

He had a cobbler in Cairo make him a pair of the crepe-soled desert boots and he brought them back to England. They received mixed reviews, but after a fortuitous meeting with *Esquire*'s fashion editor Oskar Schoefler in Chicago, the boots were introduced in the U.S. and stormed American campuses.

The desert boot did find a foothold among England's mods and urban professionals, but it was soon overshadowed by the heavier ten-inch version of the combat boot—indispensable footwear for a set of fractious subcultures, especially skinheads and punks who found Dr. Martens either too mainstream or too expensive. In the 1980s, English and Belgian "rivetheads" (fans of industrial acts like Skinny Puppy and Nine Inch Nails) favored both combat boots and tanker boots, beefing them up with unnecessary straps and platform soles, while black-metal fans, goths, and techno-age steampunks seized on them in their own way. Finding new devotees and interpreters in every decade, the combat boot marches on with no end in sight. ●



The cast of *Quadrophenia* (1979): When they started shooting *Quadrophenia*, Sting (center) and his band The Police were relatively unknown. By the time the film was released, they were climbing the charts.