

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is ultimately to predict the predominant style of wedding dresses which will be worn in the decade of 2020. In order to make connections throughout the piece, the evolution of marriage culture and the wedding dress in America must first be understood. Next, to make an informed prediction, one must determine what factors have an effect on the dress and how they ultimately translate into stylistic features. American current events, culture, and fashion (as they pertain to women) come together with American wedding culture in any given decade to shape the model of the ideal wedding gown.

Upon analyzing the different culture, fashion, and views of marriage across the span of 50 years, from the 1920s and again from the 1970s, it becomes clear how they are translated into the style of the respective decade's wedding dress. The connections are further verified by analyzing Ball State University's Beeman Collection's authentic, locally-donated wedding gowns from each period. Based on the understanding of these connections between culture and dress, the predicted culture of 2020 can be used to anticipate a prominent style of dress for the American weddings of that decade. The paper will finally anticipate that cultural atmosphere, draw the connections, and forecast the gown.

In brief summary, the 1920s wedding dresses were heavily influenced by such cultural factors as feminism and technological advancements, as well as consumerism, all due in part to the state of change in post-war America. The dresses of the 1970s were mainly influenced by nostalgia and feminism as a result of an economic downturn during the period. With a forecasted future of advanced technology, social responsibility, and social acceptance, the gowns of the 2020s will appear less traditional (long, white, conservative, etc.) and more reflective of individual's personalities (colorful, sexually appealing, etc.).

Honors College
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306