Michelle O Meets Jackie O

Why Barack Obama's Wife Is Fueling Visions of Camelot

AS THE DEMOCRATIC race intensifies, comparisons between the Kennedys and the Obamas are mounting. With Barack Obama's wife, Michelle, in the spotlight, there is also growing buzz about the striking similarities between her and former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy. First there's the hair. Worn flipped or curled under, Mrs. Obama's style is reminiscent of the volumized "Swan" look that Mrs. Kennedy—who would later be known as Mrs. Kennedy Onassis—tucked beneath her pillbox hats. Then there are the accessories: single-strand pearls the size of grapes, as well as the three-strand version. Though Mrs. Obama was unavailable for comment, her friends say her classic style has varied over the years, but only slightly. She doesn't employ a stylist or have a favorite fashion house. Instead, she works with Chicago-based designer Maria Pinto, who describes her client of five years as unpretentious and modern. Mrs. Obama appropriates the "Jackie O" look, says Vogue magazine's editor at large, André Leon Talley, "but in her own way."

—*Shelly Branch, an editor at The Wall Street Journal, is co-author of the style book "What Would Jackie Do? An Inspired Guide to Distinctive Living."*

A CLOSER LOOK

Styles shared by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Michelle Obama

For Mrs. Kennedy Onassis, jewel-toned **sleeveless shifts** were conservative without covering up her arms.

Mrs. Obama endorses a similar ensemble on a recent magazine cover.

Demure, frace-framing **Peter Pan collars** gained currency in the East Wing.

Mrs. Obama favors the same neckline on a crisp white suit.

Houndstooth checks were a staple for Mrs. Kennedy Onassis, starting on the campaign trail.
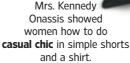
Mrs. Obama is in check during a women's conference in October.

Dowdy pearls found new relevance with the first lady's iconic **triple-strand necklaces.**

The same accessory gets a more modern platform.

Mrs. Kennedy Onassis showed women how to do **casual chic** in simple shorts and a shirt.

At a rally for her husband, Mrs. Obama adopts a similar style.

The choices of both **Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis** and **Michelle Obama,** pictured above, exude a relaxed confidence: wide, open lapels on feminine—but not trendy—suits. Accessories are kept to a minimum. Mrs. Obama has modified her locks only slightly in the past five years, says her Chicago hairstylist, Rahni Flowers. A blunt cut with a few layers makes the hair easy to flip or turn under—just like the former first lady's.

He Calls Her His 'Rock.' The Real Michelle Obama.

Newsweek

FAREED ZAKARIA ON THE END OF A CONSERVATIVE AGE