

# Cassidy Stopped to 'Re-Evaluate'

By JERRY PARKER

TODAY Newsday News Service

In the early 1970s, millions of American girls put away their Barbie dolls and took up David Cassidy.

They watched him on "The Partridge Family," bought his records, attended his concerts, read David Cassidy comic books, chewed David Cassidy bubble gum, put David Cassidy posters on their bedroom walls and took their peanut butter sandwiches to school in David Cassidy lunch boxes.

Thanks largely to his sometimes hysterical prepubescent following David Cassidy, at the age of 21, was earning more money in a single night than most people make in years. He sold 5.5 million copies of his biggest single, "I Think I Love You." One afternoon in Houston, he filled 56,000 seats in the Astrodome twice.

His career brought him a Corvette, a mansion in Encino, Calif., and an income in excess of \$250,000 a year. A year and a half ago, he decided that he could not stand it another minute.

"I WALKED away from it," he said. "I stopped touring, stopped doing concerts, stopped doing the merchandising, stopped doing the television show, stopped doing inter-

views, stopped recording.

"What I really stopped doing," he says, "was feeding a machine that was creating an image that was manufactured, fabricated, false."

He is a mellower 25 years old now, and though he says he is rich enough not to have to work again, he has recently emerged from self-imposed oblivion to resume his musical career. RCA has just released his album, the first Cassidy has made in two years, and he has embarked on an international tour to plug it.

Cassidy has occupied himself with a number of things since he dropped from public view. There are the horses he keeps on a ranch two and half hours out of Los Angeles, his new house in Hawaii, his music, and he says, "a couple of nervous breakdowns."

Defining his terms, he says that, no, he was not hospitalized for emotional problems and never sank into an alcoholic or drug-induced quagmire. He did seek psychotherapy and he did, he swears, take to his bedroom and refuse to come out for three months.

"I took a long time re-evaluating what I wanted to do as an artist," he says. "I took a long time reassessing my relationship with friends I had

**'What I really stopped doing was feeding a machine that was creating an image that was manufactured, fabricated, false.'**

**David Cassidy,  
war pop singer**

lost because of devoting so much time to a career that was . . . fabricated."

"My record company didn't care about me as an artist," he said. "They didn't understand me saying, 'I don't want to record this any more. It's all the same.' They said, 'You're making money, why not?'"

CASSIDY AND his friend Bruce Johnston, co-produced the new album and wrote several of its songs. Called "The Higher They Climb, the Harder They Fall," the record is a kind of tongue-in-cheek chronicle of the rise and fall of a teen idol.

"It's like putting a cover on the last five years of my life," Cassidy said. "I lived the personification of the American dream. People no

longer want to become movie stars," he said. "People want to become rock and roll stars."

The seven gold record albums that he did for Bell Records notwithstanding, Cassidy calls his new effort "the first album I've made that's representative of me as an artist."

What was so dreadful about being the idol of millions of juveniles? "I took a part in a television series 'Partridge Family' when I was 19, playing a 16-year-old," he said. "I finished at 23, playing a 17-year-old. That's the way television is, you don't grow up. They don't let you grow up."

"In the beginning, it was

sort of fun. I never thought it would be anything that would be taken seriously. I never thought people would look at me as that person on the television show."

IN THE midst of it all, Cassidy rebelled via a cover story in Rolling Stone. The counter-culture publication photographed him in the nude, then further shattered the image by reporting that he watched a "Partridge Family" episode while smoking pot and quoted a 24-year-old woman, with whom he'd had a casual, on-the-road affair, complimenting him in his sexual prowess.

"The network went berserk," Cassidy said with a mean grin. "The Kellogg's people almost didn't want me to do the Rice Krispies commercial. Unfortunately, it wasn't quite as effective as I wanted it to be."

Cassidy is the son of Jack Cassidy and actress Evelyn

Ward who divorced when he was 4. He saw little of his father during his boyhood and has said that he felt shunned. Although he maintains a good relationship with his former stepmother, Shirley Jones (who played David's mother on "The Partridge Family" and is now divorced from Jack Cassidy), he is currently not speaking to his father.

"I'm incommunicado with my old man," he said, "I've never known him, and I never will. You can't miss something you never knew and I don't care to, quite candidly."

HIS OWN adolescence was far removed from Keith Partridge's "Hey, Mom, can I borrow the keys to the car?" wholesomeness. At 16, Cassidy was one of the thousands of dropouts who converged on San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district. He was "experimenting" with various drugs—marijuana, amphetamines, LSD, he says, but never became a "serious" user.



TODAY Special Photo

**YOUNG TEENS' IDOL DAVID CASSIDY**  
... walked out on \$250,000 a year