

Study on Original Design Features of First Ladies' Evening Dresses⁺

– Comparison of Jacqueline's Styles and Later First Ladies' Styles –

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Abstract

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis (July 28, 1929 – May 19, 1994) was served as First Lady of the United States in the early 1960s. Her fashion styles are analyzed into the elements of designs, and the features of Jackie look are assorted. A variety of sources about women's suits for the 21st century are suggested in the research. Jackie's taste in fashion, her fashion image are searched. In addition, after Jackie, other nine fashionable First Ladies' evening dresses are compared to Jackie's dresses so as to see if there are similarities between their styles. Based on this data, the typical First Lady's look is classifiable. The purpose of this study is to furnish the industry with basic information which helps create high value fashion design.

Most of Jackie's evening dresses had the straight – sheath silhouettes, and the round or bateau necklines without collars. Pale tones like white predominated in her dresses, and patternless colorful silk, silky and bright texture of cloth was used for the dresses. Elegance and classic represented her image. Design features of Jackie look are the straight silhouette, the simple line excluded adornments, and the fine quality of cloth.

There has been little change in other nine First Ladies' evening dresses since Jackie . They weren't influenced by the vogue at that time, but they kept the style the way Jackie did. Jackie style is the beginning of the typical first lady look, that is.

Key Words : evening dress, first lady look, image, design feature, fashion style.

I. Introduction

1. Background and Purpose of the Study

Recently, Korea has got into the era of a

20,000 dollars per capita GDP, so people can afford to enjoy plenty of cultural life. They often have parties, which were considered as the exclusive property of the western people once.

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Naturally, the demand for party dresses has increased these days. There are a variety of dress codes for parties. In the present situation, it is very useful to determine the origin of the western formal gowns. It is also important to study design features of them in fashion industry. This study will surely help design new high value fashion products. Various factors can lead to changes in women's fashion. Downward spread from social leaders is the most general of them. Jacqueline Kennedy became, at age 31, one of the youngest First Ladies in history. She received a lot of attention and love from the public. She was thrust into the spotlight the most ever. Kennedy was also an important figure in fashion history because she is remembered for her taste in clothing worn during her husband's presidency. Her style was called 'Jackie Style'¹⁾. 35 formal evening dresses that Jackie wore are presented and the design features of them are described here. The influence of Jackie look on later First Ladies' styles are studied. This study is aimed at tracking back to the origin of the formal dresses in the modern women's fashion. This provides the 21st century women clothing with design sources.

Since 2004 the advanced studies on Jacqueline's clothes since have been as in the following: Jung, Hye Jung(2007)²⁾, (2005)³⁾ and Lee, Hyun Young and other two(2004)⁴⁾. In their theses, they were interested in how the Jackie look that Jacqueline showed as the First Lady influenced on the women's clothing style. They pointed out the features of Jackie's style, and emphasized the effect of it. Besides, they have done a comparative analysis in Princess Diana's styles.

The advanced studies after 2004 were 'The features of the clothes worn by the Fashion

Leader, Jacqueline and its significance in fashion history'⁵⁾, 'Jackie's styles designed by certain designers'⁶⁾, 'The study on First Ladies' inaugural gala gowns of all time', and 'The dress classification based on First Ladies' roles'⁷⁾, and 'The inaugural gowns of First Ladies'⁸⁾.

This study presents various pictures of Jacqueline's styles, and focuses on their silhouettes, the colors of details, materials, which weren't come up in other theses. Also, the First Ladies' same fashion items as Jacqueline's are shown here. The purpose of this study is not identifying Jackie's influence on women's clothing, but proving that Jacqueline's evening dress is the root and origin of the First Lady look.

The items, the objects of this study are totally different from those of any other studies. They are utmost evening dresses at formal parties, not everyday wear such as two-piece dresses or one-piece dresses. In short, this research has the different subject, purpose and object that have not been studied in other advanced theses.

2. Method of the Study And Scope the Study

Qualitative research and quantitative analysis based on one-volume books, photo collections, fashion magazines, biographies, some Internet data and preceding theses is performed. This study is carried out by formulating a hypothesis below and proving it.

First: Jacqueline's official dresses created the typical Jackie O style that were different from earlier dresses. Second: Jacqueline's official dresses are the same as the later First Ladies' ones. 'Sense of Style' and 'Fashion Image' presented in 'Style and Image of Jacqueline Kennedy's Evening Dresses' are analyzed to

prove the first hypothesis.

35 evening dresses at official appearance as First Lady between 1961 and 1963 are subjects of the study. Ankle-length or floor-length dresses at formal meetings for evening or day shown in the pictures are named evening dresses.

There is a limit to this study. It is impossible to observe Jacqueline's dresses in person, only possible to examine the photos of her dresses in the book Jay Mulvaney(2001). The color of Fig 36 is analyzed by that the picture is scanned with the high-definition scanner, and then it is cut into pieces as a color chip and compared them with the profile of tones. In a series of this process including photography, film developing, scanning, and printing out, there might be trivial errors to display colors.

The material analysis is reliable because all the information is quoted here just as that in the books describing. Some parts not written in those books are assumed, carefully judged.

II. Design of Jacqueline Kennedy's Evening Dresses

1. Silhouette

Table 1 shows pictures of full-length evening dresses analyzed in the study.

Fig. 2 is the Inaugural gala gown that Jackie wore at the President's inauguration in January 20th, 1961. The innerwear under the gown was a sleeveless silk chiffon dress which has the clocked bodice with spun sliver and gems. She put a chiffon overblouse with a shirring neck on over the dress. She completed her look with the outerwear, a floor-length white chiffon cape. Jacqueline designed the dress for herself and it

<Table 1> Figure pictures of full-length evening dresses⁹⁾

					
Fig.1.	Fig.2.	Fig.3.	Fig.4.	Fig.5.	Fig.6.
					
Fig.7.	Fig.8.	Fig.9.	Fig.10.	Fig.11.	Fig.12.
					
Fig.13.	Fig.14.	Fig.15.	Fig.16.	Fig.17.	Fig.18.
					
Fig.19.	Fig.20.	Fig.21.	Fig.22.	Fig.23.	Fig.24.
					
Fig.25.	Fig. 26.	Fig.27.	Fig.28.	Fig.29.	Fig.30.
					
Fig.31.	Fig.32.	Fig.33.	Fig.34.	Fig.35.	

was made in the boutique of Bergdorf Goodman, New York¹⁰. After the President's inauguration, her 22 evening dresses of 35 had straight silhouettes and other 12 dresses had hourglass silhouettes. Among the straight silhouettes, sheath dresses outnumbered others by 20. There also were a high-waisted empire line dress having the waistline right under the bustline, a tubular silhouette, and an H-line dress. A sheath dress has no seam on the waist. Instead it has darts, so the body looks slender in it. The slit up each side makes walking easy. It was popular in the 1930s and 50s, early 60s and 1986. Fig.9, Fig.11, Fig.12, Fig.14, Fig.17, Fig.19, Fig.21, Fig.25, Fig.29, and Fig.31 are sheath dresses by the document. Among the hourglass silhouettes, 10 are dome silhouettes, and one is a bustle dress and one is a barrel dress.

2. Detail

Table 2 is about each style of 35 evening

dresses and the design features of them.

Collar is one of the details of long dresses, but the collars were not seen in dresses. Neckline is the alternative. 6 dresses with a basic round neckline, 10 dresses with a bateau neckline, 6 with a boat neckline, 7 strapless off the shoulder dresses covering the chest in a straight line, 2 one-shouldered dresses, 1 dress with an oblong neck, 2 with a wide square neck, and 2 with a scoop neck are sorted out.

18 of 35, namely 51.4% of all outfits are sleeveless with a pair of long gloves. 7 strapless dresses mean that they retain the original form of western women's dresses that reveal bared shoulders but cover the feet entirely. 3 extended-shouldered dresses show that they are more moderate than general women's dresses in the way that they reveal shoulders and cleavage. First Ladies look has to be suitable for their position. 2 Set-in sleeved dresses, 2 dresses with dropped shoulder sleeves, 1 dolman sleeved dress and one long bell sleeved dress.

<Table 2> State of evening dress design

Item	Silhouette	Detail		Design Point
		Collar	Sleeve	
Fig.1	bustle s.	no c. / round n.	set-in / above elbow length	a corsage using the same cloth on the left waist, a asymmetrical wrap around the skirt, above-the-elbow gloves
Fig.2	sheath s /barrel s.	ring c. / round n.	arm slit / sleeveless	sleeveless bodice featured shirring under the round neck, embroidery on the surface, half length of the forearm gloves, a ribbon on the lower left waist
Fig.3	empire s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	none	a ribbon bow below the waist, elbow length gloves
Fig.4	tubular s.	one-shouldered	sleeveless	a satin bow on the right side of the waist line, embroidery on the bottom of the skirt
Fig.5	dome s.	no c. / round n.	extended-shoulder s.	s gathered skirt under the low waistline, a streamlined hem, the shorter front than the back
Fig.6	sheath s.	bateau n.	drop-shoulder	a gold silk sash belt
Fig7	dome s.	bateau n.	sleeveless	a gathered skirt, a ribbon in the center

<Table 2> Continued

Item	Silhouette	Detail		Design Point
		Collar	Sleeve	
Fig.8	dome s.	boat n.	sleeveless	a waistline 10cm above the bodice, a ribbon at the middle of the waist, a front gathered skirt
Fig.9	sheath s.	oblong n	sleeveless	a brooch on the right shoulder, a one-right-shoulder bodice, a wrap skirt adjusted to the left side
Fig.10	sheath s.	bateau n.	sleeveless	a high neckline not showing collar bone
Fig.11	dome s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	sleeveless	a topstitching on the raffia bodice, a white satin gather skirt
Fig.12	sheath s.	boat n.	drop-shoulder	black jet-beaded on the top, white gathered satin on the bottom
Fig.13	sheath s.	wide square n.	sleeveless	an embroidered top with gold thread, hip-length spun gold trimmed hem
Fig.14.	sheath s.	bateau n.	sleeveless	an amber-colored orange, narrow slim line train on the back
Fig.15.	sheath s.	bateau n.	dolman s.	a short – bustline length bolero jacket, heavy embroidery
Fig.16.	dome s.	bateau n.	sleeveless	a yoke below the waistline on the skirt, a pink satin on the top, an embossed white satin on the bottom
Fig.17.	sheath s.	one-shouldered	sleeveless	smocking seized on the right side of the chest asymmetrically
Fig.18.	dome s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	none	tight on the top, an A-line skirt, extremely restrained, no accessories, rarely adorned, the only one diamond pin on the crown of the head
Fig.19.	sheath s.	bateau n.	sleeveless	gold beads 5cm above the bustline, see-through chiffon over them, silver spangles all over the dress
Fig.20.	sheath s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	none	twisted folds on the neckline, two layers of the wrap skirt, crystal beads along their edges
Fig.21.	sheath s.	round n	none	heavy beads on the stole having the edge fringed, the design of the dress is unseen
Fig.22.	sheath s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	none	inspired by a turban, a sash belt, impressive ribbon on the right
Fig.23.	sheath s.	scoop n	sleeveless	black chiffon pleats along the center line of the skirt, a satin ribbon on the waistline below the chest
Fig.24.	dome s.	scoop n	sleeveless	an embroidered top with pink thread, silver stone beads, rustling gathered skirt
Fig.25.	dome s.	boat n.	sleeveless	the same design with the 8th dress in this table, holding ruffles with a bow
Fig.26.	dome s.	bateau n.	extended-shoulder s.	tiered triple ruffles below the knees

<Table 2> Continued

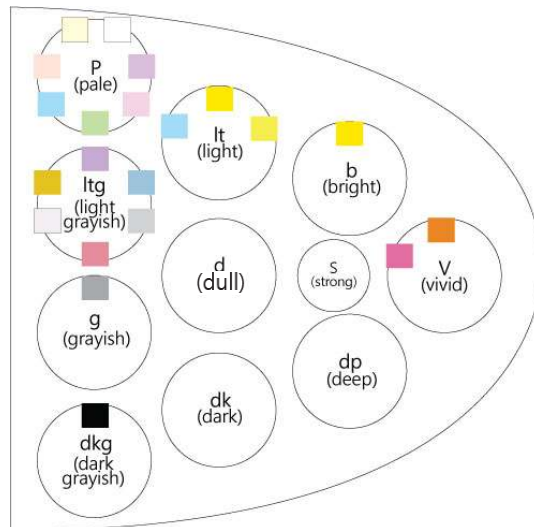
Item	Silhouette	Detail		Design Point
		Collar	Sleeve	
Fig.27.	sheath s.	round n.	sleeveless	the top of the two-piece suit goes to the hipline, a belt using the same cloth, beads on the neckline and the edge of the skirt
Fig.28.	H line.	bateau n.	long bell s.	fabric imported from Dior, not showing the waistline, the cuff and the hem of the top are on a level, a two-piece suit
Fig.29.	sheath s.	boat n.	sleeveless	low waistline, a bow ribbon
Fig.30.	sheath s.	bateau n.	sleeveless	a diamond on each shoulder, a long rectangular shawl
Fig.31.	sheath s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	none	an over skirt from the chest high to the under knees, a satin ribbon on the waist
Fig.32.	sheath s.	strapless off-the-shoulder	none	a starburst pin on the center of the chest
Fig.33.	sheath s.	boat n.	extended-shoulder s.	embroidered pink, violet, yellow flowers and green stems on the top, a gathered skirt
Fig.34.	dome s.	wide square n.	sleeveless	a long ribbon in the center of the waist is made of the same cloth with the gathered skirt
Fig.35.	dome s.	boat n	set-in s.	the same gathered skirt with the skirt on the page 137 into the dome silhouette, beads on the top, a gathered skirt with a black long ribbon in the center of the waist

3. Color and Material

Fig.36 shows the distribution of the tones in 35 evening dresses.

By colors, white accounts for 37%, 13 of 35. Most are bright colors with pale tones taking up 85%.

According to Table 3 about the colors and characteristics of materials, there is a combination of black and white. Also, two dresses are pale pink, one dresses is a combination of white and pale pink. There are two ice blue dresses and a pale purple dress. Pale tones are preferred in general. One orange dress and one orange-black dress are counted. There are also a black dress and two black-and



<Fig. 36> Tones of the evening dresses

-white dresses. A black-and-orange dress, and a black-and-apricot a pink dress, a yellow dress, and a sea-green dress are seen.

By materials, silk accounts for 91%, which

means 32 of 35 are made of silk. Satin, chiffon, mousseline, and crepe de chine are included. 2 styles using a combination of different 2 kinds of silk are found. 1 of 35 is made of laces.

<Table. 3> Colors and characteristics of materials in Evening Dresses

Item	Color	Material		
		Name	Texture	Pattern
Fig.1.	white	double satin	silky	solid
Fig.2.	white	silk chiffon	silky/ embroidered	solid/ flower
Fig.3.	white	satin	bright	solid
Fig.4.	yellow	mousseline	crisp	solid
Fig.5.	white	silk	crisp	solid
Fig.6.	white	silk organ-die	soft	solid
Fig.7.	ice blue	silk	silky	solid
Fig.8.	pale purple	silk	silky	solid
Fig.9.	black	velvet	soft	solid
Fig.10.	white	satin	bright	solid
Fig.11.	black/ white	raffia/ satin	stiff/ silky	stripe/ solid
Fig.12.	black/ white	jet-bead/ satin	bright/ silky	weaving/ solid
Fig.13.	yellow	Venetian crepe de chine	bright	embroidery/ solid
Fig.14.	orange	silk	crisp	solid
Fig.15.	white	satin	bright	embroidery/ solid
Fig.16.	white/ pale pink	satin	bright	solid
Fig.17.	sea- green	chiffon	limp	solid
Fig.18.	pink	douppioni/ silk	crisp	solid
Fig.19.	white	chiffon/ satin	bright	solid
Fig.20.	mauve pink	chiffon	bright	solid
Fig.21.	black/ white	silk	bright	solid
Fig.22.	citron/ gold	chiffon/ satin	bright	solid
Fig.23.	black	chiffon/ satin	limp	solid
Fig.24.	white	satin	bright/ stiff	solid

<Table 3> Continued

Item	Color	Material		
		Name	Texture	Pattern
Fig.25.	pale pink	silk	silky	solid
Fig.26.	orange	organza	stiff	solid
Fig.27.	off-white	satin	bright	solid
Fig.28.	pink/ silver	lace	bright	pattern
Fig.29.	silver-gray	silk	bright	solid
Fig.30.	ice blue	satin	silky	solid
Fig.31.	ivory	silk	soft	solid
Fig.32.	nattier blue blue	silk	limp	solid
Fig.33.	white	silk	bright	embroidery
Fig.34.	black/ orange	velvet/ satin	bulky/ bright	solid
Fig.35.	black/ apricot-pink	velvet/ satin	bulky/ bright	beading

There are a velveteen dress and an organdie dress among them.

By textures, 17, 50% of all, are bright. 8, 20% are silky. 4, 10% feel crisp. 3, 9% are soft. This is very related to the fact that 91% of all are made of silk. Shininess, rustles, and softness, the 3 major characteristics of silk are reflected.

Textures are classified according to Kisoyama Kane's classification quoted in Lee, Ho Joeng's book. 11 entries of the criteria are 'rough', 'limp', 'bulky', 'crisp', 'soft', 'see-through', 'metallic', 'bright', 'stiff', 'silky', 'patterned'.

By patterns, 27 dresses are solid, accounting for 80%. 4 dresses have a pattern which is instinct to recognize. There are 2 embroidered dresses, a floral-patterned dress, a striped dress, a woven dress, a beaded dress.

III. First Ladies' Styles after Jacqueline Kennedy

1. Lady Bird Johnson

Claudia Alta Taylor Johnson (December 22, 1912 – July 11, 2007) –Fig. 37, Fig. 38–was First Lady of the United States (1963–69) during the presidency of her husband Lyndon B. Johnson. Her dress shown in Fig. 37 below has a sheath silhouette with no adornments, almost like Jacqueline's evening dress. Different thing is that Claudia's dress has long sleeves and a collar, so it doesn't allow to show her skin. The dress of Fig. 38 has no collar and it has a boat neckline and short sleeves. It is even more similar to Jacqueline's.

2. Pat Nixon

Thelma Catherine "Pat" Ryan Nixon (March 16, 1912 – June 22, 1993)–Fig. 39, Fig. 40– was

the wife of Richard Nixon, 37th President of the United States, and was First Lady of the United States from 1969 to 1974. Her styles in Fig. 39, 40 are not that different from Kennedy and Johnson's. Considering Takada Kenzo's folklore was very popular at that time¹³⁾, the sensibility to folklore was found in the material of her dresses. A bolero jacket in Fig. 39 and an evening dress in Fig. 40 prevents the body from exposing. Pat's style is much more conservative than Jackie's.

3. Betty Ford

Elizabeth Ann Bloomer Warren Ford (April 8, 1918 - July 8, 2011)-Fig. 41, Fig. 42- better known as Betty Ford, was First Lady of the United States from 1974 to 1977 during the presidency of her husband Gerald Ford. She wore in oriental ethnic clothes. Her dresses and Johnson's were nearly alike. The dress in Fig. 42 was changed style, the draped style following the trend then. Ford preferred the style like Fig. 41 than any other one.



















4. Rosalynn Carter

Fig. 43 is Eleanor Rosalynn Carter (born Eleanor Rosalynn Smith; August 18, 1927) is the wife of the former President of the United States Jimmy Carter and in that capacity served as the First Lady of the United States from 1977 to 1981. Dresses of hers were comparatively simple and moderate compared to the late 1970s' fashion. Carter's inaugural ball dress was also simple and moderate. Fig. 44 was the late 70s version of Fig. 37, Fig. 40, and Fig. 41. Plain and simple dresses. Just like Jacqueline's dresses.

5. Nancy Reagan

Nancy Davis Reagan (born Anne Frances Robbins; July 6, 1921)-Fig. 45, Fig. 46- is the widow of former United States President Ronald Reagan and was First Lady of the United States from 1981 to 1989. In the 1980s, ecology fashion appealing for naturalness was popular but Nancy followed after the style of simplicity and minimalism. Her dresses were made of lace unlike Jackie's. Silhouettes and details of hers, however, are same with those of Jacqueline's.

<Table 4> First Ladies' evening dress of U.S.A¹²⁾

					
Fig.37.	Fig.38.	Fig.39.	Fig.40.	Fig.41.	Fig.42.
					
Fig.43.	Fig.44.	Fig.45.	Fig.46.	Fig.47.	Fig.48.
					
Fig.49.	Fig.50.	Fig.51.	Fig.52.	Fig.53.	Fig.54.

6. Barbara Bush

Barbara Pierce Bush (born June 8, 1925)–Fig. 47, Fig. 48– is the wife of the 41st President of the United States George H. W. Bush, and served as First Lady of the United States from 1989 to 1993. She is the mother of the 43rd President George W. Bush and of the 43rd Governor of Florida Jeb Bush. Natural ecology fashion and grunge look were very popular during the 1980s. The dress in Fig. 48 was made of flowered cloth that was in vogue at that time, but the silhouette and detail of the dress have something in common with earlier First Ladies' dresses. Jackie's plain evening dresses with a sheath silhouette were established as First Ladies' formal evening dresses.

7. Hillary Rodham Clinton

Hillary Diane Rodham Clinton (born October 26, 1947) –Fig. 49, Fig. 50–was the First Lady of the United States from 1993 to 2001 as the wife of the 42nd President of the United States, Bill Clinton. Fig. 49, 50. The diversification of womenswear was already accelerating further in those days and a lot of styles coexisted. Even so, The style was not significantly different from Jackie look. The dresses showed various materials of the same First Lady's styles.

8. Laura Bush

Laura Lane Welch Bush (born November 4, 1946) –Fig. 51, Fig. 52–is the wife of the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush. She was the First Lady from January 20, 2001, to January 20, 2009. She was dressed in the styles shown in Fig. 46, Fig. 48, Fig. 49, and Fig. 50. Her styles are just like all other First

Ladies'.

9. Michelle Obama

Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama (born January 17, 1964)–Fig. 53, Fig. 54– is the wife of the 44th and incumbent President of the United States, Barack Obama, and is the first African–American First Lady of the United States. Her height and frame doesn't make any difference to the style. 9 First Ladies didn't fall and don't fall under the influence of the fashion during their tenure, adhering to the style of Jacqueline's evening dresses.

V. Conclusion

The evening dress is the most formal woman suit of all modern female dresses. It is not common in Korea yet, but it is a must to wear for important formal gathering in western countries. In the era of a 20,000 dollars per capita GDP, there are more chances for some people to experience more advanced life and culture. In this situation, researching design features of evening dresses and building up the basic data can help the fashion business to make high value products. This is the purpose of this study.

Historically speaking, people wanted to copy the costumes and accessories used by the kings and queens, but such a desire was prohibited by law. In the past, ordinary people were allowed to wear formal dresses on their wedding day only in Korea. It is not difficult to imagine how eager they were to look noble. Today, higher class people such as Presidents, First Ladies, actors and actresses, and pop stars are role models for people to emulate. It is worth studying the tradition and the origin of utmost

First Lady look. Jacqueline Kennedy who was young First Lady from 1961 to 1963 had an influence on fashion for years. Especially, her evening dresses are basis of today's classic eveningwear. This hypothesis is a jumping-off point of the study.

Most of her 35 evening dresses had a sheath silhouette, no collar, and round neckline or bateau neck. Whitish pale tones and patternless solid silk were used most. Therefore, the dresses were bright and silky. After Jacqueline, 9 First Ladies – Claudia Johnson, Patricia Ryan Nixon, Betty Ford, Rosalynn Carter, Nancy Reagan, Barbara Bush, Hillary Clinton, Laura Bush, and Michelle Obama wore the evening dresses that were the same as or similar to Jacqueline's dresses. Their 10 to 15 dresses presented for this study proved that the hypothesis is significant. The silhouettes and the details are almost the same, and the materials changed from lace cloth to floral cloth according to the trend of the time.

The style of the evening dresses Jacqueline wore was not in the earlier history of costume in western countries. Even empire style with a sheath silhouette had a typical waistline, not a high waist. Minimalism was a general trend of art and design in the 1960s and early 1970s when Jacqueline was served as First Lady. This permeated Jackie's dresses. Her dresses had a round neckline, a boat neckline and a V-shaped neck with no collar. Jackie's evening dresses had no shirring, puff sleeves, flounces, lacing that were common in earlier days. Looking at the sense of styles and the images that Jacqueline and the other First Ladies have, the dresses have in common. They all are in the 'prestige' and 'better' zones which are at high prices and also fall under the category 'on business' and 'formal'. In the table 5 and 6, it is

said that Jacqueline is a 'fashion innovator', but the nine ladies are 'established.' Jackie, the fashion innovator's sense of style and her image are fixed as the classical thing. That have passed down to later First Ladies. they were just simple. Since then, for about 50 years, with 9 First Ladies, there have been few changes in design of evening dresses. They weren't greatly influenced by the fashion of the time, but they adhered to Jackie style. Jacqueline was so influential that later First Ladies followed her style. Jackie look is appreciated to be sorted as a typical First Lady look.

Two hypotheses built in the introduction were proved. First, Jacqueline's formal dresses created the typical Jackie O style that were different from earlier dresses. Second, Jacqueline's official dresses are the same as the later First Ladies' ones, and it is the origin of the formal evening gown for First Lady look.

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