

Life Is Intense for Teenyboppers

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Determined to attend a Rolling Stones concert, a San Francisco girl camped in a long line for 36 hours. When she finally got to the ticket window, she discovered the last precious pass had just been sold.

She started crying. "I'm going off to die," she announced, sobbing and running away.

Rolling Stone fans who have missed their rock heroes on the Stones current U.S. tour would understand the girl's despair and determination. Another understanding group: The Teenyboppers, a group of female fans who make up a part of the thousands who scream and shout and storm the stage of their singing idols.

Teenybopperism is a way of life for millions of young girls who carry on passionate but platonic love affairs. Though Stone fans are generally older, a few teenyboppers dig the leering sensuality of lead singer Mic Jagger. Many more succumb to the more lovable innocence of David Cassidy.

Awkward and giggly, but charming too, teenyboppers from 10 to 16 are given to endlessly devouring and repeating trivial bits of information about their "fav" — favorite, of course.

Their behavior is nothing new. The mothers of David Cassidy fans remember Frank Sinatra. Or remember the screaming hordes who swooned over Eddie Fisher or Elvis Presley.

Psychiatrists say teenybopper hero worship is a normal part of growing up. To them, and to the editor of "16" magazine — a veteran observer of teenyboppers — the process is part of a girl's maturing.

Teenybopper behavior is simply a rehearsal for a woman's role, according to "16" editor Gloria Stavers, who says some of her readers are as young as eight, though most are closer to 13, and a handful are young housewives. Mrs. Stavers describes teenyboppers this way:

"Shy. Awkward, physically awkward. Shy around boys. A bit self-conscious."

"Girls of that age are very intense," she says. They love more, hate more, are more afraid, more aggressive. They're living in a kind of enhanced atmosphere. It's part of their development into adults."

Being a fan, says Mrs. Stavers, is a culturally acceptable part of becoming an adult. It's trying on a woman's role, practicing what it will be like to be in love by loving David Cassidy or Donny Osmond or any one of the dozen other teen heroes.

The girls' intense enthusiasm for their heroes — their degree of attachment — was obvious when thousands of gushing, camera-clutching girls descended on a recent David Cassidy concert near Detroit.

One of them was Sue Jackowski. Sixteen hours before her "FAV" came to Detroit, she was thinking about HIM, and she was busy writing

things about HIM on a large cardboard sign.

"I love you," she wrote. "I love you very much . . . only 16 more hours until you come . . . I can't wait."

Sue, 14, also included her telephone number. Though it seemed unlikely, she admitted, it was possible her idol might want to call her. Who knows?

"Oh, you're kidding! What do I like about HIM!" She squealed a few minutes before his appearance.

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"I love the way he stands, with his feet apart, and the way he moves . . . it's so great!"

Sue's girlfriend, 14-year-old Maryanne Maxbauer, had cried every day for weeks in anticipation of Cassidy's coming.

Maryanne also had a letter for David, which she planned to throw on the stage when he sang. The letter, she said, was about how "Love is a bunch of things."

In addition, she had a white towel for her "FAV" "In case he gets all hot and sweaty." The towel had her telephone number. Who knows?

Cassidy, a boyish singer with obligatory long hair, had barely started his first song when the teenyboppers laid siege to the stage.

Screaming, they leaped out of their seats and surged forward, a human wave of look-alike girls: long hair parted in the middle, braces on their teeth, "VOTE" sweat-shirts, bell-bottom bluejeans, sandals and halter tops. De-

spite the ushers, one girl repeatedly made it to the stage.

Cassidy, a veteran at this sort of reaction, ran off the stage in the middle of a song, apparently in self-defense, because he has been scratched and kicked and once was slugged with an instamatic camera.

"In Cleveland once," he says, "The crowd security wasn't good enough and the crowd came down on top of me. I got down on my hands and knees and started crawling. Someone who worked for the Monkees told me to do that, and it worked."

"See, what they want is your hair. They want to grab your hair. And my scalp is so sensitive. I get crazy when somebody crabs my hair. I can just cry . . ."

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Though not all girls are fans, the persuasiveness of teenybopperism is apparent in magazines like Mrs. Stavers "16," which together with its sister publication, "Spec," is the largest in the field with over a million and a half readers.

There are dozens of teen fan magazines that bite into allowances for 35 cents to a dollar an issue. They are crammed with color photos, "intimate" stories, "vital statistics," acne-prevention ads ("Doctor

Develops Home Treatment"), and advertisements for things like the "David Cassidy Lovers Kit" (for the price of one dollar, fans get a "huge, life-size poster, a kissable signed portrait, 16 heart-melting candid photos, and innumerable super secrets").

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Readers of fan magazines devour every detail of their favorites' lives. They can tell you, for example, how many brothers and sisters David Cassidy has. They can tell you his neck size is 14½, his shoe size is 8½, and he weighs 125 pounds. They can tell you that another teen hero, Donny Osmond, has a neck size of 14, waist of 27, hips that measure 31, and an inseam that is 29 inches.

By reading "Tiger Beat Super Annual," which costs \$1, fans can tell you a great deal about Michael Jackson of the Jackson Five. His favorite food is tacos. His favorite drink is Kool-Aid. His favorite dessert is cake, any kind. He hates girls who become fat and sloppy. He likes them slim and trim. He catches lizards but lets them free after he captures them.

One of Michael's few dislikes is soup. He really loves swimming and he's especially happy now that his family has a pool

of their own.

Articles in the teen magazines are exclamation-studded accounts like "Donny tells on Donny, in his own handwriting, too!" and "The nine lives of David Cassidy," and "David doesn't make me cry anymore."

The latter article in 35-cent "Teen World" informs readers that "Tears come to David's eyes when he hears gossip," it concludes, "so let this be a warning to all of you who love David. Remember: he's a sensitive human being who can be hurt very easily. Don't be the one to make him cry." The article says nothing about how David feels when someone pulls his hair.

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Mrs. Stavers admits that teen magazines have no overwhelming social message, but she claims they have a subtle good influence on teenagers.

She gives an example: "I met a woman who found out I was editor of 16. She told me that her daughter was very sloppy until she read in the magazine that David McCallum — who was a hero years ago — liked clean, neat, orderly girls. When her daughter read that, she began cleaning her room and being neat."