

# MACY'S SORDID HISTORY: DISABLED PERSONS

Bill Donohue comments on Macy's history of mistreating those who are disabled:

In 1990, Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), designed to enhance access to public facilities for disabled persons. But Macy's apparently didn't get the memo—or perhaps just considered itself above the law. By 1998, Macy's West was facing three separate class action lawsuits alleging that it was violating not only the ADA, but also the California civil code, in its failure to widen aisles and take other steps to make merchandise accessible to disabled customers.

A suit filed in 1998 covered all Macy's stores in California except for San Francisco's Union Square stores and Sacramento's Downtown Plaza store. Not that those locations were any more accommodating to the disabled. It's just that they were already targets of similar suits filed in 1996.

Laurence Paradis, the lead attorney for Oakland-based Disability Rights Advocates (DRA), which brought all three suits, said at the time that the nonprofit group received more complaints about Macy's than any other retailer. The floor of the main Union Square store was sometimes so crowded with racks that walkways were as narrow as ten inches, he said. And in depositions, he added, Macy's executives "admitted that they never made a single effort to reconfigure anything to improve access."

Contrast this contempt for the needs of disabled people with Macy's current rush to accommodate men who want to use the women's bathrooms. They'll fire someone for simply disagreeing with that policy, even when he agrees to abide by it (click

[here](#)).

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