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## HERE'S BEDDING YOU TOO, KID

A new biography claims Humphrey Bogart slept with 1,000 women and once considered suicide because of impotence and fears he was gay

**John Harlow**

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Humphrey Bogart, one of Hollywood's most enduring stars, is today remembered for his passionate and enduring romance with the actress Lauren Bacall.

Yet before marrying Bacall in 1945 he had bedded 1,000 women, including Bette Davis, Jean Harlow, Marlene Dietrich and Ingrid Bergman, according to a new biography.

The book suggests that, behind his tough-guy image, "Bogie" was riddled with uncertainty that made him impotent and he considered killing himself during his second marriage.

He became so worried that he feared he was becoming homosexual, according to *Humphrey Bogart, the Making of a Legend*, which casts an often-unflattering light on his life before Casablanca made him a star in 1942.

The author, **Darwin Porter**, a journalist who worked in Hollywood in the 1960s, said the book is based on unpublished memoirs and interviews with contemporaries such as the actors George Raft and Joan Blondell.

The biography, to be published next month, suggests his mental turmoil stemmed from his childhood, where his father, a surgeon, beat him and split his lip and then stitched it up badly, leaving Bogart with a permanent lisp.

Troubles at home prompted Bogart to run away to Broadway, where during the 1920s he found fame, fortune and a lot of sex. At one point, according to an unpublished memoir of a close friend, Kenneth MacKenna, he claimed he was sleeping with a different woman every night.

"He was good-looking and popular and, when Broadway had around 120 theatres, there were four actresses for every available actor. No one has estimated this before, but it's likely Bogart slept with 1,000 women, mostly at this time," said Porter.

"He was keeping score with his first wife, Helen Menken, who had a lot of lesbian affairs. They were both chased by the same women, including Jazz Age star Louise Brooks and the flamboyant Tallulah Bankhead," said the author.



His many girlfriends knew about his reputation. “The zipper was invented in 1926. Bogie demanded one be sewed into all of his pants — sex was a lot faster that way. He was a busy boy back then, and rather handsome before he lost his hair and his looks,” said his on-off girlfriend, Blondell.

Some of his seductions were brief affairs: at a party he was marched upstairs by Dietrich to be “measured”.

His first attempt to seduce a young Bette Davis on the verandah of her home was interrupted by her mother, Ruth, who threw him out of the house, declaring Bogart was “a slave to your genitalia, a disgusting perverted creature”.

Bogart’s second wife, Mary Philips, insisted on openly maintaining her previous relationships, even spending the night before their marriage with his friend Kenneth MacKenna, “as a farewell gift”.

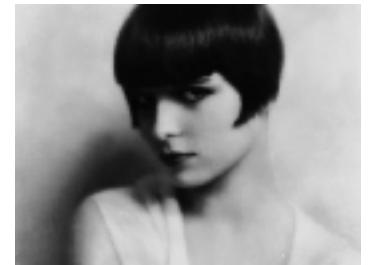
“If only Mary didn’t make it worse. When I can’t perform she mocks and ridicules me. I should never have married her,” he told Stuart Rose, a friend. The book claims that she made him consider killing himself. “But I never get beyond the thinking stage. I just can’t see myself taking a razor to my throat,” he told a confidante.

His third wife, Mayo Methot, once stabbed him with a butcher’s knife. They were known as the Battling Bogarts.

Bogart found what Hollywood magazines called “true love” with Lauren Bacall, who was half his age, on the set of *To Have and Have Not* in 1944, and made her his fourth and final wife. It was a happy relationship, although he conducted a long-running affair with his hairdresser, Verita Peterson.

Bogart, who died of cancer aged 57 in 1957, became so frail that in one of his final films, *Beat the Devil*, the director employed a young mimic to re-record his lines, said the book.

That actor was another “ladies’ man” and a star of the next generation, Peter Sellers.

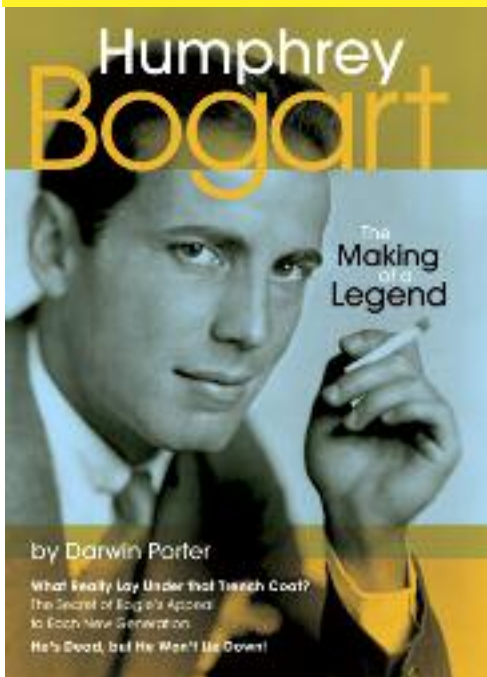


**Bogart’s Lovers**  
*Images above, top to bottom:*

1. Marlene Dietrich
2. Bogie with Bacall
3. Bette Davis
4. Jean Harlow
5. Tallulah Bankhead
6. Bogie with Ingrid Bergman
7. Louise Brooks

*“Porter’s book uncovers scandals within the entertainment industry, when publicists from the movie studios deliberately twisted and suppressed inconvenient details about the lives of their emerging stars.”*

Turner Classic Movie News



*“Porter’s biography is laced with gossippy gems. It also paints a sympathetic portrait of Bogart as a loyal friend who went out of his way to help others. He also had some scandalous skeletons in his closet.”*

The National Enquirer

Available in October online and in bookstores everywhere

***Humphrey Bogart, the Making of a Legend,***  
 by Darwin Porter

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**Blood Moon Productions** is a New York-based publishing enterprise dedicated to researching, salvaging, and indexing the oral histories of America’s Entertainment Industry.

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