TV FOCUS

One Wonders If There's Any Life Left

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By Bernie Harrison

Is there any life left in the old police undercover format? Here's NBC trying again tonight, with a teen idol playing a one-man "Mod Squad" and the title says it all — "David Cassidy — Man Undercover" (WNBC-4 at 10).

Simon Oakland plays his superior, and Joe Santos, everybody's idea of a cop, including James Garner's for "Rockford Files," plays the hard-nosed lieutenant (he doesn't care for long-hairs) who uses Cassidy as a hot rod type to get the goods on some young supermarket thieves. An added complication: could Santos be setting David up for a shootout? It moves, Cassidy's appealing, but it adds up to bang-bang subculture ho-hum. Do you think Santos someday will get his own show, or is that too daring an idea?