

Cash creates crime, Bailey says



Staff photo by Dave Bentz

F. Lee Bailey

By Chris Welsch

Crime in America could be cut substantially by passing one simple piece of legislation — prohibiting possession of more than \$500 in cash.

F. Lee Bailey, one of the United States' most famous defense lawyers, propounded his theories on cash and crime in the Coliseum Wednesday night.

Bailey said crime committed in homes and crimes committed by "crazies" are basically unpreventable. However, crimes committed by sociopaths (people who care only about themselves) could be nearly eliminated by outlawing cash.

Bailey said sociopaths have no conscience. They weigh the risks and rewards before they commit a crime. Because only 12 percent of criminals are actually caught, the risks aren't always that great, Bailey said.

Accordingly, increasing the punishment has little if any effect on deterring crime, he said.

"In England the punishment for pickpocketing was (at one time) death," Bailey said. "Pickpockets usually operated at public hangings. Obviously not a viable deterrent."

Bailey said much of society currently operates without large amounts of cash, so it wouldn't be an imposition to restrict cash. The use of credit cards and checks already prevails in large purchases and transactions.

But without cash, criminals would be crippled.

"What criminal would rob a gas station for slips and receipts?" Bailey asked. "Who would hold up a bank to hear the whir of the computers transacting cash?"

The growth of drug smuggling in America is creating a criminal network in America similar to that of

prohibition days, he said. Cash is the lifeblood of smuggling transactions.

Drug operations in the U.S. are huge, sophisticated and well equipped, Bailey said. Crackdowns on smugglers have not been efficient. The profit involved and the demand of drug users perpetuates the industry in spite of new laws and stricter enforcement.

The elimination of large amounts of cash would virtually end gas station and liquor store robberies, Bailey said.

Money in banks would not be any good, even if cash was stolen. It would be a crime for a car dealer of any business man to accept more than \$500. A banker also would not change cash. The criminal would simply be out of luck, he said.

Since possessing cash would be a crime, the criminal would have to face the charges of possession as well as robbery.

A street peddler could get by on less than \$500, he said, but the drug dealers in Louisiana and Florida could not survive without cash.

"There is no other bearer as good as green," Bailey said.

Bailey said he has put the question to the criminals themselves: "what would you do without green?" They had to admit, Bailey said, there is no viable substitute.

Bailey said he didn't see much chance of getting such a law passed by legislators.

He cited the ABCAM case as a case where outlawing of cash would have eliminated the opportunity for legislators to take a bribe. He said it would take a lot of work and determination to get such a law passed.

Bailey's appearance was sponsored by the University Program Council's Talks and Topics Committee.

Disabled students stress similarity, not difference

Editor's note: This is the second article in a three-part series about handicapped students at UNL.

By Marcia Warkentin

"I don't like the word 'handicapped.'" Those are the words of Sara Thomassen, a freshman pre-medicine major who has retinitis pigmentosa, an eye disease that gives her limited vision during the day and no vision at night. She is one of about 47 UNL students with disabilities.

Thomassen said she wants people to think of her eyes as a "personal characteristic trait of Sara Thomassen" rather than a handicap.

"I think everybody has handicaps — not necessarily physical," said Steve Bielfeldt, a senior in computer science, who lost the use of his legs 10 years ago after a spinal injury.

"Some people are handicapped emotionally or spiritually," he said.

Bielfeldt said small things cause inconvenience, like running over the cord of the vacuum cleaner with his wheelchair, but basically he can do everything for himself except reach the cornflakes on the top shelf.

Cathy Arnold, a junior special education major, who was paralyzed from the neck down in a diving accident in 1980, said God used the accident to help her grow. But growth comes through many things, she said, such as drug problems or the death of a loved one.

Arnold said her life isn't much different from an able-bodied person except she has to wait for the Handivan to take her to classes on East Campus, and simple tasks like laundry take a little longer.

"A lot of people think that because you're in a wheelchair you absolutely can't stand or walk," she said, "but there are a lot of people who can."

Kathie Carroll, a sophomore in English, has a neuro-muscular disease that limits her strength. She said common myths

people have are that students with disabilities can't take as many credit hours and that they only get good grades because of their disabilities.

Carroll said very few students with disabilities have to take fewer hours. She never expects special treatment from teachers, she said, even though she is often late to class because she has to wait outside a building for someone to open the door.

"I don't try to make any excuses because I'm in a wheelchair," she said.

Students with less noticeable disabilities experience different problems.

Thomassen said people have asked her if she is gay because she takes a girl's arm when walking.

"I tell them no," she said. "And I can't understand why they're asking me because it's such a natural thing for me to just grab onto somebody if I can't see."

Valorie Bendixen, a senior in psychology, has an eye disease that makes her extremely nearsighted and causes her eyes to dance back and forth. She said that since she doesn't use a white cane, some people don't believe she has a visual impairment. Some professors think she is trying to get off easy when she says she can't read the blackboard or a test.

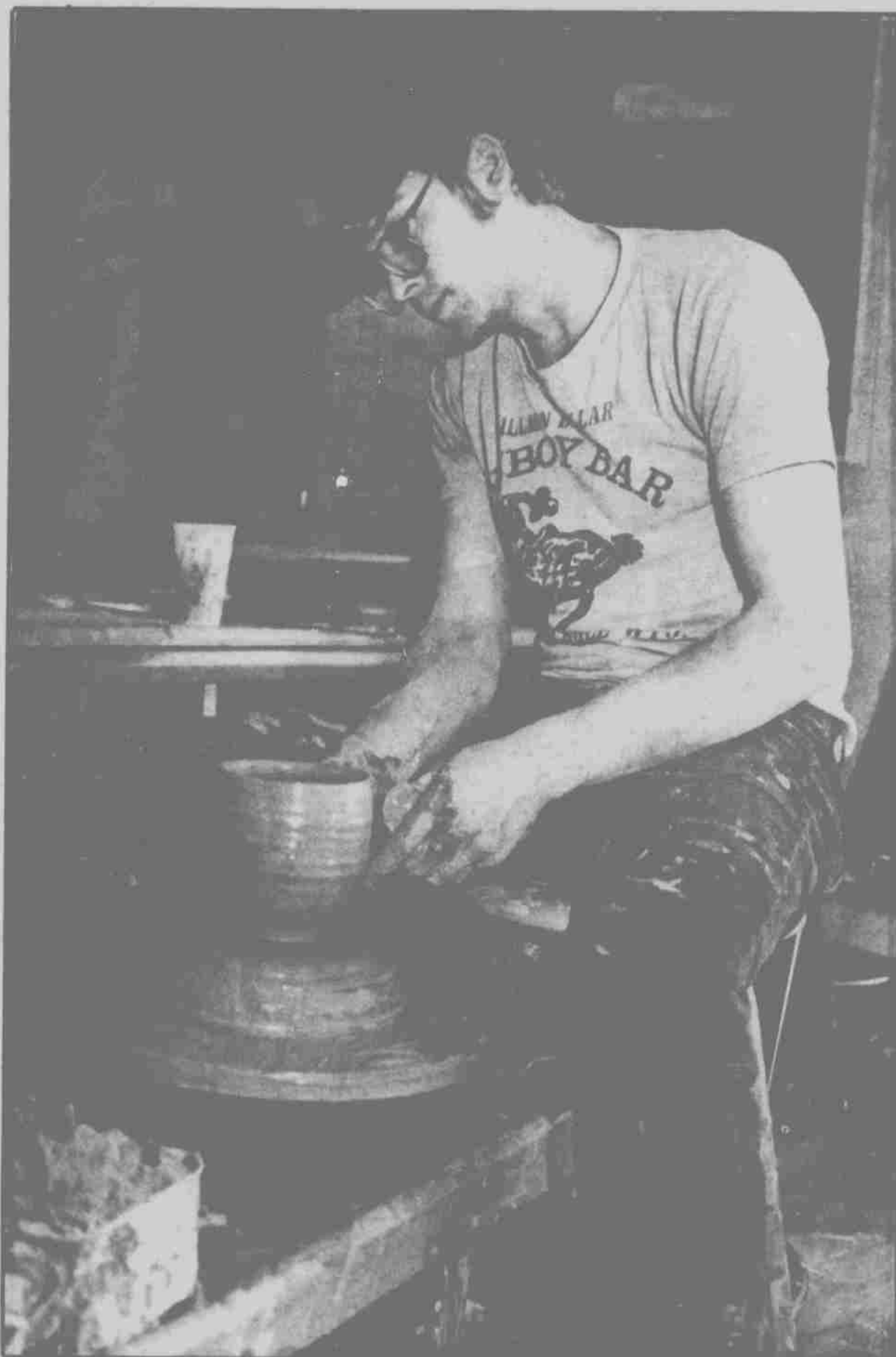
At times people have avoided looking at her eyes or wondered what was wrong with her eyes, but were afraid to ask.

"It's much easier if somebody has a question, just to ask it," she said. "I would much prefer that they ask me than to decide not to become a friend of mine because they think I have some kind of strange problem."

The students interviewed said they find few restrictions on their social life.

"I wouldn't go out dancing or anything," Arnold said, "I do go to dances though, just to be there; and I don't mind that at all."

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Staff photo by Craig Andresen

Graduate student Dave Stabley demonstrates how to use a potter's wheel in the Nebraska Union Wednesday as part of Art Week activities. Stabley's work will be on sale in the art department's pottery sale from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday in Woods art building 104.