WHAT A WORLD, WHAT A WORLD

WHAT IS "NORMAL" ANYWAY?

BY NANCY FORD

Get this.

SWISH, an apparently well-moneyed group of transvestite and transsexual investors have collaborated with Taiwanese toymakers to produce *Dragdoll*.

Dragdoll is, according to its creators, "anatomically correct, and comes with short hair, just like normal males. But they're dressed in flouncy frocks and sexy skirts and blouses and they come equipped with long blonde wigs, padded bras and things. Some of them even have makeup and false eyelashes."

By the way, this scoop comes to us courtesy of *Weekly World News*, so you know it's true. You remember — *WWN* is the source that broke the news of that bat child found in that cave not long ago, match-made two people possessing the world's longest tongues (16 collective inches, unless he's exaggerating) and the *original* I-saw-Elvis-in-a-Burger-King story. So, you see, this story must be true, Dragdoll ain't that big a stretch.

Is Dragdoll's timely introduction a coincidence, a brilliant stroke of movie merchandising genius, or another support group waiting to happen? Apparently, Robert Crodent, head of an organization called Concerned Parents for Normal Toys (CPNT), believes it's one more plot to undermine our country's family values. WWN quoted him as saying, "What these disgusting dolls teach is that there are all kinds of perverts and weirdoes in the world. That's a lesson that unfortunately our kids will learn soon enough."

My town has no active chapter of CPNT; at least, not one with a listed phone number. Too bad. It might be enlightening to learn what toys Crodent's cohorts consider "normal." Gumby? Innocent, but by no means normal. Betsy Wetsy? Nothing normal about a urinating plaything. No need to dredge up the war toy debate — we hear that carol every Christmas.

It is my supreme hope that Crodent will one day have the opportunity to, with an open mind, view *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. A very new film presented by Polygram Filmed Entertainment, *Priscilla* is "the story of three drag queens who leave Sydney and travel halfway across Australia to put on a show at a resort." That's production notes lingo. In you-and-me speak, it's *La Cage Aux La Mancha* — a lot like a Hope and Crosby road picture, with Dorothy Lamour playing all the characters. The fem imps change costumes with more inexplicable frequency than the castaways of *Gilligan's Island*. But that 's a drag queen for you — accessorize, accessorize, assecorize!

Though I'm sure Mr. Crodent would disagree, in a sense this film is very normal. It is a tale of good triumphing

over evil, decision triumphing over doubt. Bernadette, Mitzi and Felicia — one transsexual, one gay, one gayer — come of age, more spiritually than emotionally, as they realize and conquer their fears, fondest wishes and themselves as they traverse Australia's brutal, yet transforming, outback. In the course of their two week journey, they survive the elements of nature as well as abuses of the most enduring kind, test the limits of their physical and psychological endurance, and find love — all without breaking a nail.

Here's what I find abnormal: I fear that the it's-how-you-look-not-what-you-feel advocates of "normalcy" will see little more to this story that the ostrich plumes and bugle beads. I pray that the inexplicable, yet "normal" violent response of some, when confronted with something different than themselves, will be recognized as archaic instead of embraced as Divine Right. It is not "normal" in 1994 for people to judge and hate and hurt each other on the basis of appearance. Or genealogy. Or spirituality. Or taste in playthings.

Perhaps, not too many more years from now, in a family room somewhere in suburban America, children will play a new version of "Barbies." Dragdoll is invited by Earring Magic Ken to a little bash Barbie is throwing at her Malibu Beach House. Suddenly G.I. Joe storms in, performing a reenactment of the Normandy Invasion. In a Busby Berkeley-esque display of humanitarian show-womanship, Dragdoll swings into a USO number, all fall in love and live happily ever after.

It all sound pretty normal to me.

Nancy Ford performs her one woman improvisational show on Thursdays, Sept. 8 & 22 from 8:30 to midnight at Ms. B's (9200 Buffalo Speedway). Call 713-666-3464 for reservations. Open mic is also available for singers, comics, musicians, poets, etc. Also, a Safer Sex Seminar for Lesbians will be presented in conjunction with AIDS Foundation-Houston during the Sept. 22 show.

Seeking Lesbian Women?

Find Your Dream Woman Tonight! Try Our FREE Record Line:

1-800-326-M6E3E3T8

Call:

1-900-903-2326

$1.99/Min. Over 18 Only.
C/S 415-281-3183