



Young female fans in real life descend upon David Cassidy as they are doing here in one of his ABC shows.

Cassidy Isn't Ready to Leap During Leap Year

This is a Leap Year's Leap Week, and if there are any especially luring leapees among TV bachelors—at least where younger would-be leapers are concerned—they *have* to include David Cassidy, 21, the oldest sibling in ABC's *The Partridge Family*, Fridays at 8:30 P.M. (Channel 6).

He's good-looking, smart and loaded. He's not only well paid for the series and for recordings with and without his reel mama and real stepmama, Shirley Jones, but in six 1971 months, during his first weekend-only concert tour, his fans toted \$1,061,000 to 35 box-offices.

What's more, a special corporation—Daru Enterprises, Inc.—peddles David Cassidyana — shirts, blouses, bubble gum, books, dolls, lunch boxes, 3-D postcards, coloring books, color slides, posters, the David Cassidy Lover's Kit and other teenybopper treasures.

Despite numerous requests, however, he is *not* merchandising, bronzed, the gallstones he had surgically removed last July, or clippings of his hair.

If teenyboppers yearn to be teenyboppers, eager to pop a BIG—not teeny—question, David dissuades 'em.

"Marriage?" he said, echoing my question. "I've thought about it, but I



HARRY HARRIS Screening TV

don't see it in my near future."

The "teenzines" have been fantasizing fulltime about what makes the slight, blue-green-eyed, long copper-haired David tick in articles with titillating titles like "Can You Marry David?" "David: How to Turn Him On—By the Girls Who Have," "David Needs Your Love," "David's (After Dark) Confessions" and "David and Those Special Kisses."

"The stories they made up about me—'My Secret Desires,' 'My Tragic Secret,' 'My Escape from Who Knows What'—were so outlandish that they used to bother me," he sighed, "but now I'm totally oblivious to them. I ignore them."

It's possible that he's lukewarm about marriage because his father, actor-singer Jack Cassidy, divorced his mother, actress-singer Evelyn Ward, when he was five years old. Or because his father

and Miss Jones, mother of his three half-brothers, are currently separated.

Or the preference for "I don't" to "I do" may have a far simpler explanation. He's too young and having too much fun. If he's low on marriage, he's high on girls—even though he does little conventional "dating."

"Yes," he said, "I have to contend with *amorous* girls. I'd say I appeal to girls from nine to sixteen, and girls that age aren't as hung-up as adults.

"Adults are too afraid to show their emotions, but girls are so enthusiastic, so devoted, so open, so honest. If they *like* you, they *love* you, and they tell you so. If they *don't* like you, they tell you that, too.

"When I'm giving a concert, they're totally behind me and what I'm doing. That's gratifying. That's the most any actor could ask for.

"Why do they feel that way about me? It's hard to specify. Maybe it's an all-American image. If I had to put myself in a category, I'd say they consider me an idol, a hero.

"They don't know who I am, why they like me, why they feel the way they do,

continued on page 42