

# How “BERNIE” Stole “BRIDGET” From David Cassidy

Ask David Birney how he took Meredith Baxter away from David Cassidy, and he answers the question with a question. “Do you think I did that?” he puzzles politely. “I didn’t meet Meredith until we were making the pilot.” And that’s all he’ll say on the subject. He turns intelligent phrases but reveals himself with caution, especially when others might be involved. Rumors have it that David and Meredith are married; unmarried but living together; formally engaged to wed. David says they are none of these things.

“Suddenly, the pressure’s on for us to be romantically involved, and I understand this,” David says. “It’s because of the roles we play in the TV series. But none of the above is true. You can say that we see each other outside of work.

“There are certain areas of my life I don’t like to talk about because other people are involved. If what I say might affect someone

else, I would much rather not say anything.”

However, whether or not David says it, the facts are these: Meredith Baxter, his cool, blonde co-star in the CBS television series, “Bridget Loves Bernie,” is not a girl to be dazzled by actors, since she grew up in the middle of the Hollywood scene. Born to actress Whitney Blake and radio announcer Tom Baxter, Meredith grew up in an environment where she was frequently aware of the possible hazards of the profession. And as a matter of fact, a showbusiness career never appealed to her during the earliest young-adult years. She had been active in theater arts at Hollywood High School and had studied voice at Michigan’s Interlochen Arts Academy, but, at 19, she married and subsequently had two children.

Meredith’s teenage marriage was to end in divorce. So she began to discover great satisfaction in per- (Continued on page 60)