# Jigsaw artist quits Gibsons Games over demands to remove St George's flag and other British imagery



A jigsaw artist has raised eyebrows with his claim that a games company urged him to remove the St George's flag from one of his puzzles, labelling the firm as "woke". Mike Jupp, 77, an award-winning artist known for his humorous depictions of village life, reported that Gibsons Games, a family-run business with over a century of history, made specific requests as part of a diversity and inclusion initiative. This included altering a scene from his puzzle entitled 'I Love Spring', which depicts a lively and chaotic village scene complete with a parade, various animals, and distinctively British imagery.

Among the alterations demanded by Gibsons Games was the removal of a busty woman in a bathtub, a bull depicted in a compromising pose with a cow, and a group of Morris dancers, whom the company presumed represented Northern Ireland's Orange Order. Mike expressed his frustration at the requests, stating, “Telling a cartoonist how to depict humour is as disrespectful as it is infuriating." He subsequently halted his collaboration with Gibsons, feeling that the changes undermined his artistic integrity.

Kate Gibson, managing director of the company, responded by affirming the firm's commitment to its values while wishing Jupp well in his future undertakings. This situation reflects a broader discourse surrounding artistic freedom, societal sensitivities, and the impact of contemporary culture on traditional forms of entertainment.

The incident echoes similar controversies in the gaming and entertainment industries regarding the portrayal of historical symbols and imagery. In 2015, Apple removed games featuring the Confederate flag, including 'Ultimate General: Gettysburg', following public discourse on the flag's offensive connotations. While some developers chose to maintain their original game content, this led to their permanent exclusion from the platform, sparking debate over the balance between historical accuracy and societal sensibilities.

Moreover, the removal of Confederate-themed merchandise from various retailers, including Amazon, in response to the Charleston shooting highlighted a critical tension between educational and historical representation and evolving public sentiment. These actions resulted in temporary bans on Civil War-themed games, prompting discussions on how sensitive topics are addressed in media and gaming.

Additionally, broader thematic concerns have emerged within the game industry, particularly regarding the representation of colonialism and its implications. The Atlantic has examined how games like 'Puerto Rico' have faced scrutiny over their portrayal of colonial themes, pushing creators to reassess the cultural narratives embedded in their designs and the responsibility that comes along with them.

Even in the realm of seemingly innocuous entertainment like jigsaw puzzles, the echoes of 19th-century depictions of race and social norms can be heard. Historical puzzles often reinforced racial hierarchies and narratives, teaching children about societal dynamics of the time. This legacy of representation raises important questions about how contemporary artists navigate inherited themes and the pressures to conform to modern sensibilities.

As the conversations around diversity and inclusion in creative industries continue, Mike Jupp's experiences serve as a reminder of the ongoing struggle between artistic freedom and cultural sensitivity. The implications of these dialogues extend beyond singular incidents, influencing how art, literature, and games reflect and shape societal values.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14702073/Jigsaw-artist-games-woke-remove-St-Georges-flag.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14702073/Jigsaw-artist-games-woke-remove-St-Georges-flag.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14702073/Jigsaw-artist-games-woke-remove-St-Georges-flag.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 4: [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-33280133)[[3]](https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2015/jun/30/newt-gingrich/gingrich-amazon-removed-educational-board-games-ab/)[[4]](https://reason.com/2015/06/25/confederate-flag-purge-goes-nuts-almost/)[[5]](https://www.aaihs.org/seriously-boardgames-yes-seriously/)
* Paragraph 5: [[6]](https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2021/07/board-games-have-colonialism-problem/619518/)
* Paragraph 6: [[7]](https://www.shcy.org/features/commentaries/verbs-of-violence-19th-century-jigsaw-puzzles-otherness-and-american-childhood/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14702073/Jigsaw-artist-games-woke-remove-St-Georges-flag.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-33280133> - In June 2015, Apple removed several games from the App Store for featuring the Confederate flag, including 'Ultimate General: Gettysburg' by Game-Labs. The developer chose not to alter the game's content, leading to its permanent removal from the platform. Apple stated that apps using the Confederate flag in offensive ways violated their guidelines but would not remove those for educational or historical purposes. This action sparked debate over the balance between historical accuracy and sensitivity in digital content.
3. <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2015/jun/30/newt-gingrich/gingrich-amazon-removed-educational-board-games-ab/> - In June 2015, former Speaker Newt Gingrich claimed that Amazon had removed educational Civil War board games, such as 'Battle Cry' and 'The Guns of Gettysburg,' due to Confederate flag imagery. However, these games were later restored on Amazon, indicating that the removal was temporary. Amazon and other retailers had begun removing Confederate flag merchandise in response to public outcry following the Charleston shooting, leading to confusion over the status of these educational games.
4. <https://reason.com/2015/06/25/confederate-flag-purge-goes-nuts-almost/> - In June 2015, major retailers, including Apple and Amazon, began removing products featuring the Confederate flag. This led to the temporary removal of Civil War-themed strategy games like 'Ultimate General: Gettysburg' and 'The Guns of Gettysburg.' Developers of these games chose not to alter their content, resulting in their permanent removal from platforms like the App Store. The situation highlighted the challenges of balancing historical accuracy with contemporary sensitivities in digital content.
5. <https://www.aaihs.org/seriously-boardgames-yes-seriously/> - In the wake of the Charleston shooting in 2015, major retailers began removing Confederate flag merchandise, including Civil War-themed board games. This led to debates over the balance between historical accuracy and sensitivity in digital content. Some games were temporarily removed from platforms like Amazon, sparking discussions about the implications of such actions on historical education and the representation of sensitive topics in media.
6. <https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2021/07/board-games-have-colonialism-problem/619518/> - An article from The Atlantic discusses the issue of colonialism in board games, highlighting how games like 'Puerto Rico' have been criticized for their portrayal of colonial themes. The piece explores the industry's historical reliance on colonial motifs and the growing awareness and sensitivity towards these issues, leading to changes in game design and themes to address concerns about cultural representation and historical accuracy.
7. <https://www.shcy.org/features/commentaries/verbs-of-violence-19th-century-jigsaw-puzzles-otherness-and-american-childhood/> - This commentary examines 19th-century jigsaw puzzles, focusing on how they depicted racial themes and otherness. It discusses puzzles like 'Chopped Up Niggers,' which reinforced racial hierarchies and the normalization of violence against African Americans. The piece highlights how these puzzles served as tools for socialization, teaching children about racial dynamics and societal norms during that era.