

The Power of the Pillbox

How the history of such a small hat, brings a powerful statement to women's fashion in politics.

Throughout the years, women's fashion has played an important role in power and politics. Some trends will stay for all of eternity, and some will diminish as the years go by. With politicians, and women in power, fashion acts as a statement not only of wealth, but of class and influence. While trends come and go, one thing you can note on throughout fashion history is the power of the Pillbox hat. Worn for years, this hat is a symbol of class and sophistication, worn notably by women in high power.

The pillbox hat historically originated from the military, and the late roman empire, however is still being used and embraced in fashion today. The modern pillbox hat that we see today, was modeled and created by milliners in 1930. This hat was appreciated due to its sleek and sophisticated appearance, yet simplicity and elegance. A simple wool hat, in a solid colour. Rarely accessorised, hardly flashy, yet fashionable and practical. This sought-after hat became the staple of notable women. The pillbox hat became a iconic look for a women of such a high power and place. When the first lady wore such a simple and elegant hat, it became the look that women were after.



Jackie Kennedy was the first lady of the United States, during the 1960s. The role of the First Lady is not only the wife of the President, but a prominent figure in American Politics. Although the position has never been officially defined, the First Lady plays an important role in communication, social, and political relations in the United States.

For a women of such high stature, you would expect that any First Lady would bring a tasteful appearance, and elegance to the public

eye. First Lady, Jackie Kennedy brought the Pillbox hat to the 1960s, and made it a memorable fashion statement in history.

When referring to women's fashion history in global politics, Jackie Kennedy is one of the memorable figures, next to Princess Diana and The Duchess of Cambridge. During her years alongside her husband in office, Kennedy brought the Pillbox into her wardrobe as a staple. The most iconic look of hers could arguably be the wool, pink suit that was worn multiple times by Kennedy, the most well known being that of the assassination of her husband, President John F. Kennedy. The pink suit would not be complete without the wool pillbox hat, that Kennedy was seen wearing on numerous occasions.

In later years after Jackie Kennedy, the pill box remained a prominent fashion staple for the royals and high in power. The bold shape and style made it remain in our fashion repertoire for many decades. Princess Diana of her time was a lady of fashion, in which she brought attention to everything she wore. With grace and elegance, Princess Diana could make any outfit a piece of its own. A recurring piece of clothing that Diana wore was a simple pillbox hat, that of which we saw on Jackie Kennedy years before. Princess Diana was seen throughout her years in numerous solid colour pieces. Two-piece tailored suits, of one solid coloured wool, accompanied by a matching pillbox were a Diana signature look. The sophistication and elegance shines through every photo of her in the combination. The pillbox in Princess Diana's case provided a luxurious feel to the outfit and brought extra power to a lady everyone loved.

In recent years, we have seen the pillbox hat make an appearance on countless occasions in politics and royalty. Kate Middleton, Duchess of Cambridge, is the new focus on fashion in politics. The daughter-in-law of the late Diana, you can see the power and elegance reflect from one woman to the other. From Princess Diana and her numerous pillbox hat and suit combinations, you can see the resemblance and inspiration show throughout the wardrobe of Kate



Middleton. The most notable example would be that of the royal family with their new son, with mother Kate dressed in a red coat (taking on the same shape and style of a two-piece suit and skirt), and matching pillbox combination. Reflecting the style of Jackie Kennedy, and

Princess Diana, Kate Middleton asserts her power and authority in one timeless outfit. The pillbox hat is clearly an example of a piece of clothing that holds a position of it's own.



The pillbox hat for years has been dressing powerful families, who let their beauty and stature show through their clothing. With some pieces in fashion becoming outdated and rarely recreated, the pillbox hat and suit have remained strong in political fashion. Although you do not need a pillbox to assert your authority, the look is a strong piece within itself. It seems that power of appearance and presence in women's fashion in politics is simply having to hold your head high, in your pillbox hat.