

## Generations

## Would Garbo take a selfie?

A recent story caught my eye about a news anchor in Florida who walked off the set of "Good Day Orlando" when the story next in line for hot news was what Kylie Jenner was going to name her new pet bunny.

The newsman was irate having to do another insipid story. For those of you who may not know who Kylie Jenner is, she's part of the Kardashian clan, mostly famous for taking selfies of themselves and blasting them all over Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and every other vehicle in egomaniac cyberspace to promote oneself, if only for a split second.

While I sympathize with the news anchor, it made me wonder why anyone would want the world to know every minuscule detail in her life and why she would add a selfie for positive identification.

And would the name of a rabbit be something that would intellectually stimulate or amuse anyone other than the owner? The Internet begs us to open a link and find out what's cooking in the land of Kardashianville, but other than this story, I've man-

aged to resist the temptation.

The selfie phenomenon, however, made me think about Garbo — Greta, that is. The image of Garbo holding a phone a foot and a half from her face and taking a selfie was almost sacrilegious. Movie aficionados know that Garbo didn't need to constantly remind the world that she was in a class by herself.

My first glimpse of the elusive one was when I was 12 years old and happened to walk in on my father intently watching our 19-inch, black-and-white DuMont TV. The film was "Ninotchka" and, according to my father who shushed me, history was being made because Garbo laughed.

I was amused to see my hard-working, graveyard-shift, tool and die-maker father glued to anything on TV other than Matt Dillon outdrawing a heavy-handed gunslinger. However, when I heard him laugh along with Garbo, his laugh was pure joy.



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Composing himself, he said: "Peg, you either love Garbo or you can't figure out why people do. But when you love her, you love her for life."

I didn't think anymore about Garbo until I was in my 30s and happened on "Camille" one rainy afternoon. Two hours later, I knew what my father meant. That face, voice, and classic death scene were all it took to reel me in. I cried a boatload of tears when her eyes closed and she was gone until I could play the worn-out VHS tape again.

What did she possess that made my father, me and most of the world her obedient slaves? She wasn't an Oscar-winning actress or a social butterfly.

She ran from the press, covered her face, and lived the life of a recluse except when she shopped at small Manhattan stores and New Yorkers backed off out of respect.

She didn't have plastic surgery to make her look like a Barbie doll, didn't need hair extensions, fake nails, low-cut gowns, smoky eyes, or a bottle of peroxide. Yet, for a couple of decades after she faded from view, women

continued to try to capture what she had.

But of course, no one could come close or figure out her secret because she was Garbo. What made her so appealing was the simple fact that we couldn't get enough of her, and she didn't want us to. She hid and we searched, making her even more attractive.

Could she be a success today? Probably not. Our culture has become "we want to see it all and we want to see it now," and the Internet gives everyone an opportunity to do just that. But, like everything else in life, when you get too much of something, you don't want it anymore.

Garbo must have known that. She would never be tempted to flood us with selfies because she had the world in the palm of her hand rather than a phone. She'd never follow the crowd because she was too busy running from it.

And just a side note to those who wonder: the Jenner rabbit was named Bruce. I peeked.

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