

The Death of Boxing

Written by Kelsey McCarson
Tuesday, 21 January 2014 19:49



Someday there will just be rumors of fights, stirring legends from long ago, shadows on the wall. Children will disobey their parents to sneak into forts with furniture for pillows and walls made of bedspreads. They'll tell stories using flashlights as microphones.

"Do you believe in dragons?" they'll ask with mischievous smiles.

"How about ghosts and goblins and trolls?"

And what of times gone by? When giants walked the earth? The times when heroes mastered them? The times when fair maidens unfurled their gorgeous locks as rope to men who yearned to prove themselves? The times when men road beneath rail cars from town to town to settle scores?

"Where have all our heroes gone?"

Some will ask of Leviathan. Others, of a myth called boxing. Oh Modernity, we celebrate you!

The age of Leviathan, by the way, has already long passed. There are no more whaling adventures, at least not for the lot of us. That kind of romantic barbarism was part of a different age. While it still happens on the fringe, it is now frowned upon by society. We are far removed from such cruelty, such danger. We live a life on land, safe and warm in our beds a night. Our

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thermostats are set to still and quiet comfort. Our pillows are soft and fluffy. Our hearts and minds shiver at the threat of danger—nay, the mere thought of something uncomfortable. We are wildly timid.

The sea is too great for us. Too mysterious. We worship the safety of predictability. Our digital lives are far too important to shatter amid the rocks of impending shores. We find safe harbor among the crags of fluorescent flooded cubicles. The sound of the sunless beams soothes us. It is the low hum of a pacifier.

Our deaths will likely be quiet. So very quiet. We find meaning in small things, terrifyingly miniscule in their depth. We read and think in 140 characters or less. We fill our hearts with science, a system of thought that presupposes everything in our world is measurable.

Our minds are empty, save for all the things we want to see and buy and eat and wear and consume or all the things we want to yammer on about just so other people can hear us. We must do as the television tells us. We must obey existentialism. We are today.

Ah, but the drums! There is still a faint beating in the distance. Can you hear it? It's unlike anything I've heard before, except that I know I know it. I've read of such sounds and wonders in the world of the past. They are legends from long ago, the kind Edgar Allan Poe wrote about before his body turned back into dust:

*Keeping time, time, time, in a sort of Runic rhyme,
to the tintinnabulation that so musically wells,
from the bells, bells, bells, bells, Bells, bells, bells
- from the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.*

Is this the fleeting sound of boxing?

Boxing is for only a few souls now. Fewer still tomorrow. The age after, it will be on the fringe, like whaling. It will happen, but no one will hear of it anymore. The age after, it will be gone altogether. Then, it will become history. After history, legend. After legend, just a myth. After

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myth, the world will die.

But there are still some now who tarry on, some who admit with their eyes a soul more barbarous than they'd like. In Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, Ishmael is one such as these. Whenever he feels the seduction of savagery in his soul, the tug of malice, whenever he yearns to knock the cap off of a passersby for no reason but to see it fall to the ground, it is then that he heads to the ocean. Not as a passenger, but as a traveler.

Call me Ishmael, too. Call all of us so. We frail few, the last remnant watchers of boxing, as we march ever toward our destiny, singing melodies from long ago in observance of an old time ritual called pugilism. No matter the drum has faded, no matter the bells have stopped ringing, we keep marching on in time. Can you hear it in the distance? It has gone ever faint now; slowly receding from the front pages of the paper, there now to the middle, again now just a blip on the back page, and now into the slippery recess of cyberspace.

But we still tarry along, soldiers of a soulless age, movie extras who believe we might be the star of another show, but too afraid to lose what we have in this one to find out if it's true. As the week goes on, as the numbness of modern life slaps us back down to our depravity, we listen for sounds of the past. They are almost gone now, but not yet forgotten, not yet forgotten, not yet forgotten. Boxing is dead, maybe, and we are its ghosts. But we rise from our graves on Saturday nights. We float in ethereal space. We are alive. We will be alive forever. Because someday there will just be rumors of fights, stirring legends from long ago. We will be part of that story, the wraiths, bit players in a bigger story than anyone could have hoped for, a legend more intriguing with each retelling.

Wherever we are when boxing is no more, whether we are dancing with the angels in heaven, twisting with demons in hell or emptying ourselves into a bottomless oblivion, we will be better off for having lived the life we chose. And those who tell the mysteries of our day, the one's we know by heart, will be better off for it, too.

Yes, boxing is dead, maybe, but it doesn't know it yet. And we won't admit to you either.

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deepwater2 says:

Wake up son your having a nightmare. It's gonna be ok let me get you a glass of water. Now I know you've been watching a lot of Floyd mayweather fights lately so you can expect some weird dreams and the occasional nightmare that boxing is dying . Don't worry , as long as humans exist there will always be boxing. It's in our deoxyribonucleic acid. It goes back to Cain vs Abel and will always be with us. Everything in nature works in phases or different cycles. Ebbs and flows. Peaks and valleys. We might be in a mayweather valley now but we will be on a peak later in the future. I will be at the garden this weekend . I was at the garden when mago took a tough beating. Even worse then the beating was the way the NYac told mago to catch a cab a hitch a ride to the hospital. Even though that happened I will be at the the old homestead having a steak with my wife talking about the fights we will watch later on in the evening. The most interesting fight for me will be the heavyweights. Two undefeated heavys with different styles that include a southpaw with footwork. The winner of this bout will have a very good future. Enjoy the fights and don't worry boxing will always be .

Glass Joe says:

To re-appropriate a quote from Twain: "Reports of boxing's demise are greatly exaggerated."

ultimoshogun says:

If a sport like Curling has survived this long then boxing ain't going anywhere.

Glass Joe says:

It's a common conversation I have with people about boxing. They invariably ask me about football or baseball and I get a funny look when I say I only pay attention to boxing. They they say something like, "there's not much boxing on TV anymore. I remember when it was on all the time." I counted the other day: Here in Los Angeles I could have watched boxing last week 5 times -- more if I wanted to watch it in Spanish. One night there were THREE boxing shows on at nearly the same time. Mayweather-Alvarez brought in 2.48 million PPV buys. Clearly there is a market for it.