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Doc Martens Offends

Company markets 'skinhead boot' as historic treasure

By Arashi Young
Of The Skanner News

The word "skinhead" conjures many images: a closely-shorn head, Nazi gangs, white power movements – and now a marketing campaign?

Portland mother Licia Seaman was horrified when she discovered a pair of Dr. Martens boots that uses skinhead ideology as a selling point. Seaman this week wrote a letter to the company's headquarters in Portland, urging them to cease production and marketing of the boot.

"Violence shouldn't be fashionable," she said.

The Skanner News is waiting for comment from the company.

Seaman's son first came upon the boot while working in the Dr. Martens warehouse. The "tower" model is a 6-eye steel-toe boot. It is part of a new "Worn By You" collection reissued from past designs and then deliberately scuffed up for a vintage look.

A small brochure accompanies the product, describing it as originally a miner's work shoe. It says, "Almost immediately after its launch, skinheads adopted the boot as their weapon of choice."

The skinhead marketing extends beyond the tower boot. The entire Dr. Martens Autumn Winter Reinvented Collection of 2014 is inspired by the early skinhead movement of 1968-69.

The early skinheads in Britain were a working-class pride movement that set itself apart from the long-haired hippies of the time. It wasn't until later that skinheads became nearly synonymous with white power and hate crimes.

For Seaman, the years of skinhead violence can't be ignored in favor of an early expression. She said the history includes nearly 40 years of violent racial attacks on strangers, such as the 1988 beating death of Mulugeta Seraw in Southeast Portland.

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TRAVON'S MOM

A packed house came to Maranatha Church Monday evening to hear Sybrina Fulton, mother of the late Trayvon Martin, speak on her advocacy work and youth empowerment.



PHOTO BY JERRY FOSTER

Fulton Pushes Community Involvement

Some two thousand people pack halls to hear her speak

By Donovan M. Smith
Of The Skanner News

A message of youth empowerment at one event, and a call to end racial profiling at another were the focus of Sybrina Fulton during her two-day visit to Portland this week.

Fulton is the mother of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed teenager from Sanford, Florida, who was shot and killed by Neighborhood Watch volun-

teer George Zimmerman in 2012. Zimmerman was acquitted of murder in the case, which drew outrage around the world.

Tuesday morning, Fulton served as the keynote speaker at the YWCA's 38th Annual Inspire Luncheon, during which she recounted her journey from being a working mother to a full-time activist in the wake of her son's death.

"My son was murdered, and for a long time I would not say

'murdered,'" Fulton told the crowd. She said she was weary of becoming the "voice for Trayvon" but changed her mind when she learned police did not plan to arrest Zimmerman.

"I could not just let my son's death be in vain," she said. "I had to speak out against racial profiling and against the injustice that's happening against our young people today."

The 800-strong crowd at the Portland Hilton Downtown

included City Commissioner Steve Novick and Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith.

The night before, Fulton drew an even bigger crowd of 1,400 to Maranatha Church for a "community gathering."

Here Fulton delivered a largely similar message of improving the justice system through involvement with community organizations, but

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Study: Seattle Police Program Works

An effort to divert low-level drug addicts into treatment wins praise

By Gene Johnson
Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Gailen Lopton was in a downtown alley two weeks ago, having a buddy jab him in the neck with a heroin-filled syringe, when he suddenly found himself in the company of Seattle's finest.

The police officers weren't looking to lock him up, though. Instead, they offered

him a chance to enroll in a first-of-its-kind program called Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, aimed at keeping addicts and prostitutes out of jail and in housing, counseling, job training or even yoga — whatever services they need.

Organizers have had good feelings about the project since it launched in 2011, and a University of Washington study released Wednesday backed up their work: Partici-

pants were up to 60 percent less likely to be arrested than a control group, the evaluation found.

The results are so encouraging that advocates say it should prompt reconsideration of President Barack Obama's call for an expansion of drug court programs and a hard look at replicating Seattle's effort

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