



# American Dreamer: My Life in Fashion & Business

*Tommy Hilfiger, Peter Knobler*

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**In this tale of grit and glamour, setbacks and comebacks, business and pop culture icon Tommy Hilfiger shares his extraordinary life story for the first time.**

Few designers have stayed on top of changing trends the way Tommy Hilfiger has. Fewer still have left such an indelible mark on global culture. Since designing his first collection of “classics with a twist” three decades ago, Tommy Hilfiger has been synonymous with all-American style—but his destiny wasn’t always so clear. Growing up one of nine children in a working-class family in Elmira, New York, Tommy suffered from dyslexia, flunked sophomore year of high school, and found himself constantly at odds with his father. Nevertheless, this self-described dreamer had a vision and the relentless will to make it a reality. At eighteen he opened his own clothing store, parlaying his uncanny instinct for style into a budding career as a fashion designer. Through decades of triumph and turmoil, Tommy remained doggedly optimistic. To this day, his approach to commerce is rooted in his positive view of the world.

*American Dreamer* brims with anecdotes that cover Tommy’s years as a club kid and scrappy entrepreneur in 1970s New York as well as unique insights into the exclusive A-list personalities with whom he’s collaborated and interacted, from Mick Jagger and David Bowie to Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein. But this is more than just a fashion icon’s memoir—it’s a road map for building a brand, both professionally and personally. Tommy takes us behind the scenes of every decision—and every mistake—he’s ever made, offering advice on leadership, business, team-building, and creativity.

This is the story of a true American original, told for the first time in his own words, with honesty, humor, and the insatiable appetite for life and style that proves that sometimes you have to dream big to make it big.

## **Praise for *American Dreamer***

“A unique look into the fashion world . . . an honest, straightforward, mostly entertaining autobiography of the man who created a classic yet hip line of clothing.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Fashionistas and business gurus alike will glean important lessons from Hilfiger’s rags-to-riches rag-trade story.”—*Booklist*

“Tommy burst onto the fashion scene at the height of hip-hop and was instantly taken up by rappers and rockers alike. Since then, year after year he has been ahead of the curve with his elegant and stylish looks. His creative energy has always been an inspiration to me. He’s really himself in *American Dreamer*.”—**Mick Jagger**

“In *American Dreamer* Tommy shows how he has taken the (rock) stars and the (preppy) stripes and come up with a look—and a label—that are recognized globally as being quintessentially American, as well as a brand that constantly keeps time with pop music.”—**Anna Wintour**

“Tommy is an inspiration to many people. *American Dreamer* shows how he has managed to be successful in business and done so with integrity.”—**David Beckham**

“Tommy is one of the most genuine people I know! In *American Dreamer* you can feel his passion pour through everything he does: fashion, fatherhood, family, and friendship!”—**Alicia Keys**

“Tommy Hilfiger is an American icon who was able to transcend fashion and blend it with pop culture and take it to a worldwide audience. *American Dreamer* documents how, unlike any other designer, Tommy was able to tap into music, its subculture, and its influence on society.”—**Tommy Mottola**

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