

13 Celebs Who Have Law Degrees

Not everyone with a law degree follows the traditional path. There are a number of people who went through law school, put in extra hours and effort to earn J.D., and still ended up changing their minds.

That's the case with many of these celebrities who ditched their law degrees in favor of other pursuits—quite successful ones at that.

If you earned a J.D. but aren't sure whether you want to continue in the field of law, [check out this list of non-traditional jobs you can do with a law degree.](#)

1. John Cleese

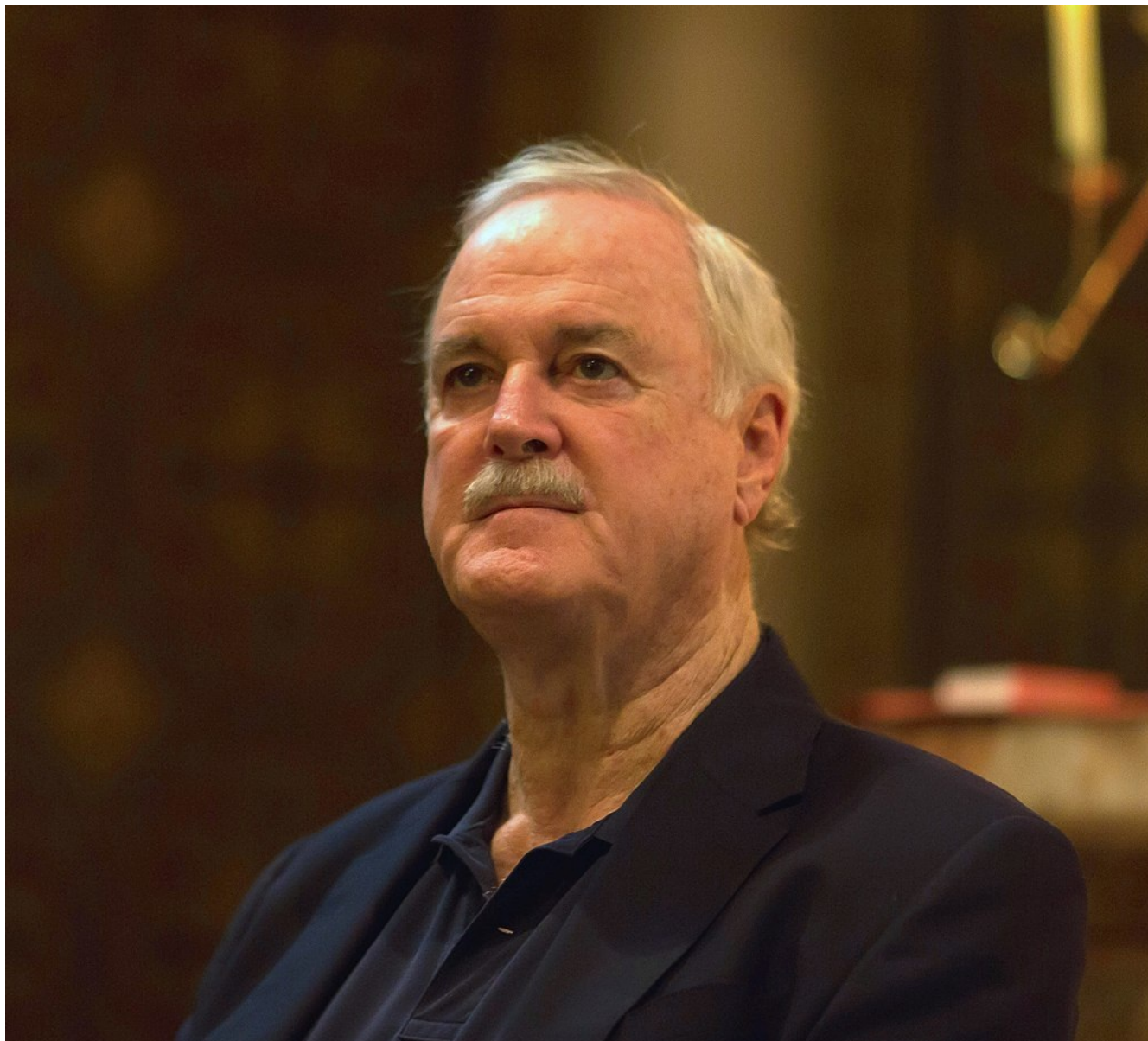


Photo by [Bruce Baker](#)

Law School: Downing College, Cambridge

Before he attended the Ministry of Silly Walks, the British comedian, and star of the *Monty Python* troupe, John Cleese was an aspiring lawyer at Downing College, Cambridge University. There, as fate would have it, he met Graham Chapman, his comedy writing partner. Soon after graduating in 1963, Cleese's comedy career took off, and he never looked back. "I think I would have been quite good at law, but I think I would have found it ultimately very empty," [Cleese told Yahoo!](#) in 2013.

2. Andrea Bocelli





Photo by [InfoGibraltar](#)

Law School: University of Pisa

The world-famous singer was drawn to music from an early age, but to please his parents, who had other plans for their son, Andrea Bocelli studied law at the University of Pisa. After graduating from law school, Bocelli became a court-appointed lawyer. Eventually, Bocelli chose to pursue his lifelong passion, music.

3. Gerard Butler

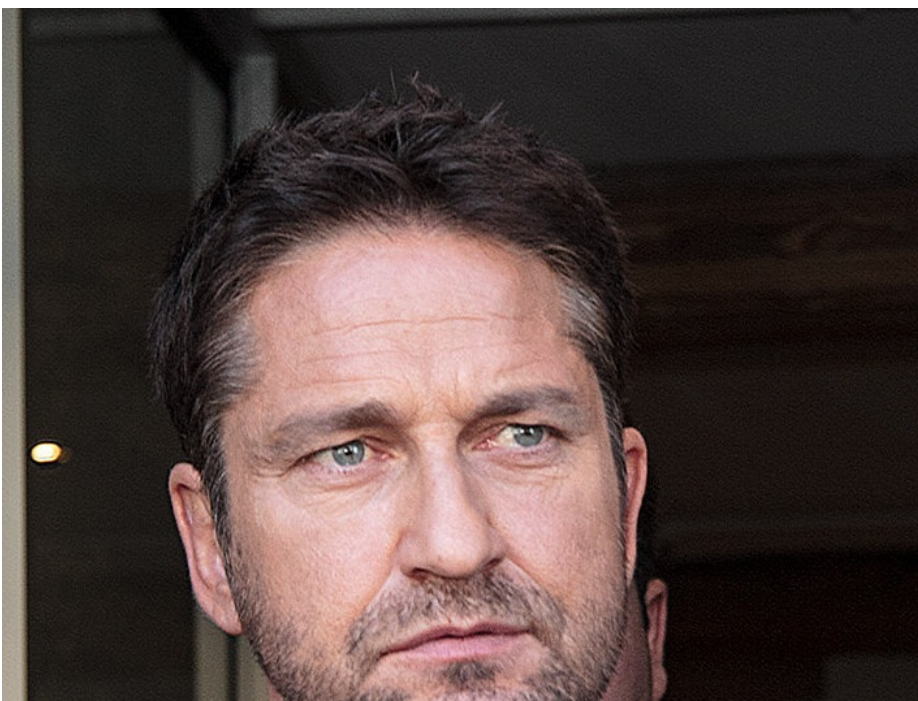




Photo by [Gordon Correll](#) -

Law School: University of Glasgow

Prior to portraying King Leonidas of Sparta, Hollywood heartthrob Gerard Butler was studying law at the University of Glasgow and graduated with honors in 1992, according to [People.com](#). Butler's impressive grades secured him a traineeship at one of Edinburgh's top law firms. However, in the last week of his traineeship, the actor-to-be saw *Trainspotting* at the Edinburgh Film Festival and left with a change of heart. When he went back to work he was fired, a week later.

4. Jerry Springer



Springer in January 2011 Photo by [Justin Hoch](#)

Law School: Northwestern University

The famous TV personality, best known for his iconic 27-season run as the host of *The Jerry Springer Show*, earned his J.D. from Northwestern University in 1968. The 75-year-old worked for two law firms before transitioning to politics. He was the mayor of Cincinnati from 1970-1978 and considered running for Senate in the early 2000s. Last year, the famous TV host decided to put his law degree to use and combine it with something very close to him—television. In Springer's new show, 'Judge Jerry', he settles legal disputes between real people.

5. Mahatma Gandhi



Gandhi, London, 1931.

Law School: University College, London

Mahatma Gandhi got sail for England in 1888 to get a Law degree and to become a barrister. After attending University College, London, Gandhi passed the bar in 1891

and returned to India to practice law in his homeland. There, he figured out that being a lawyer is not his calling as he was too introverted to speak loudly in court.

6. Geraldo Rivera



Rivera after delivering the keynote at the [Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's](#) 2008 Public Policy Conference Photo by [SRintoul](#)

Law School: Brooklyn Law School

The conservative [Fox News](#) host earned his J.D. degree from Brooklyn Law School in 1969. After graduating, Rivera worked for a Puerto Rican activist group. He gained the attention of a local news director and accepted a job as a reporter. Since then, Rivera focused on a career in journalism.

7. Rebel Wilson

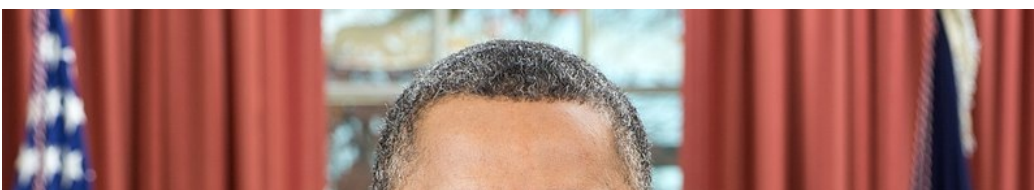


Rebel Wilson at the *A Few Best Men* movie premiere in Sydney. Photo by [Eva Rinaldi](#)

Law School: University of New South Wales

Before she landed roles in hit movies like *Isn't It Romantic* and the *Pitch Perfect* franchise, the Australian actress graduated from the University of New South Wales in 2009 with a B.A. in theatre and performance studies and a Bachelor of Laws. According to [USA Today](#), Wilson was set on pursuing law, but due to a bout of malaria, she hallucinated that she won an Oscar and decided that acting was right for her.

8. Barack Obama





Former President Barack Obama during a presidential portrait sitting for an official photo in the Oval Office, Dec. 6, 2012. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

Law School: Harvard Law School

The former president started his law school journey in 1988 at Harvard Law School where he became the first black Harvard Law Review president in the school's 104-year history. After graduation, Obama became a civil rights attorney and a professor of constitutional law at the University of Chicago Law School from 1992 to 2004.

9. Michelle Obama

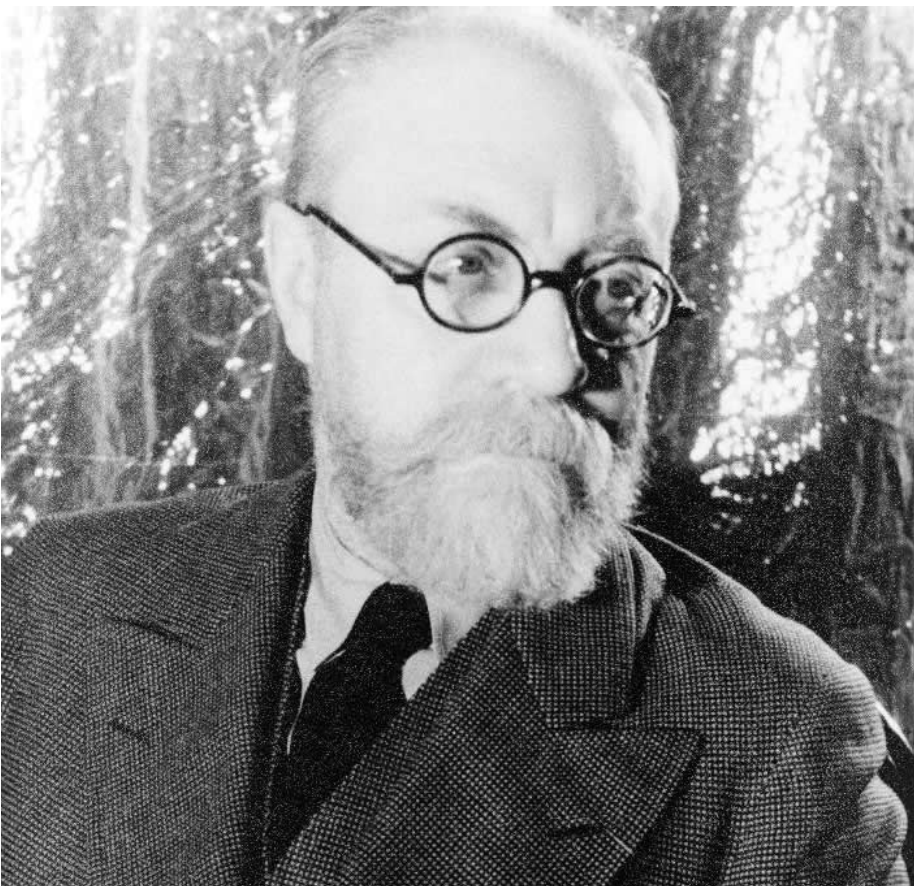


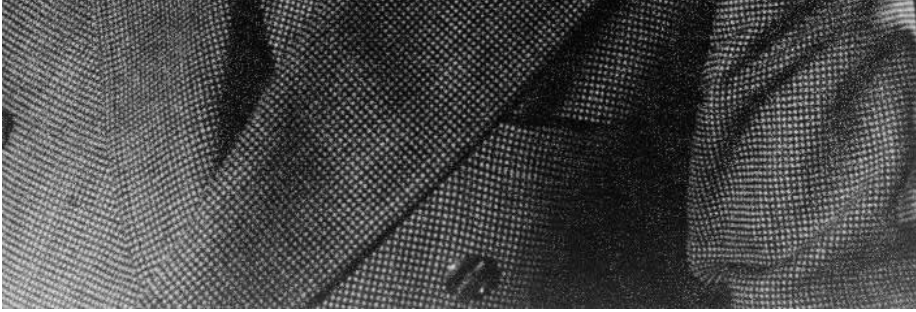


Law School: Harvard Law School

Michelle Obama also attended Harvard Law School in 1988. After graduation, she worked at a Chicago law firm where she met her future husband. Although the former first lady was on track to remain in law, she quickly embraced and excelled at her job in the White House.

10. Henri Matisse





Henri Matisse, 1933

Law School: Paris

The famous French painter went to Paris in 1887 to study law, mostly to please his lawyer father. He was working as a clerk in a law office in Saint-Quentin when he got sick, and his mother brought him oil paints to pass the time. That was the end of his law career. "From the moment I held that box of colors in my hand, I knew this would be my life," Matisse later said.

11. Steve Young





Steve Young

Law School: BYU's J. Reuben Clark Law School

The former professional [American football quarterback](#) best known for his 13 seasons with the [San Francisco 49ers](#) both completed a law degree and won a Super Bowl in the same year. The two-time NFL MVP earned his J.D. degree from Brigham Young University. He decided to pursue law after growing up with a dad who was a successful lawyer. After retiring from the NFL, Young worked in private equity.

12. Jeff Cohen



Jeff Cohen at a Collectormania Convention in 2008 Photo by [CelebHeights.com](#)

Law School: UCLA School of Law

The former child actor decided to pursue a legal career upon discovering that many of the most important individuals on the business side of Hollywood had [law degrees](#). After completing undergrad at Berkeley, Cohen earned a [J.D.](#) degree from the [UCLA School of Law](#) in 2000. He later became an entertainment lawyer in Los Angeles and in 2002 he co-founded the Cohen & Gardner firm in Beverly Hills.

13. Megyn Kelly



Kelly reporting during Fox's 2012 Republican National Convention coverage

Law School: Albany Law School

The former Fox News host after completing undergrad at Syracuse University earned her degree from the Albany School of Law in 1995. "I was offered partnership at Jones Day, one of the best law firms in the world. I argued before federal courts of appeal all over the nation," Kelly told US Magazine. "I graduated with honors in all of my programs."