

Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein Compare and Contrast

Early life experiences of Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein show a lot of things in common, which lead them having similar design style in the future. They grew up on the same block in New York City but went to different colleges. The same social class that their parents were in made them have what to achieve the same goal through their design. However, the different understanding of this world made them be in various style. There are a lot of similarities and differences between them; we could see the inkling of all these things through research their life experiences. All their life experiences lead them to become world-known designers in the future with similar style.

First of all, the experiences at their early age are so similar and have the strong influence in their future. Both Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein were born in working-class families. When Ralph Lauren's father was work for house painting, Calvin Klein's dad used to work for grocery store. Although they had different jobs, they were both immigrants. This might be a base of how Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein created their design concept. Another interesting similarity is they both grew up in the Bronx. After both had attended to the same Public School, their life began to show differences. Ralph Lauren went to Clinton High School and chose Baruch Campus of City College as his college. On the other hand, Calvin Klein was directly thrown himself into the design area. He went to High School of Industrial Art and then went to a famous fashion school, Fashion Institute of Technology. The distinguish of school choice made the way of how the get into the design world diverse. Although Ralph Lauren did not study design or fashion in

the college, he became a salesman for a tie company. The chance that made him able to touch the design world was a requirement of designing a tie. Since his designed-tie sold well, he could design clothes as his career. On the other hand, as a fashion student, Calvin Klein became a real designer by selling his design to brand. After they became artists, the influence of their life experience extended in their design.

They both wanted to make clothes that are simple and comfort but have a different style. They both set up their brand in 1968. Ralph began with the men's wear when Calvin Klein began with women's wear. The differences of their style depended on the design concept they had. Ralph Lauren wants to show a traditional American style, which could be familiar to most of Americans and could show a yearning for high-social-class life. To contrast with Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein wanted to show a feeling of living in a modern super city, which is modern, simple and International. We could easily find these differences from the style of their Ads. Most of Ralph Lauren's Ads were about the countryside life, equestrianism, and Hollywood. On the other hand, the Ads of Calvin Klein were sexier and full of tease, which could draw the attention of the young. We must not feel strange with this advertising commentary, "there is nothing between Calvin and me." This is what Brook Shields said in the Ads. We could see that with a lot of similarities in their design, they lay particular emphasis on different understanding of cloth, of the world they lived.

Lastly, the different understanding that they had were created by the life experiences. Ralph Lauren was worked at Boston when Calvin Klein worked in New York City. Influenced by the

different atmosphere in the various city, they had several views for fashion. Since Ralph Lauren lived in a city that has such strong feeling of history and traditional America, his style was also about these things, like upper society, American history, and American countryside. As Ralph Lauren said that he was interested in longevity, timelessness, style—not fashion, his design concept is more about daily life in Americans. But for Calvin Klein, he did not view New York City as a specifically American style city. It is more like a big international city; it is a combination of features in all countries around the world. Based on this thought, he more interested in creating a style that could fit this international city, simple, comfortable and modern.

In a nutshell, Ralph Lauren is so analogous to Calvin Klein for their early life experiences. But the little distinguish that happened in their life lead them to walk into two familiar but full of differences ways. It is so interesting that every difference that took place in one's life could cause a bunch of substantial diversity.

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