

White Christmas 'golliwog' display labelled racist



Andrew Backhouse | 1st Dec 2016 5:00 AM



DOLL DILEMMA: A display at a Toowoomba chemist caused controversy in the city, with an Aboriginal activist demanding its removal. Photo George Helon / Twitter

AN Aboriginal activist has labelled a display at a Toowoomba chemist racist and demanded its removal.

Terry White Chemists Toowoomba erected an "Experience a white Christmas" display in its store.

Positioned underneath the sign were nine black "golliwog" dolls.

When contacted, a manager for the store explained there was no ill-intent and promised to remove the dolls from the near the sign immediately.

Author and filmmaker Dr Stephen Hagan - who famously campaigned against the E. S. "Nigger" Brown Stand - said the people responsible for the display should be ashamed of themselves.

He said the display was offensive.

"Toowoomba is the most racist city in Australia.

"Words can't describe this behaviour in the 21st century. I can understand it in the 1960s but to do it today is inexcusable."



TAKING A STAND: Aboriginal activist Dr Stephen Hagan says a display at a Toowoomba chemist is offensive.

think of it in those terms" and it "would be removed".

Resident George Helon noticed the display on Monday and said he was shocked.

Mr Helon said he was sympathetic to the store.



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A spokesman for the store said no association had been made between the "white Christmas" sign and the rag dolls - which have been long mired in controversy.

Popular in past generations, the dolls are widely understood to be a racist caricature of people of colour.

The spokesman said the store "didn't

"It's a bit of a shocker, I walked past and thought - what?

"I showed a photo to other people and they said, 'what the hell?' I don't think there was any ill intent, it was just inappropriately placed."

Dr Hagan said Toowoomba residents hadn't voted in favour of the 1967 referendum on aboriginal rights and also were supportive of Pauline Hanson - a politician known for her stance against politician correctness.

"There is an underlying bigotry in Toowoomba that has permeated the consciousness of xenophobia within the community - it's a bad situation," Dr Hagan said. "Education is the main tool to combat racism.

"It's hard when people make racist jokes around the dining room table, and others condone it."

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