

"I am proud to be a part of rock & roll history, and this book brings back all of my favorite television memories."

—Mary Wilson
The Supremes

TV ROCK



MARK BEGO



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attempt to sound like a 1960s retread. On the album, all three of The Monkees took turns at lead-singing duties. If you haven't bought a Monkees album since you were a kid, be sure and grab this one, you'll be pleasantly surprised.



THE PARTRIDGE FAMILY

“THE PARTRIDGE FAMILY” (ABC-TV). *Air Dates:* September 25, 1970–September 7, 1974 (96 episodes). *Executive Producer:* Bob Claver. *Producers:* Mel Swope, William S. Bickley, and Michael Warren. *Directors:* Paul Junger Witt, Jerry Paris, Ralph Senensky, Ernest Loss, and others. *Cast:* Shirley Partridge — Shirley Jones; Keith Partridge — David Cassidy; Laurie Partridge — Susan Dey; Danny Partridge — Danny Bonaduce; Tracy Partridge — Suzanne Crough; Chris Partridge — Jeremy Gelbwaks (later replaced by Brian Forster); Reuben Kincaid — Dave Madden; Amanda Renfrew — Rosemary DeCamp; Walter Renfrew — Ray Bolger (later replaced by Jackie Coogan); Doris Stevens — Nita Talbot; Ricky Stevens — Ricky Segal; Donna Stevens — Ronne Troup; Richard Lawrence — Bert Convy; Cathy Lawrence — Carol Anne Pearson; Julie Lawrence — Jody Foster.

In 1967 a unique kind of pop-rock group called The Cowsills hit the music charts. They were unique because in reality they were a mother from Rhode Island named Barbara Cowsill, her four sons (John, Bob, Barry, and Bill), and her daughter (Susan). There had been family acts on the charts before, but there were no multi-generational rock groups. The closest thing around was the father-daughter duo of Frank and Nancy Sinatra singing their number 1 hit “Something Stupid” that same year.

The Cowsills sang great harmonies together, and as a unit they produced three Top Ten hits: “The Rain, The Park, & Other Things” (1967), “Indian Lake” (1968), and their version of the Broadway show title song “Hair” (1969).

What a great premise for a television show! Or so thought series creator Bernard Slade. With The Cowsills as a prototype, Slade set about to come up with a fictional suburban mom and her singing offspring. *Voilà!* Enter The Partridge Family.

As brilliant as the concept was for the show, the casting for the two lead parts was even more clever: Academy Award-winning actress Shirley Jones, and her real-life stepson David Cassidy as the group’s teen-aged heartthrob eldest sibling lead singer. By creating a cast full of equally attractive actors as siblings, ABC-TV had the perfect wholesome-family-goes-rock-&-roll weekly situation comedy. To put the frosting on the wholesome G-rated cake, the fictional Partridge Family signed a recording deal with Bell Records.

Who cared if the rest of the cast couldn’t sing? David and Shirley sure could, and, teamed with a group of top-notch studio musicians, they began racking up the Gold records. Not only did The Partridge Family rival the chart success of The Cowsills — they eclipsed it!

Debuting on Friday night, September 25, 1970, “The Partridge Family” immediately set up a perfect premise that carried it through four seasons of prime-time glory. As Shirley Partridge, Shirley Jones played an average middle-class housewife whose six kids — aged five to sixteen — put together their own amateur garage band. The kids needed another vocalist on the recording they were making, so they simply asked mom to join in their session. The song they were singing in that initial episode was a catchy pop-rocker called “I Think I Love You.” Naturally, they ended up selling the song to a record label, and the song became a huge hit.

It sounds totally contrived, but when Bell Records released the real-life single of "I Think I Love You" by the fictional Partridge Family, it became an honest-to-goodness number 1 hit that went on to sell an amazing 4,000,000 copies! Almost overnight ABC-TV had a hit series, and Bell Records had a hot recording act to rival the newly disbanded Monkees.

The TV show went on to chronicle the continuing saga of The Partridge Family, their colorfully painted school bus in which they toured, and their talent agent, Reuben Kinkaid (actor David Madden), who couldn't stand children. Because of the age range of The Partridge Family members, the plots could shift their focus to typical sit-com family situations and back to music industry settings with ease. Susan Dey played serious but boy-crazy fifteen-year-old Laurie Partridge, and Danny Bonaduce portrayed Dennis the Menace-like ten-year-old Danny Partridge.

David Cassidy became an overnight staple in all the teen-aged fan magazines, and Shirley Jones hadn't received so much notoriety since she played Marion the librarian in the 1962 film *The Music Man*. The show did quite well in the TV ratings department, and in fact ranked in the Top Twenty in the Nielsen ratings during its second and third season on the air.

The Partridge Family racked up five Gold albums in a row: *The Partridge Family Album* (1970), *Up to Date* (1971), *The Partridge Family Sound Magazine* (1971), *The Partridge Family Shopping Bag* (1972), and *The Partridge Family at Home with Their Greatest Hits* (1972). Their first three albums all hit the Top Ten on the pop LP charts. The group also released three additional albums: *A Partridge Family Christmas Card* (1971), *The Partridge Family Notebook* (1972), and *Crossword Puzzle* (1973).

In 1971, The Partridge Family followed its number 1 debut single with two Top Ten hits: "Doesn't Somebody

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Want to Be Wanted?" (which was certified Gold) and "I'll Meet You Halfway." Due to his association with the TV show and the hit recordings, David Cassidy also launched a solo singing career apart from his Keith Partridge character. Cassidy hit the Top Ten in 1971 with his single "Cherish." That single and the album of the same name from which it came were certified Gold.

For his second album, *Rock Me, Baby*, Cassidy attempted to go after a more mature rock sound. He even posed nude in *Rolling Stone* magazine in a controversial and sexy shot that was cropped at the groin, but showed visible pubic hair. Unfortunately, Cassidy was too tied to the pop-teen idol image that "The Partridge Family" has nurtured for him, and he couldn't seem to break away from that association — regardless of how much pubic hair he showed.

David Cassidy ended up with three Top Forty hits in 1972, the last of which was the single version of "Rock Me, Baby." Although the show ran until 1974, the hit-making recording career of Cassidy as a solo act and as the lead singer of The Partridge Family ended by 1973. The last Partridge Family single to enter the Top Forty was a song called "Looking Through the Eyes of Love," which hit number 39 in January 1973.



THE DREAMS

"THE DREAMS" (CBS-TV). *Air Dates:* October 3, 1984–October 31, 1984 (5 episodes). *Executive Producers:* Jon Peters and Peter Guber. *Producer:* Ronald E. Frazier. *Cast:* Gino Minnelli — John Stamos; Martha Spino — Jami Gertz; Phil Taylor — Cain Devore; Morris Weiner — Albert Macklin; Lisa Copley — Valerie Stevensøn; Louise Franconi — Sandy Freeman; Frank Franconi — Ron Karabatsos; Torpedo — Bill Henderson.