

'Chavs vs Toffs' event condemned

Several students and York locals have criticised James and Halifax College's 'Chavs vs Toffs' themed bar crawl, set to take place this evening



By [Anwen Baker](#), News Editor (2013/14)
Thursday 16 January 2014



Photo Credit: Petroc Taylor

Several students and York locals have criticised James and Halifax Colleges' 'Chavs vs Toffs' themed bar crawl, set to take place this evening.

The Facebook page for the event states "Halifax get your trackies, Burberry and caps ready and James crack out your top hats, canes and monacles for a night of HALIFAX V JAMES rivalry".

Megan Ollerhead, Chair of the York Student Socialist Society, condemned the event, saying "The Chavs and Toffs event is a particularly unpleasant example of poking fun at the working class and unemployed, which flourishes unchecked in certain sectors of the student body.

"It propagates unfair and distorted stereotypes and the student union should shut this event down and discontinue the theme in the future."

Graham Martin, a Fishergate resident, told *Nouse* of his worries with the bar crawl, saying that "an event like this reflects badly on the University at a time when it needs to be doing everything to appeal to a wider cross-section of society"

However, other students have expressed a distinct lack of concern with the event's theme. One second year student told *Nouse* "nobody is dressing up in Burberry because they think poor people are rubbish. I don't see why toffs and chavs is a particularly good theme for an event myself, but I couldn't care less if other people do."

Kallum Taylor, YUSU President, stated "I've got big problems with both terms; 'chav' and 'toff'. Both of them have ugly and unfair connotations which have been forced onto them by those looking to ridicule and mock people and aspects of their lives who are from either 'side' of the socio-economic spectrum.

"We've received no complaints about it though, so it would be unfair to claim a universal offence of behalf of YUSU's membership. However, students can lobby the respective college committees though - who can easily address this in the future."

Taylor also praised Owen Jones's book 'Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class' and encouraged

students to read it.

This comes after last term's rebranding of Derwent's infamous 'Slag and Drag' night and after similar criticism was levelled at Chav D, another controversial Derwent event.



20 comments

anon

16 Jan '14 at 5:50 pm

What the hell is going on here? Are the subs blind???

 Report

Lucy

16 Jan '14 at 5:51 pm

I'm sorry, what? it takes five seconds to google 'how to write news' - c'mon, Nouse. you're better than this.

 Report

Innit

16 Jan '14 at 5:52 pm

This is the worst thing I've ever read on this site. You do realise News Editors are meant to be some of the best writers in a paper..?

 Report

Lol

16 Jan '14 at 5:54 pm

This is horrendous. Just so bad.

This is just another thing Visions is better at than Nouse. The new editorial team doesn't have a clue.

 Report

Innit

16 Jan '14 at 5:55 pm

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-News-Article>

 Report

GL

16 Jan '14 at 5:59 pm

This is shameful.

Could we just stop for a minute to see socio-economic issues bloody everywhere and just enjoy the stereotypes of the working, middle, as well as upper class? We are at university !

 Report

confused

16 Jan '14 at 6:04 pm

Not sure what all the comments above are getting at. Seems a perfectly well-written new article.

I also think it is right that this event has been questioned. Particularly in line with the overwhelming reaction to the "blacking up" incident and other incidents involving gender and fancy dress.

Class-based discrimination should be treated just as seriously as these other examples. As well as playing on the damaging notions of a risible underclass, this event really just perpetuates the stereotype of modern middle class student living in a bubble - oblivious to the rest of society.

These students need to smarten up.

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Kanye West

16 Jan '14 at 8:40 pm

What is 'Burberry'

[▲ Report](#)

Jacob Miller

16 Jan '14 at 9:03 pm

Excellent, intelligent, well-written article. It is completely right to be criticising this as it is just reinforcing class stereotypes. Ignore the negative comments on here- there is nothing wrong with this article.

I also second the suggestion that people should read Owen Jones' "Chavs"- great book, which might change people's attitudes to issues such as this.

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Halifax committee

16 Jan '14 at 9:41 pm

Hiya guys,

We are shocked to hear that there have been complaints about this event, nothing about this has been brought to our attention, from Nouse nor anyone else. It is completely biased and unprofessional to post this article without consulting us here at Halifax, and we would have like to have been able to express our views on the matter before it became a point of controversy. We apologise for any upset this has caused, however, we went ahead with the event due to the success of last years' bar crawl. The previous committee did not inform us of any issues and this is the first negative response we have heard. With regards to the theme, we do not have any malicious intent by perpetuating such stereotypes, we merely wish to ridicule how the divide present within society is portrayed within popular culture. York students come from a variety of different backgrounds and I think we can all appreciate that neither 'chavs' nor 'toffs' is an accurate representation of us or anyone else.

Many thanks,

Fax Love x

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patronising socialists

16 Jan '14 at 11:53 pm

Megan Ollerhead linking working class and chavs is degrading, not all the working class are chavs just as not all chavs are unemployed. There are even some of the middle-class who are unemployed. In order to rid society of class, these correlations need to end.

If those who were offended by this event wanted to do something about it they should've been more proactive as it has been advertised for sometime.

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Red Ed

17 Jan '14 at 10:08 am

@patronising socialists

Spot on here

What is wrong with poking fun at stereotypes , by mocking them you are showing them to be invalid.

As an ex-derwenter I was appalled to learn about the change of slag and drag to Cabaret D and now the other cult classic, Chav D, is under threat.

When will it end? Will Rave theme be shelved because it promotes underground drug culture?

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Working class girl

17 Jan '14 at 11:35 am

Picking up on the statement that suggests this event was 'poking fun at the working class and the unemployed'

I would just like to point out-

Not all 'chavs' are working class and I am outraged a person would also stereotype a 'chav' as unemployed. It is possible to be employed and still be what society would class as a 'chav'.

It's comments like the one mentioned above that creates so much more stigma surrounding these issues.

I'm a second year faxer and I've attended both bar crawls. Both have been great fun, extremely well organised by the Halifax team and all students who participate appear to enjoy themselves. Therefore what is the problem?

The problem here is that yet again some do-gooder news reporter wants to expose something minute and manipulate what it actually is into something it actually isn't. It's ridiculous.

I'm from the working class. Does that mean I am chav as suggested above with bold sweeping statements? No it does not.

It's just as easy for us working class to stereotype and 'poke fun' at the 'toffs'. But yet again the issue is not with the treatment of the wealth of the student body. It's how the wealth are 'poking fun' at the workin class. GREAT JOB NOUSE! You just made a spectacle out of the working class and reminded us all that we should not forget that's who we are.

People need to stop demonising these events and realise that the majority of the student body actually do not care.

Because university teaches us that society is a melting pot of all kinds of people from all walks of life. It's the media who create such issues within our student community.

Sending all my 'chavvy' love.

A frustrated working class home girl.

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Therapist

17 Jan '14 at 11:55 am

Sorry babe, if you're studying at York Uni then you frankly aren't a chav. This place is about as middle-class as it gets.

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Little Englander

17 Jan '14 at 1:00 pm

If you want to know why everyone hates the working class so much you should watch Channel 4's brilliant new documentary on them. They are all lazy sponges and thieves.

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Working class girl

17 Jan '14 at 1:33 pm

Little englander

You have such an educated and well informed view point of the working class.
I do hope you're not paying to receive such an education.
Class A arsehole.

[▲ Report](#)

Little Englander

17 Jan '14 at 2:13 pm

@Working class girl

TV doesn't lie.....

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Teddy Borthwicke-Huntington-heslington

17 Jan '14 at 5:19 pm

Send all the chavs/working class/middle class/gingers to Scotland and let's build a wall for us upperclassmen. Chavs don't have feelings

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JimBob McGee

20 Jan '14 at 9:44 pm

what about offense to the upper classes? Typical lefty media bias from our disgraceful student media outlet

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Arrogant Freshman

21 Jan '14 at 5:03 pm

I'm a fresher and I don't care about none of the bigger issues here. I just want to get so utterly spasticated that I'm sick through my nose in the Tokyo smoking area. Safe.

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