

Who Are We? – Celebrating a Mystery Group of People



Print a [“Who Are We?” sign](#). Add a clue in the text box, print, and post on your bulletin board. Post a different clue every day or so and see who can guess the identity of the mystery people of the month. Then plan a “Who Are We?” discussion and reminiscence activity.

Do you know who we are? Here are some clues:

1. We are a trio.
2. Respectively, we were born in 1915, 1917, and 1919.
3. One of us was arrested by Nazis for her involvement in the Hungarian anti-Nazi underground movement.
4. One of us campaigned for Richard Nixon.
5. One of us was once put on trial for assaulting a police officer.
6. We were originally from Hungary.
7. We left our home city of Budapest to escape the war.
8. One of us can claim to have been European royalty.
9. We converted from Judaism to Catholicism in the 1920s.
10. We were all known for our stunning beauty.
11. One of us suffered a severe stroke in 1966.
12. We grew up in a state of aristocratic opulence.
13. One of us claimed to be “a marvelous housekeeper.”
14. We are sisters.
15. We all chose to pursue lives in Hollywood, but one of us became more famous than the other two.
16. Our distinct European style made us stand out in the sea of Hollywood talent.
17. One of us went down in history as the “ultimate Hollywood diva.”

18. The oldest of us achieved fame in Hungary for her role in a comedy film.
19. The middle sister's most well-known movie is *Moulin Rouge*.
20. We were famous not just for our beauty and wit but for the sheer number of marriages we had.
21. Two of us married George Sanders—at different times, of course.
22. One of us married hotel magnate Conrad Hilton.
23. We had 20 marriages among us.
24. The youngest of us is famous for her role in the TV series *Green Acres*.
25. Our first names are Eva, Magda, and Zsa Zsa.

Have you guessed who we are? Yes, dahling—we're the Gabor sisters!



Print a copy of the [pictures](#) to pass around as you share and discuss the information with your group.

The Gabor Sisters: A Legacy of Glamour and Charisma

Throughout Hollywood's history, few names shine as brightly as the Gabor sisters—Zsa Zsa, Eva, and Magda. These remarkable siblings captivated audiences with their beauty, charm, and wit, leaving an indelible mark on the entertainment industry. With careers that spanned several decades, the Gabor sisters were more than just Hollywood icons; they were living testaments to the allure of fame and the enduring power of sisterhood.

Early Lives

Born to a life of luxury and refinement, the Gabor sisters hailed from Austria-Hungary (now Hungary), a country known for its rich cultural heritage. Magda, the eldest of the trio, was born on June 11, 1915. She was followed by Zsa Zsa on February 6, 1917, and Eva on February 11, 1919. Their parents, Jolie and Vilmos Gabor, were affluent jewelry and porcelain traders and instilled in their daughters a love for the arts, sophistication, and a strong sense of self-worth.

Growing up in Budapest, the sisters' childhoods were marked by the opulence of their family's estate. They were exposed to music, literature, and languages from a young age. These early experiences would later contribute to their cosmopolitan personas. However, their lives were disrupted by the threat of World War II in Europe, and they all left Budapest at some point to begin a new chapter of their lives.

The Gabor sisters carried with them an air of European elegance that set them apart in Hollywood. Their upbringing, rich in European traditions and manners, made them unique in an industry that often favored the conventional. Zsa Zsa, with her striking beauty and penchant for witty one-liners, soon found herself in the spotlight.

Magda and Eva, while not as well-known as Zsa Zsa, also pursued careers in entertainment. Magda, the eldest sister, displayed her acting talents in both film and television, while Eva achieved fame for her role in the hit TV series *Green Acres*.

Discussion Starters

- Budapest, the city where the Gabor sisters grew up, has a rich cultural heritage. Have you ever visited a city known for its cultural significance? What city was it? What aspects of the city's culture left a lasting impression on you?
- The Gabor sisters' parents instilled in them a love for the arts, sophistication, and self-worth. How do you think early exposure to the arts and culture can influence a person's life and career choices?

Zsa Zsa: Hollywood's Glamorous Icon

Of the three Gabor sisters, Zsa Zsa Gabor, often dubbed the "ultimate Hollywood diva," was undoubtedly the most iconic and flamboyant. With her captivating beauty and glamorous lifestyle, she became a symbol of Hollywood sophistication and charm.

Zsa Zsa made her Hollywood cinema debut in the 1940s. Her striking looks, often compared to those of classic European movie stars, combined with her exotic accent, made her an instant sensation. In her early career, Zsa Zsa often played the role of the femme fatale or the exotic beauty, perfectly fitting her image as a glamorous Hollywood star. Her breakout role came in the 1952 film *Moulin Rouge*, where she portrayed the seductive dancer, Jane Avril. This performance earned her critical acclaim and marked the beginning of her ascent to stardom.



What truly made Zsa Zsa a household name, however, was not just her acting talent but her larger-than-life personality. She was known for her quick wit, elegant style, and impeccable taste. Zsa Zsa was a master of the art of self-promotion, and she embraced the role of the celebrity with gusto. One of her most famous quotes, "I am a marvelous housekeeper. Every time I leave a man, I keep his house," perfectly encapsulated her sassy and audacious persona. Her marriages to a great many wealthy and influential men, including hotel magnate Conrad Hilton and actor George Sanders, only added to her allure and cemented her reputation as one of Hollywood's most glamorous and intriguing figures.

Despite her penchant for drama and extravagance, Zsa Zsa also possessed a genuine warmth and charisma that endeared her to fans around the world. She was a fixture on television talk shows, where her candid and often humorous interviews showcased her larger-than-life persona. Zsa Zsa Gabor was more than just a Hollywood star; she was a living legend, an embodiment of old Hollywood glamour, and a woman who lived life on her terms.

Discussion Starters

- What does it mean to live life on one's own terms, and why do you think it's an admirable quality?
- Consider the concept of the "old Hollywood glamour" that Zsa Zsa Gabor is said to have embodied. Are there other Hollywood stars you associate with this style?
- How do you think cultural backgrounds and accents can influence a performer's image and success in the entertainment industry?

Little Sister Eva

Eva Gabor, the youngest of the sisters, married Swedish doctor Eric Drimmer in 1937. The pair immigrated to the United States soon after, thereby providing the link between Eva's family and the United States. Eventually, all of the Gabor sisters would join Eva, but it would take several years.

Eva possessed a natural talent for acting, and her adventure in Hollywood began in the early 1940s. Eva's career took a slightly different trajectory from her sisters'. She found her niche in the world of television and became a beloved figure on the small screen. Her most enduring role came in the 1960s when she portrayed Lisa Douglas in the popular sitcom *Green Acres*. Her character, a sophisticated New York socialite who moves to a rural farm with her husband, became an iconic television character. Eva's comedic timing and charm made her a favorite among viewers, and *Green Acres* became a beloved classic. Eva also hosted her own talk show in the '50s.



Magda's Life of Intrigue

Magda was the eldest of the Gabor sisters and the first to make her mark on the entertainment industry. She began her career as an actress in Hungary, where she starred in two comedy films before emigrating to the United States. It was Magda's experience in film that prompted her mother Jolie to move the family to Hollywood. Magda would not have much of a career after that, but she appeared on several talk shows and even an episode of *The Colgate Comedy Hour* with Jerry Lewis.

While Magda did not have a bustling Hollywood career, she led a very interesting life. When Hungary came under attack from the Nazis in the early 1940s, she joined the Hungarian anti-Nazi underground movement and became a codebreaker and driver who aided Hungarian POWs escape. Magda and her mother were arrested by the Nazis in 1944, but their release was secured by the Portuguese ambassador to Hungary, a man with whom Magda had formed an attachment.

Magda suffered a severe stroke in 1966, rendering her impaired, both physically and verbally. Her right side was nearly useless. Still, she was able to communicate using mainly facial expressions and gestures. And ever the glamorous woman, she still managed to style her hair and apply makeup—including false eyelashes—with her left arm.

Discussion Starters

- Eva Gabor's career focused more on television, particularly with her iconic role in *Green Acres*. Can you name other actors or actresses who made a significant impact on television during the 1960s? (**Examples:** Barbara Eden in *I Dream of Jeannie*, Sally Field in shows like *Gidget* and *The Flying Nun*, James Garner in *Maverick*, Lucille Ball in *I Love Lucy*, etc.)

- Eva's character Lisa Douglas in *Green Acres* was beloved by audiences. Do you fancy yourself more comfortable in the country or the city? If you were to have to move to the one you were less comfortable in like Lisa does, what do you think would be the hardest part for you? What might be a benefit?
- Magda Gabor was a civilian who wanted to support the war efforts in her home country. Who are some others who used their celebrity status to support war efforts abroad, and what was their role? (**Examples:** Jimmy Stewart was a pilot in the U.S. Air Force and flew 20 combat missions during WWII; Bob Hope and Dinah Shore were part of the USO and provided live entertainment to the troops during WWII; etc.)

Sunset for the Gabor Sisters

Despite being the youngest, Eva was the first to pass away, on July 4, 1995. Magda died two years later on June 6, 1997. In her later years, Zsa Zsa faced health challenges that limited her public appearances, but her legacy as a Hollywood legend remained untarnished. She passed away on December 18, 2016, at the age of 99.

Together, the Gabor sisters represented an era of Hollywood glamour, elegance, and charisma. They exemplified the idea that talent and personality could take you far in the entertainment industry. Their ability to captivate audiences with their wit and warmth left an indelible mark on the hearts of those who knew them.

Trivia

- The Gabor family converted from Judaism to Catholicism in the 1920s.
- Both Zsa Zsa and Magda were married to British actor George Sanders at some point.
- Zsa Zsa was the only sister to have a child. She shared her daughter Francesca, born in 1947, with Conrad Hilton.
- Near the end of her life, Eva had a friendly relationship with the creator of *Wheel of Fortune*, Merv Griffin.
- In 1989, Zsa Zsa was put on trial for assaulting a police officer.
- Zsa Zsa's marriage to Frédéric von Anhalt technically made her the Princess of Anhalt and Duchess of Saxony, although there is controversy surrounding Von Anhalt's claim to any titles at all.
- Zsa Zsa campaigned for Richard Nixon in 1968 and 1972.

How Many Marriages!?

Eva was married five times, Magda six times, and Zsa Zsa a whopping nine times! Zsa Zsa is certainly one of the most prolific celebrities in terms of number of marriages. Listed below are the descriptions of 10 other well-known celebrities who might give her a run for her money. Read each description aloud, and have participants try to guess the serial bride or groom.

1. This Hollywood star was married eight times. His spouses included Ava Gardner (1942–1943), Martha Vickers (1949–1951), Elaine Devry (1952–1958), and Jan Chamberlin (1978–2003), among others. He had a prolific acting career spanning several decades, earning four Academy Award nominations and an honorary Oscar for his contribution to film. He was best-known for his leading role in the Andy Hardy movies and *National Velvet* (1944).

Answer: Mickey Rooney

2. This legendary actress was married eight times during her lifetime. Her notable spouses included Conrad Hilton (1950–1951), Eddie Fisher (1959–1964), Richard Burton (1964–1974, 1975–1976), and Larry Fortensky (1991–1996). She won two Academy Awards for her roles in *Butterfield 8* (1960) and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1966).

Answer: Elizabeth Taylor

3. This renowned television and radio host was married eight times to seven different women. Over the course of his career, he conducted over 60,000 interviews, won two Peabodys, an Emmy, and 10 Cable ACE Awards. He's known for his iconic television show, which ran on CNN from 1985 to 2010.

Answer: Larry King

4. This British actress and author has been married five times. She achieved international fame for her role as Alexis Carrington in the hit TV series *Dynasty* (1981–1989). She is also a successful author, with several best-selling novels to her name. (Her sister Jackie is also a prolific writer.)

Answer: Joan Collins

5. This famous actress was married seven times. One of her husbands was Artie Shaw, but they were married and divorced in the same year (1940). Her film career took off in the 1940s, and she became known as the "Sweater Girl" due to her sultry on-screen image. She starred in classics like *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946) and *Peyton Place* (1957).

Answer: Lana Turner

6. This rock 'n' roll pioneer has been married seven times. He achieved fame with hits like "Great Balls of Fire" and "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" and is considered one of the early icons of rock music.

Answer: Jerry Lee Lewis

7. This celebrated film director has been married five times. His most famous former spouse was Isabella Rossellini (1979–1983). He is known for directing iconic films like *Goodfellas*, *Raging Bull*, *Taxi Driver*, and *The Departed*. He is considered one of the greatest directors in cinematic history.

Answer: Martin Scorsese

8. This beloved country music legend and actor was married five times during his lifetime. He was known for hit songs like "The Gambler," "Lucille," and "Islands in the Stream."

Answer: Kenny Rogers

9. This talented actress and producer has been married four times. Her ex-husbands include Jeremy Thomas (1994–1995), Tom Green (2001–2002), and Will Kopelman (2012–2016). She began her acting career at a very young age, and she is known for her roles in the films *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* and *The Wedding Singer* with Adam Sandler, among many others. She also comes from a long line of famous relatives including Lionel Barrymore.

Answer: Drew Barrymore

10. This actor, famous for his roles in TV series like *Two and a Half Men* and films like *Platoon* and *Wall Street*, has been married three times. His former spouses include Donna Peele (1995–1996), Denise Richards (2002–2006), and Brooke Mueller (2008–2011). His career has been marked by both critical acclaim and controversy.

Answer: Charlie Sheen. His father, Martin Sheen, on the other hand, has been married only once, and that marriage has lasted over 60 years!

Additional Activities

1. Learn more about the Gabor sisters from this [A&E Biography](#) (2:06:42) or this [shorter video](#) (14:52).
2. Watch [Moulin Rouge](#), one of Zsa Zsa's most well-known acting roles.
3. Enjoy some favorite moments from an episode of [Hollywood Squares](#) (25:35) featuring Zsa Zsa Gabor.





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people this month