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DAVID CASSIDY

[continued from page 37]

"bubblegum" teenybopper he played on television

It's not that David has anything against his young fans. He willingly says, "You ask me how I feel about the millions of little girls who would gladly tear me to pieces for a souvenir? I love them because they're good and wholesome and they regard me as safe and trustworthy. I can feel their spirit across the footlights. Those kids who come to hear me sing—they love me. And I try to return their love. And maybe it sounds hokey and corny, but I feel it's genuine."

David meant every word of what he said. But he is not a boy; he is a man with a man's needs. And he is of an age when men find a certain girl and settle down and marry. Of course, he is always on the lookout for his dream girl. Jan Freeman could be that girl.

He and Jan like each other a lot. They met on the show where she works behind the scenes. She would certainly measure up to his idea of marriage partner. She's young, very pretty and she understands the business and the pressures David is under. She works with him so she is not awed by him as an idol. David can be himself on their dates.

When *The Partridge Family* was in its first years, naturally, the studio tried to engineer a romance between David and his lovely co-star, Susan Dey. They appeared together at several premieres and parties. And they obviously enjoyed each other's company, but what they felt was friendship, not love. However, it looked good when they showed up in fan books together the way Michael Cole and Peggy Lipton "dated" when *Mod Squad* was brand new.

David and Susan are still close and they like working together, but David is happy that she has found someone she can love. And, ever since Susan and Dale McRaven started being seen in public, the pressures on David have lessened.

Before, David avoided many parties, preferring to stay home and have his friends in. Many times teen idols are advised not to be seen steadily with one girl or their fans get jealous and drop them. This may be why David was so quiet the first two years his series was around.

When he traveled to New York or on a concert tour, if a girl was with him, she hid her face. And David slouched in his seat in his car or even went so far as to walk through airports with his jacket pulled around his head. He never revealed the name of his traveling companions, except for his good buddy and confidant, Sam Hymen.

Now he appears to be saying, Keith Partridge is not David Cassidy. We are separate. While it would be bad for Keith to get married on the show, because the fans like to fantasize about their TV heroes, I, David Cassidy, am 23 years old and am not afraid to be seen with the girl I love.

David really isn't too concerned with the future of *The Partridge Family*. He has made it quite clear that the show and music

have made him a star but that he wants to go into serious acting when it has run its course. Before his half-hour series, he appeared successively on various dramatic shows.

And he plans to continue with his music, with more of an emphasis on writing and performing his own material. He feels that in the past two years his voice and style have matured and that he will last as long as Elvis Presley in the entertainment field.

So he isn't worried about losing his teen idol status. It looks like a good time to go back to being David, which means dating pretty girls and even marrying.

Marriage is a very serious step, of course, and all David has to do is look at Elvis' recent trouble to know that it can end tragically. After all, Elvis and Priscilla knew each other for almost six years before they married. And they had a daughter. But the marriage failed, possibly because Elvis has been so active in his career.

David is patterning himself after Elvis and any marriage plans he might have been contemplating undoubtedly will be scrutinized very carefully. It isn't easy marrying an actor, but with a singer it's doubly hard since his schedule is full of one-day concerts at opposite ends of the country. Priscilla thought she understood Elvis' life style when she married him, but she just couldn't cope.

As a child of divorced parents, David hopes for a stable marriage. There is still a little bitterness within him over the fact that he felt abandoned by his father as a child. His dad, Jack Cassidy, was a musical comedy performer who traveled a lot and David missed him terribly.

His own dream woman probably would be very feminine and womanly with a terrific sense of humor. She would like to do things at home since David really isn't a party-goer. And she would have to make his friends comfortable in their home as David is very loyal and open with his buddies. For his part, David would be an ideal husband. He understands the commitment a man makes in marriage from his own childhood environment. His home is very important to him as his privacy, that's the one thing he's missed since becoming an idol, his privacy. He's had to move several times because his fans find out where he lives and overwhelm him. David doesn't mind meeting his fans singly or in pairs but when several hundred a day run around his home, it's frightening.

David and Jan look to be in love. But we don't think they will reveal their plans because David is still tied up with his show. But if in a year or two, the show goes off the air, they could marry. And, then, they could marry secretly long before that and keep very quiet about it.

At 18, Keith Partridge is just entering college and dating around. But at 23, David Cassidy has dated just about every type of girl, from high school to older woman. He could be ready to settle down. Certainly, if little Susan Dey can seriously think about marrying a man fifteen years her senior, divorced with two children, nothing should stop David's marriage plans. □