

Quitters of the Squared Altar: Debilitating Element Grows, Threatens Box Nation

Written by Seis G. Gonzalez, SPECIAL TO TSS
Tuesday, 31 July 2012 19:36



Lora (right) wasn't getting the better of it against Thurman, no, but he didn't drape himself in Gatti glory by soldiering on when things looked bleak. Instead, he begged out of the contest. This is not a healthy trend, the writer declares. (Hogan Photos)

As I watched the conclusion to the Orlando Lora-Keith Thurman fight on HBO's "Boxing After Dark," I was reminded of the actor Tom Hank's line in "A League of Their Own."

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“Are you crying? There’s no crying in BASE-BAAAAALL!”

I was beside myself. I couldn’t believe my eyes. I watched Lora stand up after being dropped to the canvas, walk over to his corner, and simply quit.

“Are you quitting? There’s no quitting in BOX-IIIING!”

Tradition. Violence. Sacrifice. Concepts that separate the recreational boxer from the professional ranks.

Well, they should anyways.

Without fail, the ensuing days after yet another episode of Victor Ortiz quitting in the squared altar, and therefore denying the boxing Gods their just and due sacrifice, a nation divides and the polarizing force is compassion. Perhaps fueled with the melancholy memories of Deuk-Koo Kim, along with his two-thousand peers who have fallen to the same fate, pugilistic internet posters of compassion run to the defense of boxers who quit in the ring, by accusing antagonizing boxing fans as being merciless, blood-thirsty animals, with no respect for life, and absent of human regard.

Meanwhile, the defenders of the Pugilistic Puritanical Nation - those diehard conservatives who expect fighters to die trying - are outraged. No longer calling for blood spilled from the altar - they demand heads chopped off. Losing by decision or knockout is honorable, but quitting in the squared altar takes a darker turn. For the sacrificial lamb has pulled a Roberto Duran, and bleated, “Baaaaaa. No maaaaaas.” And then simply walked away.

Their anger is justified, for since when does the lamb call the shots?

Does clay give instructions to the potter?

Boxing is a violent sport. And, as defined by the rules, ends in decision or knockout. Any middle ground leeway, i.e., the technical knockout, is left up to the discretion of the referee, fight physician, and the boxer’s hand-picked cornermen. Win, or lose, in either of these ways, and a fighter stands the chance of growing rich off the sport. Yet, there is a growing element of fighters who feel just as comfortable with quitting in the middle of a fight, as they do with becoming rich from it.

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Q: Know what happens when you raise a snake?

A: It grows up to bite ya.

Box flocks cannot afford to turn a blind eye upon this growing phenom, lest this element insidiously grow to the point of being socially acceptable. And by the flock's complete disregard for Lora's quitting to Thurman, it seems that it's already happening. By sitting idly, and nonchalantly giving out passes to Orlando Lora, Victor Ortiz, and their fraternal deserter brethren, box flocks are prepping its 150 year-old nation for self-destruction.

Quitting in the squared altar because one senses imminent doom not only denies box legions their due sacrifice, but it tears at the very fabric of what boxing is. No other moment in a fight is more important than when we learn how a fighter will respond to a brain shattering, body decapitating, knockdown blow.

It is the dénouement of a fight's storyline.

It is the time period, where Amir Khan is demoted from superstar Brit, to division stalwart.

It is the time period, where Paulie Malignaggi is promoted from pillow fisted pugilist, to a warrior who happens to have more fight than might.

It is the time period, where fans say they'd rather see two non belt holding warriors, in the likes of Manny Pacquiao and Juan Manuel Marquez, fight one hundred times rather than see Devon Alexander, the former WBC title holder, fight again.

And clairvoyantly, it is the time period, where box flocks will realize we prematurely drank the "Adrian Broner Kool-Aid," without ever having actually seen him tested in war. (*Yeah, I said it.*)

Whereas "24/7" built the fight, promoters hyped the fight, and fighters talked the fight, all is done in vain if the knockdown doesn't happen and both fighter and fan cannot truly measure their grit. Yet, if and when that climactic moment of truth comes, to flight and not fight, or worse yet, surrender (as did Lora to Thurman and Ortiz to Maidana), is to disregard boxing's tradition and to declare oneself unworthy of the title, "warrior."

In a story's timeline, to go from climax to conclusion, a reader or moviegoer is left with an empty feeling inside that he is often incapable of aptly describing. He is unsettled, angry, dissatisfied. These same feelings encapsulate what ringside box flocks feel like after paying \$200 to see Ortiz fight Maidana, and then watching him quit.

On the other hand, if a boxer gets up from a knockdown blow, against all odds, and fights back for his life with every ounce of will and might left in his body, he transcends the invisible boundary lines from pugilist to warrior. And these are the all too uncommon moments box flocks live for.

The time period between a fighter's sense of imminent doom and the fight's actual conclusion - doom or glory - is at the core of what boxing fans come to see.

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It is comparable to baseball's ninth inning rally.

It is akin to the final three minutes of basketball - given a nine point disparity.

It is analogous to football's final drive - with the offensive team trailing by four.

To deny fans either the sacrifice provided in the knockout, or the cathartic dénouement process that happens in brawling to the end post knockdown, is without a doubt a complete disregard for the sport itself, and a disrespect to the fans who put the prize in fight.

So, forget what you heard from some pugilistic internet poster of compassion - violence moves our souls, and tradition demands compliance. For those sensitive fans who fail to understand the tradition of boxing, and to the current and future members of the professional fighting ranks, let it be shouted from every mountain top:

THERE'S NO QUITTING IN BOXING!

~Follow the writer Seis G. on Twitter @SeisGGonzalez or reach him at SeisGGonzalez@gmail.com

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SouthPaul says:

Nonsense of a article. Tired of these kind of reads. Bet most of the cats writing these articles aren't much more durable or tougher than those they're critical of. In fact, I'm quitting now. Now write an article of me quitting the read before I was finished. Lmao

Real Talk says:

The last 2 guys I got in the ring with quit when they saw I wasn't going anywhere an it was going to be a rough night. I felt bad for the first one at first, then the next day when I felt everywhere I'd been hit I was kind of pissed because before I could really get cranked up and do some damage he quit. The next time a guy quits in the ring I'm going to pull a Mayweather and punish him until the ref jumps between us. Aint nothing cool about taking punishment an if you dish it out be ready to take it because if you give it to me I'm going to return the favor. I'm not going to knock Ortiz though, he gives us exciting fights. My lady said she doesn't think his jaw was broken because he was talking to much an I think I saw a look of resignation on his face around rd 7 or 8 but I aint a mind reader, maybe he thought he was losing or about to lose....who knows. It was a fight of the year in my book or close runner up and this is 2 years in a row Ortiz

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was in a FOY candidate. So on that note I got nothing to say to Ortiz but thank you homie. I watched that fight at least 7 times. Dueces

Radam G says:

SouthPaul, You MISSED this one. Actually that copy was spot on about the beautiful violence of pugilism. And it is not for the weak of heart and quitters. Quitters never win the war, just a few battles. "A quitter never wins, and a win never quits" is true to da core. Just imagine there would be no undefeated Rocky Marciano if quitting would have been allowed. There would be no GOAT Muhammad Ali if the late, greatest pound-for-pound trainer of all times Angie Dundee would've let him quit against murda-on-his-mind Sonny "Night Train" Liston. And the list goes on of not quitting. I could name a ton of would not have been if quitting was allowed.

NO! NO! NO! For quittin' in boksin!' Holla!

Radam G says:

BTW, I had to go holla at some actuality -- historic jive, ya KNO!

Back in da day -- 25 to 30 years ago, and, of course LONGER -- cats use to get suspended and/or fined, get their pay withheld and/or blackballed "from being in BIG television bouts again for quitting in the corner. Especially when an investigation -- always not favoring the fighter -- showed that the cat coulda continued to the final bell.

See way, way, way back in da day, da Italian mafia ran da game. [They were not punks like the nowadays media mafia dat runnin' jive _____!] And they would pay you to quit, but not obvious quittin' syet. You had to take a beating and looked as if you were going out on your shield. Those who did not gettin' on an OSCAR performance were found at the bottom of the lake with cement shoes on, or took dives into empty backyard swimming pools, who took needle shots in the arms when they were scared as syet of needles.

Boxing ain't the MMA/UFC. There is no tappin' out. I guess, by now, all you cats have heard that the South African figher Muthabula, who tangled with my homie, "The Filipino Flash," had a broken jaw that happened in the 10 round instead of a crack tooth. See the South African doctor in his corner just said that jive to get the fighter's mind off the broken jaw. And, as I said in an earlier post, I can name tons of boxers, who didn't quit because of a broke anything. The cornerpeeps made 'em suck dat jive up and FIGHT! No punkin' out in pugilism, BABBEEEE!

Did I ever tell you that time that I broke my a\$\$, but didn't QUIT! OOPS! My bad! I just had a bad nightmare on a rainy night. Hehehehe! Fo'get YALL! Now if I ever break my arse broke doing anything, I ain't punkin' out! I eat PAIN for breakfast, lunch and dinner. But I do skip that syet during snacks, though. Hahaha! Holla!

SouthPaul says:

[B]Radam[/B]

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My eyes were aching yesterday so I quit. We all have it in us to quit and it's good therapy. Those in bad relationships...by all means.....quit..... Those who work bullshit jobs....they too should quit... In fact I am quitting again. Ttyl

[B]Real Talk[/B]

Spot on Ortiz comments. Well said, sir....

TotoyBato says:

Fighters do not quit. This excuse minded, lack of will, softening and acceptance of quitting behavior threatens the whole nation.

Radam G says:

Okay, SouthPaul, it depends on what is your definition on "QUIT!" And what you are quitting. And in BOXING, you DON'T QUIT! There are powers around you that are in charge of that. Now if the corner quit it, you have no CHOICE! If the doctor quit it, you have no CHOICE. If the referee quit it, you have no CHOICE! No boxer should ever be given a chance to choose to quit. Only the above that I named should be given that absolute power. Never a fighting-for-a-living-and/or-dat-moola boxer should be given a choice to QUIT! His business is to fight and fight and think fight, not QUIT! Others in power will do that.

Like the CORNER did back in da day when GOAT Ali was gettin' fudged up by Larry "So Contrary More Than Mary" Holmes. But when Archie Moore kept gettin' knock down by Yvon Durelle, the corner kept tellin' him to get the double fudge UP! And when Ezzard Charles split Rocky Marciano's nose open, the corner told him to fudge a nose. "You fight with those fists -- not a big, ole broken and splitted-opened, bloody hooter."

The late, GBGOAT Angie Dundee told the GOAT to quit worrying about stinging syet in his eyes and use his two legs and run like a bytch from Sonny "Night Train" Liston until his eyes cleared up, then knock the cheating @ss Night Train off those tracks. Ortiz couldn't wear the jockstrap of even an average fighter who got that jaw broken, but kept battling to da END.

You DON'T EVER QUIT in pugilism, if you are any good. Nowadays, you have the dames, damsels, dolls and _____ in da game. And sometimes they are on their period and be having cramps like mutha_____, but they say "FUDGE DA BLEEDING and DA CRAMP, full speed ahead with this arse thrashing."

The girls ain't punks. So why is it, nowadays, guys have gone softy and are always looking to QUIT! In BOXING, you don't QUIT! Let the corners and officials that be do their jobs. And you, as a fighter, do yours -- DON'T FUDGING QUIT! In boxing, you don't QUIT! Unless, maybe, you have a little sugar in da tank! Hehehehe! Holla!

SouthPaul says:

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Lmao@sugar in the tank. I ain't outright condoning quitting but if a man has given himself say like Ortiz did... I just don't see that as some sort of punk sissy quit job. That's really what my point is here.

Real Talk says:

that last comment that says "spot on Ortiz comment, well said sir "is not me. @ Radam that's the real live...no quitting. The African was a soldier, but just should've bit down on that mouthpiece cuz boy oh boy did that right crack his jaw out of wack >=) Dueces