



2007

Vera Wang

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Christensen, Rita (2007) "Vera Wang," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 28 : Iss. 1 , Article 18.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol28/iss1/18>

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Krohn, Katherine. *Vera Wang*. Twenty-First Century Books, 2007. ISBN 9780822566120. \$29.27. 112 p.

Reviewer: Rita Christensen

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Biographies;

Subject: Wang, Vera--Juvenile Literature; Women Fashion Designers--Juvenile Literature; Books--Reviews;

Energy. Style. Talent. These words are used in *Vera Wang*, a young adult biography, to describe the celebrated American designer who rose to fame in the 1990s designing signature bridal wear. The biography covers Vera's growing up years, schooling, talents, disappointments, ambitions, business opportunities, awards, and family.

Vera was born into a wealthy family who came to the United States to escape China's Communist Revolution. She grew up traveling the world with her parents; often accompanying her mother to Paris to shop at couture boutiques. Vera was unsure what to do with her life when she was in college. She contemplated being a professional skater or a doctor; however, she loved art and foreign languages and graduated with a degree in art history. After college, Vera started out as a salesgirl in an exclusive New York City boutique. Through a series of fortuitous events, mixed with hard work, she became the senior editor of *Vogue Magazine*. She later landed the position of senior designer for Ralph Lauren. After Vera married, at 39, she quit her job to try to start a family. Vera's father encouraged her to return to fashion by giving her a large loan to start her own design business in bridal wear. The fashion community was skeptical that she could succeed but Vera followed her heart. Her design business has grown to multimillion-dollar proportions including: bridal wear, couture, ready-to-wear fashions, footwear, jewelry, fragrance, eyewear, fine papers, flowers, books, and even hotel suites.

Krohn's *Vera Wang* is a realistic look at what it takes to succeed in the design business. It details the sleepless nights and the many years of work it takes to be a top designer. The author also makes it clear that Vera's privileged background of education, culture, travel, and wealth was a great help to attaining her goals. Her many achievements in business and marriage are outlined. Success has its price, and the author looks at issues that plague Vera: the lack of time to relax and to mother her two adopted children, and feelings of self-doubt in a competitive environment. By all accounts, however, Vera seems to have it all. A great read for young adults who may be interested in pursuing a design career, or who have entrepreneurial aspirations.