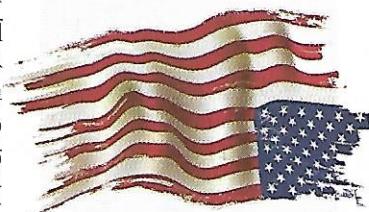


## The American Equivalent



The US has its own equivalent of the stereotypical working-class subcultures. Unsurprisingly, they're equally derogatory. A simple look at the term *white trash* is sufficient to understand there are no positive connotations there. Another term, *trailer trash* refers to poor, uneducated people who live in trailer parks, while *redneck* is used to describe modest and native citizens of the rural parts of the United States. Needless to say, it's not recommended to use these words.

the rug without much scrutiny from the rest of the nation.

However, it's not only the middle and upper classes that look at the working class with disdain mixed with a little bit of pity. There's also the old as time case of poor vs poor. Those who work their fingers to the bone trying to make ends meet might feel their welfare-dependent neighbours make a living at their expense.

The topic of chavs is a difficult one to tackle, but one is clear—cataloguing people based on their wealth is simply wrong. There could be an argument made here that nobody is really calling every member of the working class a chav. However, the issues of both chavs and the working class seem to overlap. Not everybody chose to live in a tough neighbourhood, not everybody chose to wear cheaper, knock-off clothing, and not everyone was provided equal education and career opportunities. What might seem funny and worth mocking for some, is an everyday reality for millions.

## The TikTok Chav Trend

Pleanty of TikTok users, however, didn't get the memo. If you own a TikTok account, just type *chav* into the search bar to receive an endless list of videos that ridicule the female chav stereotype. Videos with the #chavtag gathered over 3 billion views as of October 2023. Feel free to add a few hundred million if you search for #chavette, #britishchav or #chavcheck.

Although the trend's popularity is currently dying out, it dominated 2020 and 2021 on the app. The content of such videos is usually limited to a female face smeared with way-too-dark bronzing powder, blowing bubble gum, making weird faces, and mocking the British accent.

Most likely, most of the content creators who engaged in the trend were unaware of the deeper implications. The sudden resurgence of the word and the stereotype, however, were very noticeable. Since TikTok is mostly used among young people, the #chav trend has without doubt contributed to spreading the problematic stereotype among a demographic who, before TikTok, hadn't heard of the chav culture.

Some creators claim that nowadays, the word *chav* no longer bears negative, classist connotations, and may refer to anybody—it's just another way to call somebody *kitschy*. Well, although the creators are surely not actively trying to harm anybody, and come off as holier-than-thou, it's not up to them to decide whether certain societies they don't belong to may take offence at the ever-so-ignorant trend.

## Check Your Privilege!

Surely, there are people out there whose behaviour could be considered as chavvy not because they were let down by the system, but because their own choices led them down this path. Still, it's an ominous term that has its roots in 4 emo | osoba reprezentująca styl, modę, postawę nawiązującą do muzyki post hardcore punk, pop punk, metalcore i deathcore

4 emo | osoba reprezentująca styl, modę, postawę nawiązującą do muzyki post hardcore punk, pop punk, metalcore i deathcore  
villainised | demonizowany  
low-income | niskodochodowy  
big break | fart, szczęśliwy zbieg okoliczności  
handy | poręczny, wygodny  
to allow sb to do sth | pozwalać komuś coś z/robić  
to sweep sth under the rug | zamieść coś pod dywan  
scrutiny | tu: analizowanie czegoś  
disdain | lekceważenie, pogarda  
to work one's fingers to the

bone | ciężko pracować, zaharowywać się

to make ends meet | wiązać koniec z końcem  
welfare-dependent | zależny od zasiłku  
to live at one's expense | żyć na czyjś koszt  
to tackle sth | uporać się z czymś  
wealth | bogactwo, majątek  
to seem | wydawać się  
to overlap | nakładać się, zaskładać się  
rough | tu: kiepski, marny  
knock-off | tania podróbka  
worth sth | wart/y czegoś  
mocking | szydzenie, drwienie  
to get the memo | dostawać cynk  
to ridicule sth | kpicić, szydzić, drwić z czegoś  
to gather sth | z/gromadzić coś  
content | zawartość  
smeared with sth | wysmarowany czymś  
bronzing powder | puder brązujący  
unaware of sth | niewiadomy czegoś  
resurgence | odrodzenie się  
without doubt | bez wątpienia  
to spread sth | rozpowszechniać coś  
nowadays | obecnie  
kitschy | kiczowaty  
to harm | kiczowaty  
sb | s/krzywdzić  
to come off | ktoś  
holier-than-tou | świętusz od papieża  
to be up to sb | zależeć od kogoś  
whether | czy  
to take offence | obrażać się  
privilege | przywilej  
let down | zawiedziony  
ominous | złowrogi, przerażający

