

of his young fans, and while he emphasizes that he is not by any stretch of the imagination preaching to his young admirers, the kids pick up on virtually everything he says. When he gives an opinion, it is of the utmost importance, even if they don't agree. It is a well-known fact that during adolescence, kids are most influenced by their peers, other kids. In David, they have an idol, but because he is such a natural, unaffected—and one musn't forget adorable—kind of guy, most think of him in very personal terms, like a close friend, and it is evident in the calls that do reach David and as well as in his fan mail. In particular, many of them relate to his life—to the problems he had to overcome as a teen-ager.

"I get a lot of calls from girls who want to date me," David comments, "... some of my fans have found out where I live. That's the one thing I really dislike about being a celebrity... after a while you just wish you could go someplace without people coming up and bothering you. It really bugs me when they call me at all hours and drive up to my place... I'm going to move again (David has had to move two times). Another thing, it's tough on me. When I was in high school, if a girl chased after me, I'd grab at the opportunity. Now that I'm established, well, it makes it very difficult on me... not because I'm so moral... it's just that I've become selective. But I think it really turns me off. It's great to be recognized, but to have girls chasing you, bugging you... well, it makes it hard on a guy."

But because David has talked about drugs and the younger generation, about the war, about the kind of girl he would like to marry, many feel compelled to call him, and once you have the number, the most difficult part, you can bet the temptation is irresistible!

A statements like: "The thing that would make me most happy would be to find a girl who would really love me and with whom I could spend the rest of my life" seems like an open invitation to any wide-eyed, star-struck teen-age girl. And one would imagine that an anonymous caller might get really brave over the phone, and succumb to the temptation to say something not too ladylike, especially when it became apparent that David wouldn't go out on a date with the little gal.

Love, many claim, can be an emotion very close to hate. And when a feeling is multiplied a thousandfold, when there is a great deal of physical excitement going on, the object of that affection can be very lucky to escape in one piece. Such headlines as "Would you like to know when I was born, how old I am, my coloring—and *all* my measurements" can incite some pretty unfavorable reactions. And now it has gotten to the point where David, while he knows his fans care about him, is afraid of that very affection.

David is the kind of guy who likes to get away from the Hollywood scene as often as his hectic recording and shooting schedule permits. He likes to get to places "where God's natural beauty (is) all around me, and I (can) think in the peace and quiet." And when he's not performing, he likes to wear jeans, and go casual all the way. Well, here David was,

near the Big Sur, California's rough but beautiful coastline, camping with his friends, when the public David Cassidy was recognized, despite the fact that he was masquerading in something of a disguise...

"My hair was filthy," he explained, "and I had a beard and I loved it." Then David and his pals popped into a restaurant for a bite, and David almost wound up on the menu. "We've got forty-three Girl Scouts coming in!" warned a concerned waitress. "Man, I just inhaled my tuna fish sandwich," David continued. "We were lucky to make it out alive."

Strangely enough, when David was recently hospitalized for a gall bladder operation, letters poured in by the scores from fans wishing their hero a fast and complete recovery. Many a fan, in fact, stood watch outside Cedars Of Lebanon Hospital, crying and praying for David's recovery. After the operation, David was still in pain, when six fans rushed into his room with gifts.

And when David appeared in concert for the first time after his operation, the crowds were there again, pushing, shoving screaming, again making David, and no doubt nervous publicists, fear for his safety: In no business other than showbiz is the term "loving them to death" more true.

When his fans' adoration is most cumbersome, however, is when David is on a date—for then, it is not only he who is subject to often problematic attention, but also his gal for the evening. When David was planning to attend a recent concert given by Carole King, he was giving thoughtful consideration to wearing a bearded disguise to avoid recognition at an event at which scores of young people would be present.

Don't mistake David, though. He is grateful a thousand times over for the tremendous success his career has had. There are drawbacks in any profession—perhaps more when you are a public figure. And David does understand why his fans are so eager to get at him—either through the mail or by phone. They care about him, enjoy his performances immensely and identify with him and often would just like to "rap" with a performer they consider a real friend. There are David Cassidy love beads contests to win a date and to win a phone call from David. So, perhaps there is this feeling that maybe it wouldn't hurt to try and get a date or to make a phone call to their idol on their own.

David likes his fans, appreciates their letters, but simply can't get a one-to-one relationship going with them on a personal basis. That's what his art is about. When David performs, he is communicating with *all* his fans—and on a personal level. David gives all he has to his performances, as was demonstrated by his first post-operative concert. A young star with his popularity could have taken off for six months after such an operation, and there are many who might have claimed that prerogative. But David was eager to get back. As soon as his health allowed, he was back on the *Partridge* set, which had been closed down during his bout with illness, and back on the concert stage, wowing them with his solo performance.

"There are a lot of people out there who

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