Please write a brief description of the subject matter for the potential exhibition, and describe the impact you hope to make by featuring this subject

Exhibit of artifacts, photos, documents, and film related to the life of Bill Sackter, the namesake of Wild Bill’s Coffee Shop in the School of Social Work. On the 110th anniversary of Sackter’s birth and the 40th anniversary of his death, we wish to celebrate the impact his life—and his unlikely status as a national celebrity—had on the nation’s understanding of people with disabilities and their place in society. As Wild Bill’s shifts its modality away from a coffee shop and toward a more expansive mission of advancing social justice for all marginalized populations, we hope to teach a new generation of people about Bill Sackter’s story—not only as an important part of the history of the University of Iowa and our national leadership in the area of disability, but also as a demonstration the power of writing and storytelling (in this case, the Emmy- and Golden Globe-winning film “Bill,” written by Barry Morrow) and how it can shift perspectives, expand understanding and empathy, and truly make a difference on a large scale.

What is the overall theme/concept of the exhibit?

Every person has a meaningful story to tell, and deserves to be included in the community.

How is the subject of this exhibition socially relevant, or how does the exhibit theme tie in with our current social environment?

The subject of inclusion and equity for individuals with disabilities is highly relevant to larger topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion for people with marginalized identities. People who have disabilities (along with their other intersectional identities) are often forgotten in the conversation, for a number of reasons—whether because most disabilities are not visible to others, because disabilities are widely understood or feared by the general public, or because (especially in the past) they are literally hidden from society’s view. Bill Sackter’s story is an example of a pivot point in history, when the story of one disabled person, treated with dignity and empathy and inclusion by the people around him, became a vehicle for fostering greater understanding by a large portion of the population—and subsequently, greater inclusion and equity for people like him in other communities.

Who do you hope to reach with this exhibit, and why?

We hope that University of Iowa students (nearly all of whom were born after Bill Sackter’s death) will come to understand that the world in which they’ve grown up—where people with disabilities are more present and integrated in the community—started with the vision, hard work, and educational efforts of a small group of dedicated people. We hope that long-time University and Iowa City community
members will reminisce and reflect on the legacy of Wild Bill’s, Bill Sackter, and the groundbreaking work of the School of Social Work (and potentially other departments within the University) and its faculty, staff, and students in advancing the rights, inclusion, care for, and visibility of people with disabilities. We hope that current faculty and staff will learn about Bill Sackter, Wild Bill’s Coffee Shop, and consider how they, too, might make a global difference in support of social justice through local, intentional acts of inclusion, advocacy, and storytelling.

**How do you plan to tie University of Iowa Libraries materials into the exhibit?**

- William "Bill" Sackter Papers collection
- Tom Walz papers collection
- Barry Morrow’s Emmy Award
- Anything related to mental institutions, psychiatry, deinstitutionalization?
- The School also has historical materials that we want to put in the archives / Special Collections (film, recordings, documents, artifacts)

**Is there a specific time frame in which the exhibition must be displayed?**

Fall 2023 proposed dates are requested:
- To mark the anniversary of Bill Sackter’s birth (1913) and death (1983)
- To coincide with Disabilities Awareness Month in October