

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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PHILLY'S ETHICALLY CHALLENGED D.A.

Bill Donohue comments on the latest scandal in Pennsylvania law enforcement:

Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams, like now-disgraced Pennsylvania Attorney General Kathleen Kane, has tried to make a name for himself through a campaign of Catholic-bashing. As we noted earlier this month, Williams continues his vendetta against Msgr. William Lynn, whose bogus conviction over his handling of sexual abuse allegations has just been tossed out for the third time (click [here](#)).

Now it turns out that the moralizing Philly D.A. is—like the just-convicted Kane (click [here](#))—quite ethically challenged himself.

Over the past six years, Williams, by his own belated admission, has accumulated more than \$160,000 in unreported gifts from friends, defense attorneys, business owners, campaign donors, a judge (who as a defense attorney had routinely negotiated plea deals with Williams' office), and others. The swag included free vacations, like four family getaways at the Florida beach house of an attorney who has represented many defendants charged by Williams' office; air

fare for vacation trips; thousands of dollars in tickets to sporting events; Visa gift cards; furniture; clothing; an iPad; free home repairs from a builder, including a new roof worth \$45,000—and cash gifts.

Philadelphia's ethics law requires public officials to report all gifts they receive worth more than \$200. Indeed, Williams had previously convicted five public officials for accepting unreported gifts from an undercover informant. Their total take? About \$9,000. Williams accepted gifts worth almost *18 times that amount*—and evidently saw no need to report them, until it became known that the FBI and IRS are investigating his finances. His delay allowed him to hide these gifts from voters when he ran for re-election in 2013.

Williams, like Kane, apparently figured he was above the law. She just found out differently. It's time he did as well.

MACY'S SORDID HISTORY: IMMIGRANTS

Bill Donohue comments on Macy's treatment of legal immigrant workers:

In June of 2013, Macy's paid a civil penalty of \$175,000 after the U.S. Justice Department determined that the company had engaged in unfair documentary practices against work-authorized immigrants. The government found that although these workers were already legally permitted to work in the United States, Macy's demanded documentation from them that they don't require other employees to submit. Some of these

employees suffered economic harm due to this unfair burden, in the form of lost wages or seniority.

Since first exposing Macy's firing of a man for his Catholic beliefs (click [here](#)), we have in recent days documented Macy's mistreatment of a military veteran, a pregnant woman, elderly widows, and immigrants. And we are just getting started. It is indeed a sordid history.

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PA ATTORNEY GENERAL STEPS DOWN

To read Bill Donohue's piece on CNSnews.com about Pennsylvania Attorney General Kathleen Kane being found guilty of nine criminal charges, including perjury and criminal conspiracy, click [here](#).

SATANISTS ABUSE LIBERTY

Bill Donohue comments on Satanists in Oklahoma City:

Today is a holy day in the Catholic calendar, the Feast of the Assumption. Satanists in Oklahoma City chose this day to offend Catholics by holding a "Black Mass" this evening, one that will include the desecration of a statue of the Virgin Mary.

This is not the first time that a Satanic ceremony has been held in Oklahoma City. A registered sex offender, Adam Daniels, pulled a similar stunt two years ago; he is leading the one today.

Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley handled the 2014 event responsibly; he's doing so again now. He is asking the faithful not to give Daniels the media platform he is seeking; rather, the archbishop has encouraged Catholics to attend a Unity Prayer Service and Walk.

Archbishop Coakley asks why local officials are allowing this "abhorrent act" to take place. I join him in that quest.

Please spare me talk about freedom of speech. The First Amendment is not an end—it is a means to an end. But we have forgotten what the Founders envisioned. Speech must be free, they said, if the public is to choose how best to govern society. In other words, free speech meant political discourse, without which the good society could not be crafted. Free speech was defended because it served a noble end.

There is nothing noble about hate speech, and this includes intentionally insulting people of faith. That this offensive exercise will happen in an arena funded by the public, which includes many Catholics, makes this "Black Mass" all the more astounding.

The mayor and city council need to answer this question: What liberty is Daniels advancing, and why should it be sponsored by the public?

Contact Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett: Mayor@okc.gov

UNJUST CALIFORNIA BILL REVISED

Bill Donohue comments on revisions in a bill that did not bode well for religious colleges in California:

California State Senator Ricardo Lara has deleted the most controversial part of his bill, SB 1146, that would have essentially gutted the heart and soul of religious colleges and universities.

The bill, as first introduced, would have denied important exemptions to such schools that have long been honored by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The revised bill insulates these religious institutions from lawsuits that challenge their teachings on sexual ethics.

Kudos to Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez, Bishop Charles Blake of the Church of God in Christ, and the many activist organizations that protested the bill and pushed for the revisions. We were happy to add our voice to this effort.

No one wants to see any students denied basic civil liberties, but when cross-dressing men claim victim status for not being allowed to shower with women—in a college that respects the biological distinctions provided by nature and nature's God—then such appeals must be rejected. To do otherwise is to counsel state control of religious entities, as well as to indulge in a political fiction.

Sen. Lara is still seeking to make religious colleges comply with a provision that would notify a state agency each time a student is expelled for violating the school's moral code of conduct. This is classic state overreach and a flagrant violation of the First Amendment. As such, it should be eliminated.

There is a huge difference between advancing human rights and using the club of discrimination to force religious institutions to abandon their autonomy. Separation of church and state is not being disrespected by the faithful, but it is being trampled upon by militant secularists.

MACY'S TAKES A HIT

Bill Donohue comments on Macy's economic health:

Here's the latest news on Macy's: It is in trouble—it has to close another 100 stores to stop the bleeding.

Macy's employees are good Americans, but its top executives merit the gold standard of intolerance in the retail industry (click [here](#) to read how the Macy's thought police operates).

Surely it is not good news that those who work there will suffer the brunt of the bad news, but no fair-minded person will be disappointed if the Macy's ruling class takes a hit. Any private sector company that punishes employees for their thoughts should not be patronized.

The second quarter figures show that Macy's reported a drop in sales for the sixth straight month. Total sales fell 4 percent, and net income to its shareholders fell 3 cents per share.

The closing of 100 stores will cost Macy's \$1 billion in net sales. This represents 15 percent of all its department stores.

We encourage all Americans, not just Catholics, to shop at Macy's competitors. We know of no department-store chain that disrespects conscience rights, other than Macy's.

Justice demands that Macy's revoke its decision to fire a Catholic employee who believes that men should use the men's room. Failing that, it should be forced to pay a price for its discriminatory behavior.

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IMPERILED WORLDWIDE

Bill Donohue comments on the findings of the 2015 International Religious Freedom Report issued by the U.S. State Department:

It is a mistake to ascribe all religious persecution to Muslim madmen who belong to terrorist groups such as ISIS, al Qaeda, al Shabab, and Boko Haram. The sad fact is that Muslim-run governments are centrally involved in oppression, as are Communist-run governments.

The Report cites Penn State researchers who found that "the number of countries that require some sort of [religious] registration has increased significantly over the last two decades, to nearly 90 percent of all countries." Worse is the practice of punishing people for merely criticizing Islam or converting to another religion. Such persons are routinely tortured and killed, with the approval of street mobs.

In Mauritania, a blogger critical of the government was initially sentenced to death, but it was revoked after he apologized; he is still in prison. Mobs in Pakistan have killed 62 persons for blasphemy since 1990. Sudan punishes anyone who claims that the Quran—not the government—is the

sole source of authority.

In Saudi Arabia, a Palestinian poet was sentenced to 8 years in prison and 800 lashes (he was initially sentenced to death); three others had their death sentences upheld. The Syrian government has been on a tear killing Sunnis and other religious minorities. Iran executed at least 20 persons for blasphemy. Religious minorities were tortured in Eritrea, and three persons were legally stoned to death in Brunei for apostasy. China demolished several Catholic and Protestant churches, and “the exercise of religious freedom continued to be nearly non-existent in North Korea.”

Still worse is the fact that the Obama administration continues to cut deals with Iran, and has been muted in its condemnation of Christian persecution. Beyond belief is the fact that the Clinton Foundation has received upwards of \$25 million from the thugs in Saudi Arabia. For obvious reasons, the Democratic-controlled State Department failed to cite any of these facts.

MACY’S SORDID HISTORY: PREGNANT WOMEN

Bill Donohue comments on Macy’s firing of an employee going through a high-risk pregnancy:

Anabelle Mayi had been working at Macy’s flagship store in Manhattan for two-and-a-half years when she was diagnosed with a high-risk pregnancy in April 2015. She requested reasonable accommodations, like a chair or stool so she could sit down periodically while working at the counter. According to Manhattan Legal Services, which filed a charge with the

federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, she was first told “this would not be possible” but that a transfer to an office job would be. But although her physician filled out the required Family and Medical Leave Act paperwork requesting the needed accommodations, Macy’s did not provide them. When Macy subsequently took several sick days for pregnancy-related illness, Manhattan Legal Services says she found her employee access blocked. On July 7, she was officially terminated.

It is incredible that Macy’s can make accommodations for men who think they are women—allowing them to use the women’s bathrooms, even at the discomfort of other customers, and firing employees who voice religious objections (click [here](#)). But they cannot give a chair to an employee with a high risk pregnancy in order to safeguard her and her baby’s health.

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MACY’S SORDID HISTORY: ELDERLY WIDOWS

Bill Donohue comments on Macy’s abusive treatment of elderly widows:

Of the many varied victims of Macy’s sordid history—which we will continue to detail—elderly widows seem to come in for special abuse. Karen Padgett and Dr. Sonia Saceda, both of Florida, ran afoul of Macy’s collections department last year, seeking payment of money they did not owe.

Macy’s charged Saceda’s credit card \$1,596 for purchases she did not make. Then they started calling the 79-year-old, 20

year army veteran as often as three times a day, seven days a week, seeking payment. When she contacted Macy's, they assured her she would not have to pay. But the calls continued, followed by threats to take legal action against her.

Padgett, 75, noticed a \$111 charge to her Macy's credit card that she could not account for. As far back as last October, the store assured her that the charge would be removed. But each month, she received statements not only showing the bogus charge still there, but with interest and late payment penalties added! By April the charge was up to \$426.87—and Macy's was threatening to send a collection agency after her.

In both cases, only after media became involved did Macy's move in earnest to stop the harassment of these elderly widows. It seems that public shaming is the only thing Macy's responds to. And so we'll continue to shine a light on their sordid history, until they rectify their latest offense: firing a man for his Catholic beliefs (click [here](#)).

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