

David Cassidy: Teenyboppers' Latest Delight

by Lloyd Shearer



Gyrating, singing David Cassidy performs before thousands of pre-teenagers in New York's Madison Square Garden. Every little movement in his skin-tight white jumpsuit was greeted with shrill screams added to multidecibel rock.

HOLLYWOOD.

Remember Rudy Vallee from the Stone Age? Remember Frank Sinatra from World War II? Remember Elvis Presley, Ricky Nelson, Bobby Rydell, and Frankie Avalon?

Remember the ear-shattering, heart-rending, near orgasmic wail-cries of "Rudy!, Bobby!, Frankie!, Elvis!, and Ricky"?

Add now to that list of bobby-soxer and teenybopper idols the name of David Cassidy, 22, singing star of a television program, *The Partridge Family*.

Cassidy, 5 feet 8, 130 pounds, choir-boy face, long brown hair, hazel eyes, soft-spoken, sensitive, safe-looking and perceptive, is the latest in the line of singing sex substitutes who have throbbled the female adolescents of this country.

Because he is young and inflation is rampant, Cassidy will undoubtedly earn more from his performances than many of his famous musical predecessors.

Last year, for example, he grossed \$1,061,000 working weekends during a six-month period. This year, two of his corporations, Daru and Ru-Da, will easily double that figure. Daru and Ru-Da are combinations of David's first name and the first name of his personal manager, Ruth Aarons.

Multiple items

It is not only Cassidy's recordings which are selling in the millions. Recordings comprise only the tip of his commercial iceberg. There are David Cassidy posters at \$2 each, David Cassidy photo albums at \$1 each, David Cassidy love kits, luv stickers, dresses, shirts, lunchboxes, coloring books. And don't laugh, David Cassidy bubble gum which will bring in an estimated \$150,000 in royalties before the year is out.

David's is a typically American, inspiring, Horatio Algeric, chamber-of-commerce legend. Yesterday, a nobody, a sometime dropout, a struggling, depressed youngster. Today, through the accident of face and voice, founder of the Cassidy cult, and as such, an emperor of big business, a business shrewdly fanning the flames by constant publicity.

Month after month the fan magazines repeat the by now tired story of David's

life and the titillating details of his new loves, mostly fictional and all platonic. One magazine has carried his photo on its cover for 24 consecutive months. "I went to the editor," Cassidy explains, "and begged him to stop it. But I soon found out it was hopeless. Once they latch on to a good thing, they ride it to the end."

He sells magazines

Fan magazine editors say that Cassidy is the hottest thing since Jackie Kennedy and that they intend to star him until he cools off. "Like it or not," explains one editor, "he sells magazines at a time when marketable show business faces are rare. We just hope he lasts."

At the moment, of course, Cassidy is tabbed the hottest attraction in show business. He sells out wherever he's booked — Bangor, Maine; Madison Square Garden in New York City. Dressed in white on stage to project his youthful purity, he is applauded and greeted by screaming teenyboppers from whom there is seemingly no escape.

"The last time I went to a movie," he recalls, "kids and their mothers were crawling over their seats trying to get at me. Last summer when we were shooting a *Partridge Family*, a horde of girls swooped down on me. I ran into the men's room. I wasn't safe even

