a bank account, a pair of shoes and the ends of jeans are seen, you will save so much money on a pair of shoes if you join your nearest Midlands Bank.

This chapter discusses the role of the retailer in relation to the Dr. Marten boot, discussing the retailer and how his job involves, being aware of the fashion world, new trends and careful attention of consumer demands. Also, looking at Griggs & Co. the manufacturers of Dr. Marten boots and how they advertised themselves. The chapter has also looked at a number of areas in which the Dr. Marten boot is presented to the public through direct retailing, company advertising, and direct advertising through associations with popstars and the media and the adoption by a number of marketing campaigns such as Smirnoff Vodka and Longman Revision Guides.

Chapter Five

The Post Modern Woman

Woman and the Dr. Marten Boot, Changing Focus.

The language of women's dress relating to the Dr. Marten boot in the post-modern world is discussed and analysed in this chapter. How woman's dress has evolved through four decades focusing on the Dr. Marten boot, the high heeled Dr. Marten and the new range of Dr. Martens for women. The 1960's paved the way for the new confident woman. She developed her own confident tastes and styles. The 1960's brought the feminist woman into the limelight, giving women greater choices in clothing and footwear. The contraceptive pill caused a revolution in the 1960's and the women's movement in the 70's and 80's brought out woman's plight against discrimination. Also, the feminist issues concerning woman's dress, lesbians and the punk woman. This chapter will look briefly at Vivienne Westwood and the punk style she created, worn by female punk bands, such as 'Sioxsie and the Banshees'.

In the 1990's Griggs & Co. the manufacturers of the Dr. Marten boot, with the collaboration of the 'Red or Dead' Clothing Co. created the high heeled Dr. Marten specially for women. This was a new departure for the company after thirty years manufacturing. There are two products aimed specifically at women in the Dr. Marten range, the lady Dr. Marten and the high heeled Dr. Marten.

The post modern world we live in has become a bombardment of pastiche and eclecticism. The term 'post modernism' appears to perform a function of describing various styles that have been mixed together and copied.

"Post modernism expresses at one level a horror of the destructive

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study. It discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the methodology used in the study. It includes information about the sample, the data collection methods, and the statistical analysis.

3. The third part of the report is a discussion of the results of the study. It presents the findings of the research and discusses their implications for the field of study.

4. The fourth part of the report is a conclusion and a summary of the findings. It provides a final assessment of the study and its contributions to the field.

5. The fifth part of the report is a list of references. It includes all the sources of information used in the study, such as books, articles, and other documents.

6. The sixth part of the report is an appendix. It contains additional information that is not included in the main body of the report, such as raw data, detailed calculations, and other supporting materials.

7. The seventh part of the report is a glossary. It defines the key terms and concepts used in the study, ensuring that the reader has a clear understanding of the terminology.

8. The eighth part of the report is a bibliography. It lists all the sources of information used in the study, providing a comprehensive overview of the literature on the subject.

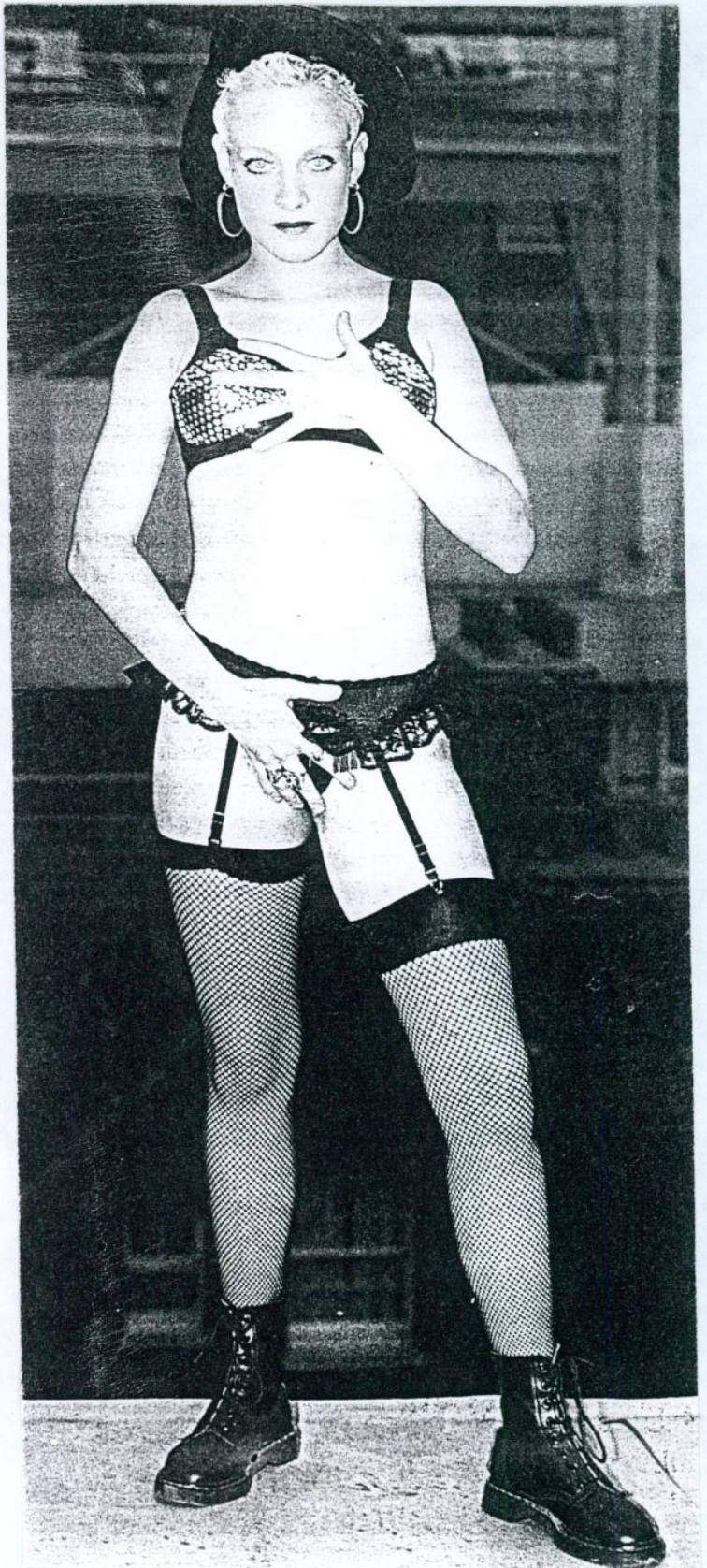


fig. 27; 'Lesburados', lesbian subversive of accepted dress code.
(Wilson, 1989, p.13).



excess of western consumerist society, yet, in designing this horror, we somehow convert it into a pleasurable object of consumption". (Ash, 1992, p. 4).

Dress has become ambiguous, we are conforming to a style, yet stimulating individualism ourselves. Dress is a cultural allegory, we wear materials which represent us in a cultural context. The mass media in the 1960's increased public awareness of youth sub-cultures and it played a role in the development of the fashion conscious. Some of the forms of mass media were magazines, such as 'Woman' and 'Woman's Own'.

In the 1960's the contraceptive pill was marketed in Britain, this caused a revolution among women and their sexual behaviours, because they were given the choice to have or not have children. Fashion of the 60's directly reflected the arrival of the pill and the permissive society. Models in the mass media and in magazines posed in unladylike situations. Woman's fashions and styles reflected their new age confidence.

"New world 60's...good taste became square...clothes thrown together...clothes brighter and more darlingly mixed" (Wilson, 1989 p.169).

The late 60's saw the hippie counter-culture, flared trousers, flowery blouses. Women and men visited antique markets buying 'frocks' and 'suits' from the 30's and 40's. The popularity of bands such as the Beatles in the 60's, made flamboyant jackets, crew cut hair styles etc. very popular among men and women, women and men began to dress alike, not seen in fashion before. The woman's movement of the 70's and 80's pushed issues of discrimination, against mass media and cultures, general depiction of woman.

Women who wore fashionable clothes, were beautiful and slender. Working boots like the Dr. Martens would not have been worn by women, too masculine, too defined as a man's work boot, the women's

1970



Men in frocks, women in braces,
unisex safari suits - what will
emerge next from this years
Paris fashions?

The Hotpants are out!
Available in such colours as
hot orange, green and
pink, as long as you've got
the legs.

The skinhead
emerges;
teenagers devel-
op a new hard
fashion look of
close cropped
hair, Ben
Sherman shirts,
boots and
braces.

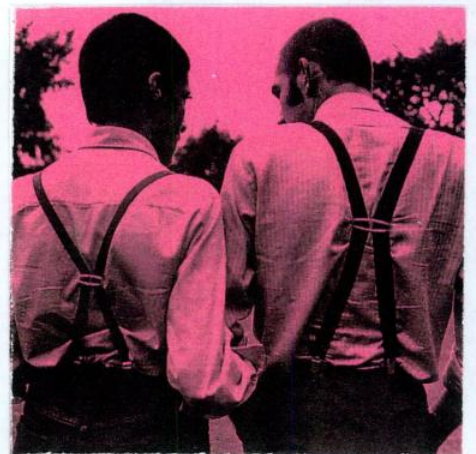
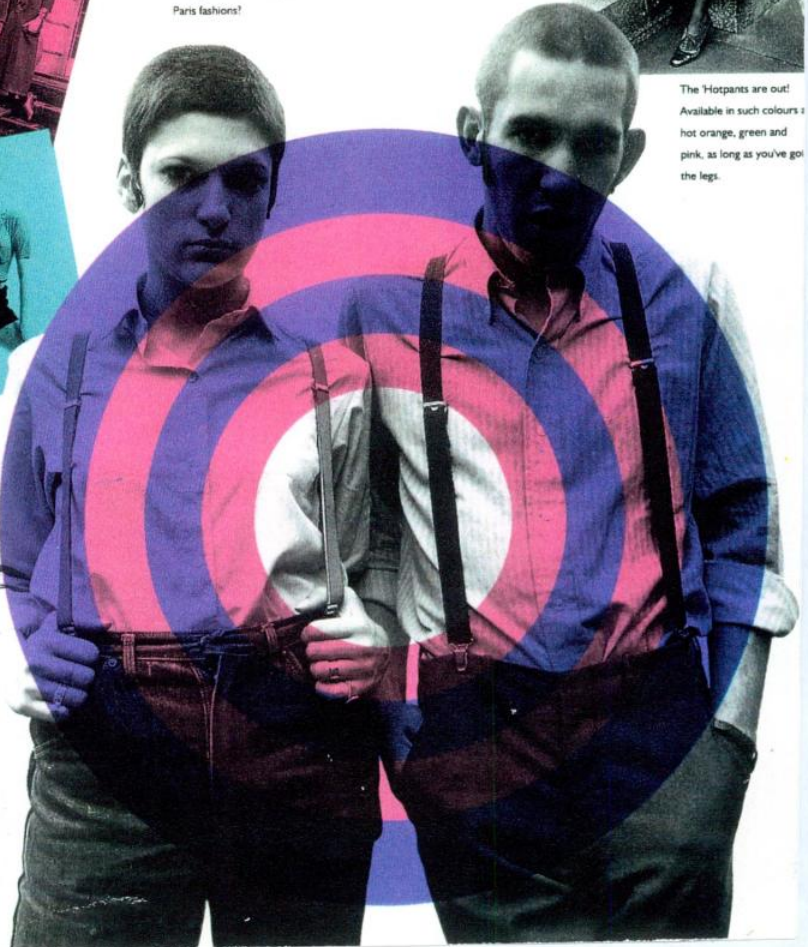


fig. 28; '1970' - Woman's dress.



movement was protesting against the norm, trying to give women more freedom. Feminists were interested in women's dress and how it had always incorporated the idea that women's dress was a form of enticement and subversion for men.

"Clothing in fact, has the unique characteristic of being able to express ideas about sex and the body, while stimulating it actually adorns the body" (Ash, Chic, p.12).

We wear clothes that are extensions of self and our body, also the culture that we associate ourselves with.

A number of gays and lesbians adopted the look of the 80's fashion trends of leather and rubber, 'motifs of fetishism', bondage and erotic lingerie.

In fig. 26; "*Lesburados*", *lesbian subversion of accepted dress codes* (Wilson, 1992 p.13). Dr. Marten boots, fish net stockings, bra and so on, are worn by 'Lesburados' she is exploiting the contracts of mismatched items of clothing which are paved in such a way to break the rules. She creates her subversions by the way she wears her clothes and what she wears them with.

By the mid 70's the avant garde had grown tired of the hippie naturalism, they were looking ahead for a new innovative and experiment styles. In 1976 the punk look first caught the attention of the public.

"It is significant in being almost the only one of the postwar youth cultures....music movements founded to have integrated woman" (Wilson, Looking Glass, p. 196).

The punk look for women in the late 70's was the same as their male counterparts, wearing black clothes, such as leather jackets, T-shirts dark eye make-up, spiked coloured hair, and large workman boots such as the

Dr. Martens. The female punk created an image, like her male counterpart, she did not want to be ~~she trying not to be~~ a mysterious or a delicate female, but one of the gang and in doing this wore these clothes to look like her male counterpart.

In fig. 27, women in the 70's were dressing like men and men like women. *"men in frocks, women in braces, unisex safari suits..."*

Vivienne Westwood in the late 70's designed clothes for the shop 'Sex' on Kings Road in London. She designed bondage trousers, leather corestry, rubber and kinky gear. Women punk bands such as 'Sioxsie and the Banshees' wore her clothes, the band became notorious for their power shocks.

One of the purposes of clothing has traditionally been used to distinguish men from women. Men's clothes are designed to suggest physical or social dominance, while women's clothing reflected fragility and focused attention on their different sexuality. The punk woman created her own unmistakable image of black leather, chains, black eyeliner, nails, large boots. Objects and clothing not associated with the woman, the post modern woman, combining elements of pastiche and eclecticism.

It was not until the late 60's that trousers became acceptable for women to wear. A long struggle for freedom and comfort, the introduction of the panty hose, allowed women freedom from ugly painful, rubber and plastics to hold up their stockings.

From the 70's and 80's women who have been wearing tight skirts and high heels have revealed to men their handicap, which men found attractive. The high heel made legs look longer but made standing very



LONDON

fig. 29; Punk couple, woman adopted the same image as her male counterpart.



painful and running impossible.

The manufacturers of Dr. Marten boots, Griggs & Co. designed a new range of footwear for women. Griggs & Co. in collaboration with the fashion company in London 'Red or Dead', designed these boots specifically for women. Griggs & Co. did no more than introduce a couple of lighter variations of soles *"the traditionally broad sole has been slimmed down for the high heeled range and the sizes are limited to between three and eight"* (Tredre, Sept 1992, p.33). The price of these high heeled Dr. Martens begins at £50.00.

The designer of the high heeled Dr. Marten boot was Vicky Pratt, she was like a *"formula one racing driver"* (Tredre, 1992, p.33). They are in the fast lane constantly being sought after by footwear companies like 'Shellys' and the clothing company 'Red or Dead'. Griggs & Co. collaboration with 'Red or Dead', and Vicky Pratt. They kept the design of the high heeled Dr. Marten very secretive, first exhibiting the high heeled Dr. Marten at a Trade Exhibition in Germany in 1992. They took orders for 16,000 pairs and had to refuse many orders. Stephen Griggs the Managing Director of Griggs & Co. confessed,

"To be honest we didn't realise so many women had started wearing D.M's in the mid 80's. In our innocence we just noticed a massive swing from men's sizes to boy's and we thought boys were buying them". (Tredre, 1992, p.33).

The high heeled Dr. Marten was a development by Griggs & Co to introduce the boot to woman. Women in the 1980's had been wearing shoes such as stiletto's or forms of lower heels popularised by Princess Diana.

1. The first part of the report
describes the general situation
of the country and the
state of the economy.
It also mentions the
main problems which
the government is
facing at present.

2. The second part of the report
deals with the results of the
survey conducted in the
different regions of the country.
It shows that there are
significant differences
in the economic situation
between the different
regions.

3. The third part of the report
contains the conclusions
drawn from the survey.
It states that the
economy is generally
stable, but that there
are still some problems
which need to be solved.

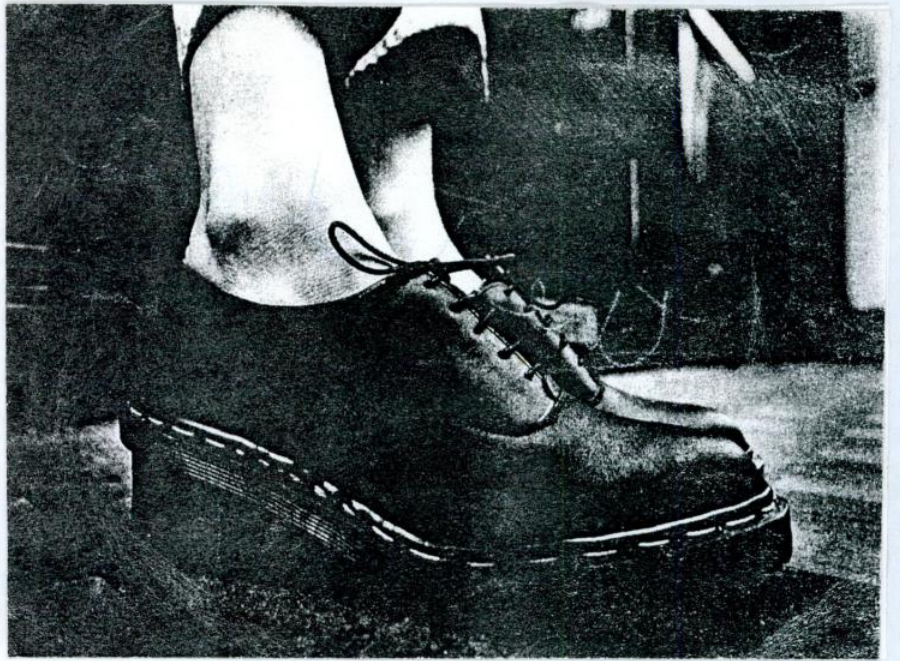


fig. 30; Two variations of the high heeled Dr. Marten
(height heel 2 inches).

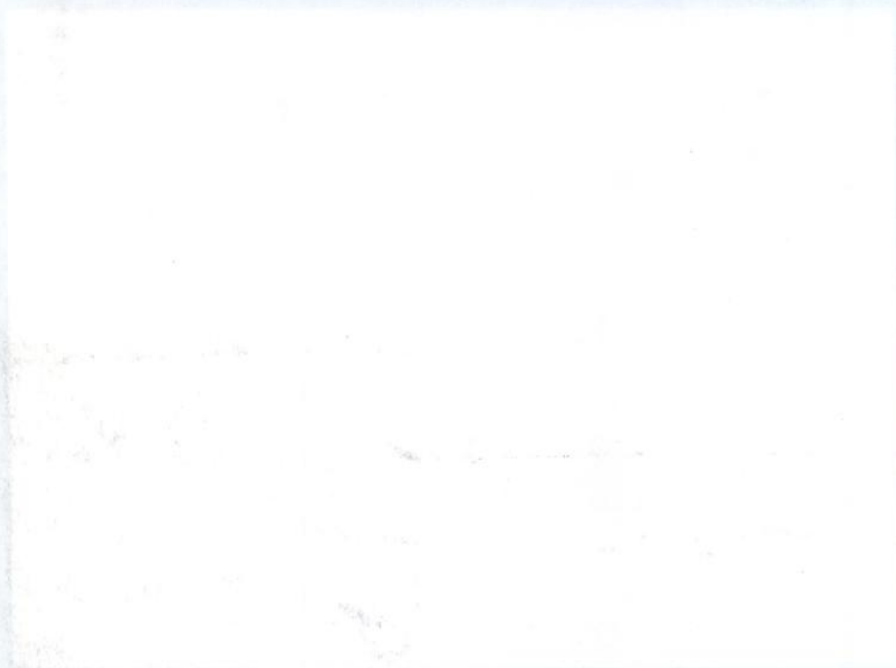




fig. 31; A variety of Dr. Marten styles for women.



The new range of high heels Dr. Martens for women were as Tredre put it, *"Beautiful they are not. But the typical D.M. wearer has always found beauty in the ugly. The chunkier the better"*. (Tredre, 1992, p.33).

With their launch of the high heeled Dr. Marten, Griggs & Co. and 'Red or Dead' launched a new country collection, more conservative Dr. Martens for women, blue suede brogues and pine green leather gibsons. Like the heeled Dr. Marten boots the shoes are made with slimmer shapes and lighter soles.

When Griggs & Co. and 'Red or Dead' designed and constructed the high heeled Dr. Marten they created a slimmer sole to allow for the shape of the high heel and the woman's foot. The eight hole lady Dr. Marten was created too with a slimmer sole and are lighter compared to the standard eight hole Dr. Marten. The only changes that existed between the two boots was the lady Dr. Marten was lighter and the quarter was longer in length and shorter in height. They were both size six and the length from the base of the soles of the lady Dr. Marten to the top of the quarter was six and a half inches, compared to the standard Dr. Marten which was seven and three quarter inches. Are Griggs & Co. creating a feminine Dr. Marten boot to suit women, or what they think suits a woman. Perhaps they are marketing to a new type of woman, introducing a style that would suit them.

In fig. 33 there is a cross section of female Dr. Marten wearers, the aristocrat Catherine Maxwell Stewart wears her Dr. Martens with casual trousers and a jumper. Each of the women have their own distinctive style and their boots suit each one. These women are dressed casually, wearing their Dr. Martens with leggings, jeans, shorts and trousers, their

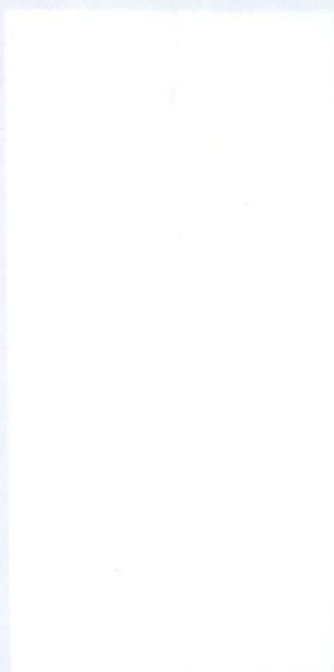


fig. 32; The Lady Dr. Marten worn with leggings and a long jumper.





fig. 33; (top left) 'posh Doc's', aristocrat Catherine Maxwell-Stewart, Student Linda O'Connor, Betty Bo, Kathy Dennis, and Demi Moore all wearing Dr. Marten boots.



Dr. Martens are saying that they are comfortable casual, very wearable with all types of clothes.

From the early 1960's the woman's role in the post modern world changed dramatically. The plight of the woman and discrimination against women which was prominent at that time changed. The language of woman's fashion changed in the 60's with the hippie counter-culture, with the 1980's brought a number of gays and lesbians to the notice of society with their adoption of fetishism and their subversion of the code of dress in fashion at that time. The punk woman in the late 70's played a part in the punk society, joining bands such as 'Sioxsie and the Banshees' and wearing clothing of leather corestry, rubber and kinky gear and Dr. Martens eight eyelet boots, designed by people like Vivienne Westwood. Feminists were unhappy at the language of dress for women, especially women who wore clothes that was alluring for men. While the feminists chose to wear clothes that were not alluring, such as jeans, workman boots like the Dr. Marten boot, jumpers.....with little or no make-up.

The role of the post-modern woman in society, reflecting on clothing such as the Dr. Marten boot was a great break-through for women which began in the 1960's. Women counteracted discrimination by establishing the Woman's Movement in the 70's and 80's. The woman developed confidence in herself and her language of clothes, by wearing clothes that were not associated with the woman, such as Dr. Marten boots. Women in the 80's and 90's created large consumer markets for themselves, making footwear manufacturers such as Griggs & Co. take note and develop specific ranges of Dr. Marten footwear for women. From this chapter we gain an insight into the background of the

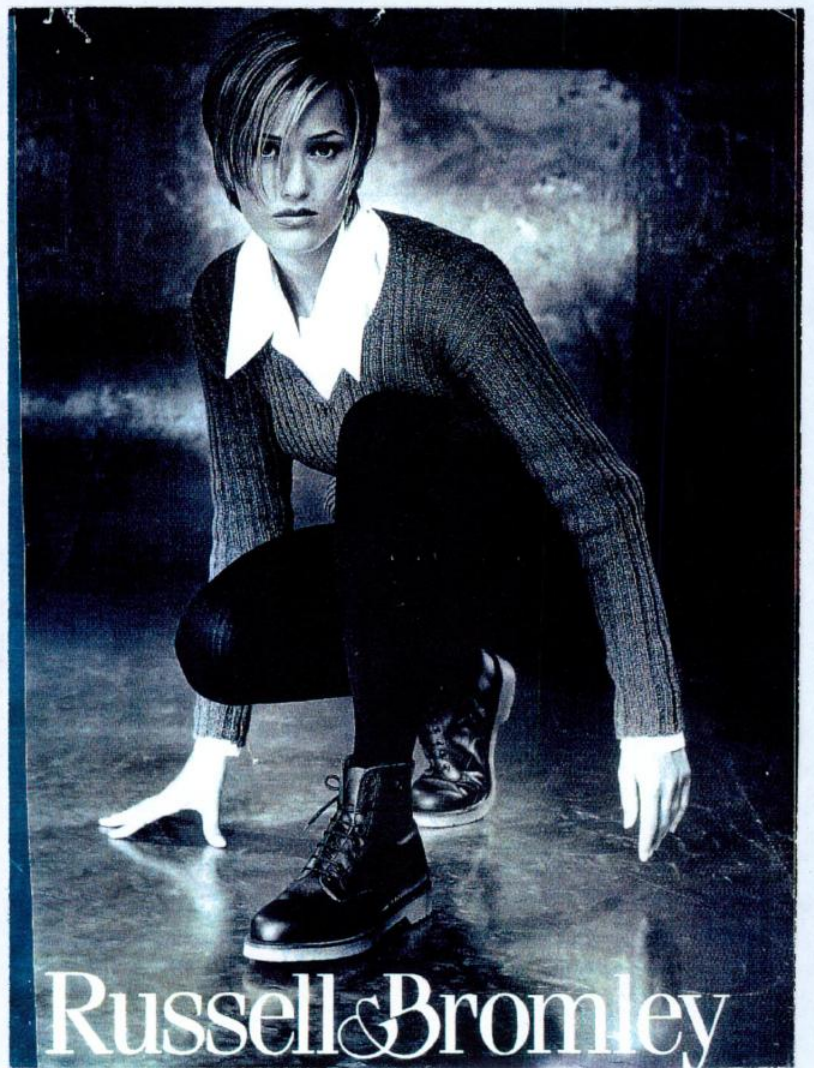


fig. 34; Russell & Bromley 'Waxed carved boot by Dr. Marten.



post-modern woman, her fight against discrimination and her adoption of the Dr. Marten boot, from the 1980's onwards. Women who wore Dr. Martens in the 70's, such as the punk women, were labelled as rebellious working class, it was not until the 80's when Wayne Hemingway customized the Dr. Marten boot, that it became acceptable for women to wear Dr. Marten boots.

CONCLUSION

This thesis is about a boot that has evolved through four decades, beginning in the 1950's as a humble orthopaedic boot, to become a boot that was hijacked from popular culture into high culture.

The Dr. Marten boot is an object that communicates non-verbally, yet, it has developed from an appropriate work boot to connotating sexual attractiveness, worn by attractive trendy youths. In the 'social world' the boot has developed from part of a rebellious uniform, worn by sub-cultures such as the skinheads into a fashionable, prestige boot for women, as styles such as the high heeled Dr. Martens have been designed especially for women. The boot has also created such a profitable market for the shoe retailer, owing to their long established status and their wearability and fashionability. This has led to various imitations been produced of the boot in many forms.

The boot has evolved through several decades into present day society, unchanged in its construction from the 1960's. No other wearable object has progressed as far as the Dr. Marten boot, having been tamed into a universal fashion accessory.

The boot has out lived its competitors and has achieved a status. The Dr. Marten boot has adapted into society, both past and present and is still functioning the same as before.

As Dewan Sudjic said of cult objects such as the Dr. Marten boot, *"It must give the impression at least of the existence of limitless numbers of identical copies, hinting at an ideal universal form that is independent of its creator"* (Sudjic, 1985, p.16).

Once only a required fashion accessory for skinheads and police, now the Dr. Marten boot leaves it's foot prints all over the world.

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