

NEWS

## IS THE CLOTHED FEMALE NAKED MALE FETISH FEMINIST?

by Gareth May | 01 12 2014



Ever visited Pornhub and spotted an incongruous image of a naked man surrounded by clothed women? Then you've stumbled upon the fetish of CFNM – Clothed Female, Naked Male.

The year was 1990. The place, a manor house in Berkeley Hills, San Francisco. Women sat around sipping Earl Grey and discussing literature as their servant men waited on them hand and foot. Unable to speak unless spoken to, their servile silence wasn't the only thing out of the ordinary about these waiters – bar a dainty bow-tie and polished shoes all the men were completely and utterly naked. Never was tea poured so steadily.

The hosts, four famous feminists of the time (Susie Bright, Lisa Palac, Laura Miller and Amy Wallace) called it the [Naked Slaveboy Tea Party](#) – and for any one involved in CFNM (Clothed-Female-Naked-Man) it's considered the start of the movement.

For those of you who don't know what CFNM is, the premise is simple enough. CFNM describes a situation or environment such as a party, where the men are always nude and the women are always dressed. [CFNM Village forum founder](#) Brad Thompson first coined the phrase in the early 1990s. He'd set up a website called Visual Sensations for Women and the 'Clothed-Female-Naked-Man' seemed apt to describe the conversations held in the discussion boards on the joys of female appreciation of the male form ([active until last month](#) and NSFW).

At first Thompson thought he'd stumbled upon 'a small erotic niche' limited to just those he'd introduced to it, but soon enough the acronym went viral, at one time garnering 100 million hits on Google. Using the website as a launch pad, Thompson went on to organise the first official CFNM party in 1992 and, soon enough, CFNM parties sprung up all over the world.

But what's the appeal of such parties? 'There is definitely a power exchange going on with CFNM, and nudity is an instrument for that exchange,' Thompson says. 'The male is naked and vulnerably exposed to the female. She can see everything about him, yet he can see nothing [and that] creates what is tantamount to an unfair situation, yet this inequity is not only acknowledged, but is emphasised and celebrated. It is this dynamic tension that makes CFNM what it is. Yet, although it's meaning is simple (a disparity in clothing between the genders), its implications can be profound.'

These implications can be found in the matriarchal undertones of that original meet up and all subsequent CFNM events, where the (male) bodies on display cater to the female gaze alone.

'CFNM is often viewed by many feminists as an appropriate and necessary counter-balance to the male-oriented exploitation of female nudity in media specifically, and in society in general,' Thompson says. 'CFNM seeks to turn the societal tables,

which for so long have objectified women, and thus allow women the same opportunity to observe men on display – and it is solely up to the woman, not the man, how that situation can and should be enjoyed.'

This dominion over men is epitomised by the asexual situation, as with Susie Bright's 1990 soiree, Thompson asserts that CFNM isn't necessarily sexual or erotic in nature, even going so far as saying that at 'proper' CFNM gathering is 'never about hardcore sex'.

Search 'CFNM' on the internet however and you'll be inundated with links to videos or gifs, most of which involve sexual contact of some kind including, but not exclusive to, hand jobs, blowjobs and cum-shots. Nearly 25 years after that first unofficial CFNM party, with its strong feminist connotations, is this what the movement has become: bachelorette party porn?

'Porn producers targeting the consumer dollars of men that sit at their computers and download their product created their own version of CFNM for profit – one that has no relationship to the real world and excludes the female perspective while feeding the fantasies of the many men that buy internet porn.' Thompson says. 'Their usage of the term unfortunately has flooded search engines, and for the neophytes wanting to explore and learn about the concept, they often misunderstand the true meaning and instead associate it with the stereotypical pornography that objectifies women while catering solely to male fantasies, all the while calling itself CFNM.'

Dig a little deeper into the CFNM communities on Reddit and other forums, however, and you'll find that CFNM porn is just one of the strands available online. It seems the fetish has evolved and, as with so many others, as a result it's impossible to pin down. 'CFNM' now covers everything from [1990s late night](#) quiz shows to [art works](#) to [beach blogs](#) to [mistress meet ups](#).

According to Sunny Megatron, host of the new TV show in US on Showtime, [Sex With Sunny Megatron](#), the core values of CFNM still revolve around a power exchange relationship regardless of the format – be it overly sexual, about embarrassing and humiliating men, dehumanising men and turning them into objects, or simply visual. Women are in a position of dominance and the men in one of submission. At least, that's how it seems. Sunny believes the extent to which CFNM is a feminist act or even if it's considered feminist at all, depends on who you ask.

'Many women who engage in CFNM feel empowered because it flips the dominant male/submissive female social construct on its head, allowing women to take back power they may not necessarily have in day-to-day situations,' Sunny says. 'On the surface CFNM appears feminist because the woman has all the power. But in a true power exchange relationship, the submissive holds the power – they generally enjoy the submissive acts they are made to perform and have clearly negotiated their boundaries. So in a CFNM situation, if the female allows the male to act out his hidden desires in a safe environment, is he not being empowered also? Some may even argue that dominant women are actually put in a position of servitude by letting the men indulge in their desires. It's all about perspective.'