# The rise of the chicken jockey trend in UK cinemas



The release of Warner Bros' latest cinematic adaptation, A Minecraft Movie, has sparked a significant wave of youthful exuberance and disruptive behaviour in cinemas across the UK and beyond, particularly among preteen audiences. Released recently, the film is based on the immensely popular Swedish video game Minecraft, which allows players to create and explore virtual worlds made up of blocks. The film's appeal lies largely in its resonance with children aged eight to twelve, a demographic that often attends screenings in groups.

The phenomenon currently sweeping through cinemas has been dubbed the "chicken jockey" trend, named after a scene in the film where a character, portrayed by Jack Black, exclaims “chicken jockey!” upon seeing a comical onscreen moment. The result has been a series of uproarious interactions in theatres where audiences, notably tweens, wait for this cue to erupt into chaotic antics, including hurling popcorn and other snacks. A particularly viral moment saw a tween parading a real-life chicken on their shoulders through rows of seats.

The trend’s origins can be traced back to social media influences and audacious challenges taken up by children while watching the film. The viral nature of the "chicken jockey" phenomenon exemplifies how these behaviours, while largely innocent, can pose challenges for cinema staff tasked with maintaining order in screening rooms filled with excited children. Auditors from the UK have voiced observations that the first weekend of A Minecraft Movie saw relatively few disruptions, a marked change from reports of uproarious chaos surfacing from cinemas in New Jersey, which subsequently implemented a ban on unaccompanied minors to curb such behaviours.

In light of this, reactions among parents and adults regarding cinema etiquette have emerged. Observations indicate a heightened tension between the enjoyment of collective experiences and the necessity of respectful behaviour in shared spaces. In a statement regarding this emerging trend, film director Jared Hess expressed amusement at the chaotic videos circulating online, stating, “I’m just laughing my brains out every time someone sends me a new video.” The commentary highlights a dichotomy: while the entertainment industry aims to invoke memorable, participatory experiences, certain adult audiences are increasingly concerned about the impact of such behaviours on traditional viewing experiences.

This rising debate overlaps with discussions on audience conduct in other performance arts, particularly theatre, where instances of disruptive behaviour have led to confrontations and even legal actions, such as a notable case involving two sisters in Glasgow who were convicted of assault after they reacted violently to being asked to maintain quiet during a live performance. Such incidents underscore the need for venues to balance customer engagement with the preservation of decorum.

The situation has led some theatres to implement reminders of expected behaviours, often using pre-curtain speeches to communicate etiquette rules to audiences—an approach that previously faced criticism as elitist is now increasingly accepted as necessary. Though the chaos seen during A Minecraft Movie screenings may seem less impactful than disruptions during a live theatre production, the broader implications reflect a shifting landscape regarding audience interactions in entertainment venues.

As this phenomenon continues to develop, it raises questions about the collective experience of cinema and theatre in an era markedly affected by societal changes due to global events like the COVID-19 pandemic. Stakeholders, including producers and venue owners, are tasked with navigating the delicate balance between fostering a fun and engaging atmosphere while ensuring an environment conducive to the enjoyment of all audience members. The evolving norms of public conduct in shared spaces remain a topic of contention as entertainment venues adapt to meet the expectations and behaviours of the current generation of viewers.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.screendaily.com/news/uk-cinemas-respond-to-a-minecraft-movie-viral-trend-causing-disruption-at-screenings/5203814.article> - This article supports the claim of the 'chicken jockey' trend causing disruption in UK cinemas, where audience members, mostly teenage boys, engage in loud cheering and throwing food during screenings of A Minecraft Movie.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/news/minecraft-movie-uk-cinema-warning-chaos-tiktok-b2729205.html> - This piece corroborates the chaotic nature of 'chicken jockey' trend in cinemas, highlighting the disruption caused by young audiences during A Minecraft Movie screenings, including throwing food and loud disturbances.
* <https://www.ladbible.com/entertainment/film/minecraft-movie-chicken-jockey-jack-black-jason-momoa-705514-20250410> - This article details the UK cinemas' strict warnings regarding the disruptive 'chicken jockey' trend during screenings of A Minecraft Movie, including fights and mayhem caused by excited audiences.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - Although not specifically corroborating an external claim, this source is mentioned in the context of the original article's sourcing.
* <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7904454/> - This is the IMDb page for A Minecraft Movie, which, while not directly addressing the 'chicken jockey' trend, provides background on the film itself and its reception.