

BUBBLEGUM MUSIC

is the Naked Truth

The Partridge Family Temple: Religion is the Bubblegum of the Masses

by Go-Go Giddle Partridge and the Risen Keith



Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a Partridge like me. The glory of music is what makes the Partridge Family a religious experience for the followers of a Now cult called the Partridge Family Temple. Let these words be a psychedelic bus to take you on a spiritual journey to the Kingdom of Albuquerque. We've been traveling in circles such a long, long time trying to say hello to you. Well, now we can. If you are reading this right now, it is because Keith Partridge declared it so.

Listen to the far-out pop sounds of the Partridge Family over and over again, and you will realize the Truth. For, you see, the Partridge Family produced the most psychedelic holy music ever created. We came to know the Truth—that the characters on the '70s sitcom *The Partridge Family* are in fact Gods and Goddesses. Each song has a spiritual message for those who dare to listen for the not so hidden meaning. We came to know Reality in 1988, and the Partridge Family Temple was hatched. Walk in the fleshy spirit we like to call Now!

The Partridge Family Temple is a religious organization devoted to the worship of the Partridge Family. Each character represents a different archetype: Shirley is the Virgin Mother Earth Goddess (hence no father on the show), Keith is the Male Sex God King Christ (David Cassidy was chosen by Keith to be his human vessel for his mighty milk flowing phallus), Laurie is the Holy Harlot Honey Whore of Babylon (just read Susan Dey's *Secrets On Boys, Beauty and Popularity* and you'll know what we mean), and Danny is the Trickster God. It's no coincidence that Danny declares on his solo album that he'll be your magician in the bubble magic world of milk and honey. He was the first and only being ever to deflower his own Mother, for Pete's sake! This knowledge is all there for the taking.

The Partridge Gods use groovy far out sacred bubblegum music to communicate with the masses. The sounds vibrate from your record players right into your souls. Every Partridge Family song is Our Lord Keith spreadin' a little lovin' all over the listener. Then he keeps movin' on to reach more with his powerful message. And while the television shows, the novelizations, lunch boxes, trading cards and more are very powerful tools of enlightenment, these are all really just means of getting you to dig the music. The seemingly wholesome situation comedy is a Trojan Horse that introduces at least one great mind-blowing song every week into the psyches of kids all over the world. The Partridge Family will make you happy—whether you like it, or not.

A majority of Partridge Family songs are Keith²⁸ speaking directly to the listener, the "You" in the songs. Just look at these *titles* to a few Partridge Family classics and you'll see what we mean: "I Think I

28. Who possessed David Cassidy's body from 1970 to 1974.

Love You," "I'll Meet You Halfway," "I Can Feel Your Heartbeat," "I'm Here, You're Here," "Every Song is You," etc. We are not making this stuff up! Keith is reaching out to you. Don't try to fight it; accept him into your life. He does think he loves you, he will meet you halfway, he really can feel your heartbeat even though you didn't say a word, and most importantly, every song is you. These are just the titles. Wait until you get heavily into the lyrics!

The albums are like a spoken bible. The more you listen, the more you get out of them. We recommend listening to songs at least one hundred times in a row in order to fully grasp the hidden meanings found within these spiritual texts. We also suggest listening to the music at various speeds, and backwards. We guarantee that with each and every listen you will learn more and more about Reality.

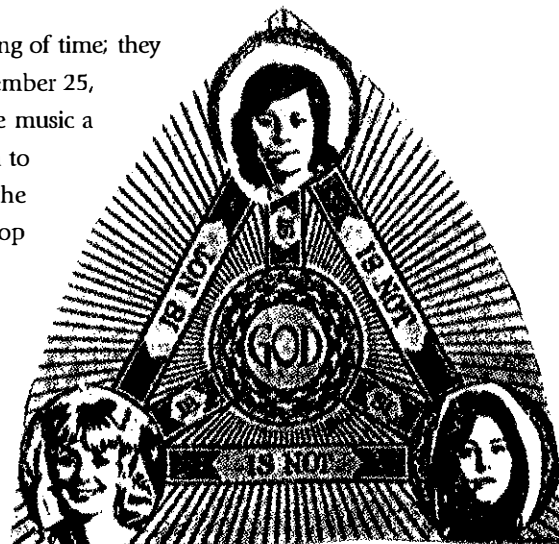
Pop culture is the spiritual medium of the Now. The Partridge Family taught us that. How did they teach us that? By creating us to create the Partridge Family Temple, the first serious religion based purely on pop. Television characters are the new gods, sitcom plots are the new myths, and bubblegum songs are the new spiritual hymns.

The Partridge Family is the greatest band of all time. They are bigger than the Beatles and bigger than Jesus. Time will tell. A thousand years from now, no one will have heard of the Beatles, but everyone will know about the Partridge Family. People try to put down the Partridge Family, whining that they are not a real band. But they put out real music on real records and transformed the lives of millions and millions of real fans who later became real cult leaders and the most groovy cult leaders at that. Now that's all that matters. They are more than just a real band, they are Reality itself.

People complain, "But they don't play their own instruments or write their own material." The Partridge Family used the greatest studio musicians and songwriters of all time. Elvis Presley didn't write most of his music either, but he is considered the King of Rock and Roll. Well, David Cassidy is the King of Bubblegum Music. Jim Morrison may have been the Lizard King, but Cassidy was the Partridge King. Dig it.²⁹ Everyone talks about the musical genius of the Beach Boys, but they (as well as the Carpenters, the Mamas and the Papas, and others) used many of the same musicians that our Gods did. What's more, all of these musicians and songwriters came into this world via Shirley Partridge's vagina. The ultimate paradox is that the Partridge Gods created the creators of their television show.

The Partridges have been around since the beginning of time; they just decided to reveal themselves to this world on September 25, 1970. (More accurately, they revealed themselves via the music a month earlier.) This was a sneak preview of the religion to come. They knew that the most powerful way to reach the now generation was to get with it utilizing television, pop music, and a psychedelically painted bus.

The beauty of the Partridge Family Temple is that unlike most religions whose followers often are not even sure their gods existed, no one doubts that Keith Partridge exists. He's right there in front of you on the eternal tube. And while it may be hard



29. Cassidy did actually write a few Partridge tunes.

to visualize what Loki the Norse Trickster God looks like, anyone can pick up a *Teen Beat* magazine and dig the redhaired mischief maker, Danny Partridge.

Join the temple now and be pointed in the direction of Albuquerque as our beloved master sings to us. Let the music into your heart. Become a Teen Idol Television Rock God before the bus leaves without you. Come to the Temple where you can indulge 24 hours a day in sex, drugs and bubblegum music.



For more information dig our temple in cyberland at:
www.partridgefamilytemple.com
or write us at:
The Partridge Family Temple
P.O. Box 480775
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No Gum Chewing On The Bus, Please by Lisa Sutton

The 1970 fall television line-up was a great one when it came to music. *Lawrence Welk* and *Hee Haw* aside, weekly doses of *This Is Tom Jones* and *The Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour* were enough to keep lovers of contemporary music tapping their toes in prime time. Saturday mornings were also high on the tuneful trend, as shows like *The Bugaloos*, *The Double Deckers*, *The Hardy Boys* and *Lancelot Link, Secret Chimp* all spawned their own musical soundtracks. Not surprisingly, one of the most popular debuts of the season was *The Partridge Family*, a musical sitcom that was born of the sentiment that “a family that plays together, stays together.”

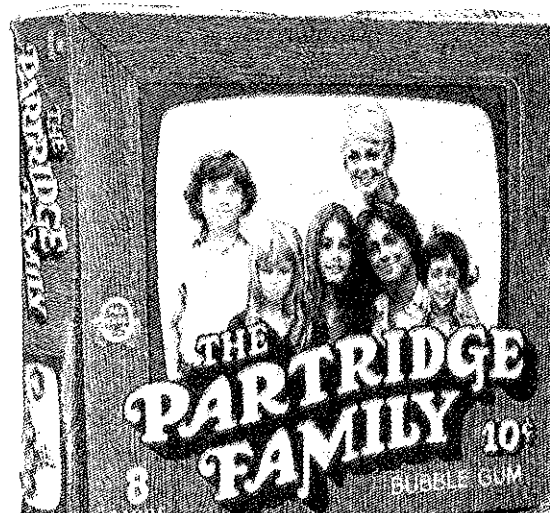
As absurd as the premise sounds today, the story of five musical kids recording pop albums with their mom was based in reality. Originally, *The Partridge Family* was to be *The Cowsill Family*. Show creator Bernard Slade had actually come up with the idea for a singing family in the late '60s, but it took the success (and vaporizing) of *The Monkees* to interest Columbia Pictures Television in the idea. Once the yet-to-be-titled series was in development, Slade caught a performance of the Cowsills on *The Tonight Show* and decided to develop the show around the singing siblings and their Mom.

It wasn't long before the Cowsills found themselves out of the picture. Right off the bat, those developing the show didn't like patriarch and former military-man, Bud Cowsill. It was no coincidence that it was soon decided to make the TV mother of five a widow. Although the folks from Columbia spent over a month observing the Cowsills, they always figured on casting real actors in the lead roles. Oscar-winning actress Shirley Jones (and her blonde Barbara Cowsill coif) were hired to star as Mom, and a cast of juvenile unknowns of various hair colors were brought in to play her brood.

From the start, the cross-marketing geniuses at Columbia intended to release albums, à la The Monkees. The pilot was shot in the fall of 1969 and featured two songs recorded specially for the show by studio musicians: “Together (Havin' A Ball),” and a Neil Sedaka/Carol Sager-penned Monkees leftover called “Let The Good Times In.” John and Tom Bahler of the Love Generation had recorded this ditty in 1969, and were the musical arrangers of a dead-to-nuts re-record for the pilot with the “Penny Lane”-esque piccolo trumpet of the original replaced by the soprano “buh-duh-duh-dum-dum-dums” of Shirley Jones.

Together with the Bahler Brothers, uncredited Monkees' background singer Ron Hicklin and session diva Jackie Ward became the voices of the Partridge Family. When the series was picked up, Wes Farrell (who formerly had produced the Cowsills' LPs) was brought in to produce the first Partridge Family album, cleverly titled *The Partridge Family Album*.

With the singers in place, Farrell went about securing some of the best-known studio musicians in town to lay down the backing tracks. Hal Blaine, Joe Osborne, Max Bennett, Larry Knechtel, Mike Melvoin, Tommy Tedesco, Larry Carlton, Louis Shelton and Dennis Budimir were among the musical wizards who played musical Cyranos to Keith, Laurie, Shirley, Danny, Chris and Tracy. Their resumes were impressive, including backing sessions for the Association, the Beach Boys, the Grass Roots, the Fifth Dimension, the Mamas and the Papas, and (surprise!) the Monkees. To complete the team, Farrell (who himself had composed “Hang On Sloopy” and “Come A Little Bit Closer”) employed a



bevy of Brill Building graduates, including Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil, Tommy Boyce & Bobby Hart, Carole King & Gerry Goffin, Tommy West & Terry Cashman to pen the tracks.

The Partridge Family began shooting in early spring of 1970 after the network ordered 16 episodes. Shirley Jones was slated to sing backup on the albums, while the rest of the singing ensemble memorized tracks for lip-synching. Idol-in-waiting David Cassidy was hired to play 15-year-old lead singer Keith Partridge. Aside from being Shirley's real-life stepson, Cassidy had already been making a splash on the covers of teen magazines, spurred by guest appearances in *The Mod Squad*, *Adam-12* and *Bonanza*. When asked to mouth the words, Cassidy pointed out that he was not just a pretty face, but could sing as well. Although he dutifully mimed to the Bahlers' vocals in the first few episodes, Farrell and show execs agreed that it would only be an improvement to have him sing his own parts long before the series' September premiere.

The result was a pop music explosion that was heard all the way from Hollywood to Hong Kong. David's lead vocal on the song "I Think I Love You" was solid, and the track was released a month before the show's debut in an effort to create a buzz. And buzz it did. The song began a slow climb up the charts, buoyed by a live appearance by Cassidy on *American Bandstand* and other shows, lip-synching to his own voice. By the time the song appeared on the series (in the 6th episode) it was already in the Top 20, hitting #1 on *Billboard's* Hot 100 on November 21st. It went on to sell a staggering four million copies.

Friday night became the original "must-see TV" night for teens and pre-teens. *The Brady Bunch*, *Nanny & The Professor*, *The Partridge Family*, *That Girl* and *Love American Style* could not be beaten by the action programming on the other two networks. (Not such a difficult feat; when *The Partridge Family* debuted, it was up against *The Name of the Game* and a forgotten Andy Griffith vehicle called *The Headmaster*.) Kids would crowd around their televisions every week to watch the comic and musical antics of the Partridges. Girls swooned over Keith's magnificent coif, boys wished they were as funny as Danny, and just about all of them dreamed of starting their own band.

Because the show was targeted at younger viewers, there was an instant stigma surrounding the music. The term "bubblegum" was slapped onto it immediately, mostly because the show's performers were moppets themselves. In truth, the music of *The Partridge Family* was far more akin to the middle-of-the-road music of the day. With few exceptions (like "Baby I Love, Love, Love You" and "Somebody Wants to Love You") the songs were geared toward adult tastes, as ten-year-olds clearly couldn't grasp the true meanings of "I Can Feel Your Heart Beat" or "One Night Stand." Andy Williams and Perry Como must have agreed, as they both covered "I Think I Love You" in the early '70s. Of course, to the kids of the day, that was not exactly a favorable endorsement.

Parents did enjoy the show, but kids were consumed with *The Partridge Family*, which rapidly became a full-fledged phenomenon. Along with the weekly songs performed on TV, Partridge Family albums were released at a rapid-fire rate of one every six months. On top of that, David Cassidy himself had a meteoric ascent to the top of the teen-idol heap, kicking Bobby Sherman's squeaky-clean derriere off the throne. Farrell had negotiated for first right of refusal on producing the P-Fam actors on any solo endeavors, and it wasn't long before David Cassidy LPs were being squashed out, in between the Family releases.

As the record sales proved highly profitable, David began performing live concerts on weekends to promote both himself and the show. Cassidy soon became the most in-demand live performer on the planet. An impossible schedule evolved as David would tape the shows during the day, record in the studio at night, and jet across the US on weekends to sing for thousands of screaming, hormonal teenagers and their very frightened parents.

Over the course of the show's four-year run, the Partridge Family released eight studio albums and two greatest hits packages for Bell Records. David released four as a solo artist (in addition to a PF/DC

hits compilation). Although they were dispensed to the public as rapidly as humanly possible, each effort was produced with the finest quality musicianship, composition and production that early '70s technology had to offer. As the catalog grew, the show also progressed and evolved, creating a large volume of ultimately very palatable pop.

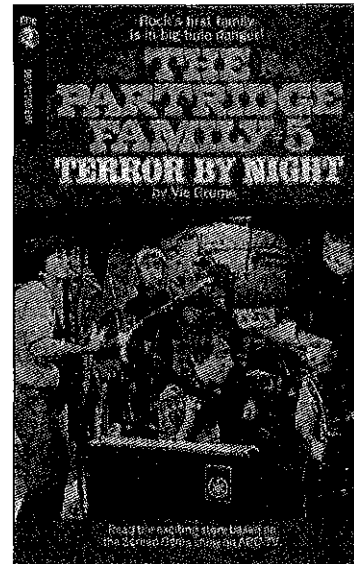
Initially, with *Album* (the first LP) Farrell would double-track Cassidy's vocals as well as speeding them up a notch to create a more youthful lead vocal. (After all, Keith Partridge was supposed to be 16. David sounded too much like a 19-year-old for Farrell's taste.) This technique was used on the second LP, *Up To Date* as well, though Farrell did throw David a bone, letting him include his first self-penned tune, "Lay It On The Line." Shirley Jones was singing backup as originally contracted, though she is inaudible after the fourth album, *Shopping Bag*.

In 1971, at the height of their popularity, the Partridge Family released their *Abbey Road, Sound Magazine*. Had there not been a television show called *The Partridge Family*, this album would have been heralded as one of the best pop albums of the decade. Not that it didn't do well. *Sound Magazine* sold over a million copies, and is considered their best by most fans of the Partridge Family's music. If there had been a Grammy award for best use of the harpsichord, this album would have won by a landslide. Since it was merely a TV-driven, commercial effort, it languished as a guilty pleasure, even if the coolest of cats, Sammy Davis, Jr., had the record in his collection.

David's solo albums were recorded using many of the same musicians and songwriters as the Partridge platters, though they lacked the harmonic qualities of the Family. His first solo album *Cherish* was standard, breathy, pop vocal material. David was allowed to show his bluesy side on the second solo release. *Rock Me Baby* had a grittier edge than any of his previous vocal efforts as well as some more daring material sonically and lyrically. Even more experimental was his third LP, *Dreams Are Nothing More Than Wishes*, which was a huge seller in England, coinciding with David's second world tour.

While Farrell was up to the task of producing LPs for David, he passed on opportunities to record with the other solo Partridges. Shirley Jones recorded a couple of singles for Bones Howe that were released on Bell, and daring Danny Bonaduce, who never sang on the show (except to warble "M-e-e-e-e-ry Christmas" on the holiday episode) recorded his very own LP for Lion Records in 1973. (Apparently Bell Records had certain standards at the time.) There were two singles released from this slice of '70s-ana, the most overdubbed LP in history. "Dreamland" and "Blueberry You," thankfully, did not chart or appear on the TV show. Although the LP was relegated to the \$1 bins at Salvation Armies for most of the '70s and '80s, *Tiger Beat's* sister magazine *Fave* gave it a better review than Paul McCartney's *Red Rose Speedway*. We're so sorry, Uncle Albert, indeed.

In 1974, those girls on *Venus* finally had their chance to get their share of the Partridge Family when CBS aired the cartoon *The Partridge Family 2200 A.D.* This *Jetsons*-inspired, Hanna-Barbera creation took the Partridges of the prime time series and placed them in the future, playing intergalactic gigs and getting into typical Saturday morning cartoon adventures. Using the voices of the original cast (sans David and Shirley), each episode was interspersed with tunes created by the generic studio players at HB. None of these songs were released on album, as the live-action P-Fam was still releasing their own material.³⁵



35. The albums *Notebook*, *Crossword Puzzle* and *Bulletin Board*.

As baffling as the concept of the Partridge Family in outer space was, an even more puzzling transformation had occurred on the prime time *Partridge Family*. David Cassidy had announced that he was ready to leave the show, and the producers began ushering in possible replacements. The first to appear was little four-year-old Ricky Seagall. Cute as a bug, Ricky was brought in to breathe new life into the show; curiously, it's impossible to find a person to take credit for the decision today. The demise of *The Partridge Family* is generally credited to the power of its cross-network rival, *All In The Family*, though weekly warbling from this kiddie crooner contributed to the fall, as he was no replacement for David. Ricky Seagall was treated to his own solo Bell LP, which, in conjunction with Rodney Allen Rippy's *Take Life A Little Easier*, were rumored to be a major contribution to the demise of the entire label.

As the television show ran its course, so went the musical Partridge Family. With no shows to write songs for, there was no need to create music, especially with each LP release dropping in sales successively. *The Partridge Family* went into reruns, and the albums soon were unilaterally cut out. Dance and disco music became the wave of the future, and although the Partridge Family music was beautifully crafted, melodic and easy on the ears, it was suddenly miserably dated.

Fortunately, time heals all wounds, and disco music is now a more painful memory than the red velvet costumes of the Partridge Family. Retro is all the rage, and it is once and for all safe to admit you like harpsichords and five-part harmonies. The music sounds better than ever on compact disc, and is a lasting artifact of a time when well-crafted, harmonic pop music could still make you happy.

