

NAKED CAME POLONSKY:

I would like to take this occasion to announce that I shall be passing a collection plate around the central square tomorrow in order to procure sufficient funds to enable me to afford the price of admission to Maple Leaf Gardens on March 8. Eight dollars entitles me to a back row seat to view on screen perhaps the greatest sports event of the decade — the Joe Frazier — Muhammad (Cassius Clay) Ali Heavyweight Championship Fight. For three years now I have been patiently awaiting this gala occasion, and I will not allow my poverty to keep me from attending the match.

Boxing is the king of the sports world. And a heavyweight boxing match is the king of boxing. I have long gone lost my enthusiasm for the World Series (ever since Sandy Koufax and company knocked off the magnificent Yankees in four straight), the Super Bowl barely fizzes me, I watch the Stanley Cup only out of patriotic purposes, but never will I pass up a heavyweight championship bout.

There simply is nothing nobler, save a good chariot race, than a championship bout. Two men in perfect physical conditioning stand face to face in an exhibition of strength, beauty, and grace that would make Rudolph Nureyev look pale in comparison. No event can compare with the excitement, the grandeur and for that matter, the money that surrounds the big bout. And the biggest bout of them all happens in just ten days. Beautiful Muhammad Ali, banished from

boxing for three years for his refusal to participate in the Vietnamese war (Joe Namath by the way was excused from the War because the poor fellow has bad knees) goes up against the supposed Champion of the World, "goody two shoes" Joe Frazier. Two of the finest boxers in history get to battle it out for sixty minutes and I'll be there to see it all.

I confess to reading with some dismay that the Toronto bookies are apparently placing their money more on Frazier than on Ali. I find this most distressing. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind, a mind well endowed with the ins and outs of the boxing scene, that Ali shall duly defeat Frazier. Ali is perhaps the classiest boxer of all time, other than the great Sugar Ray Robinson, and classy boxers just do not get beaten by goody two shoes like Frazier. And that's that.

The greatest trauma of the upcoming spectacle though, is not whether Ali will prove to be the victor, for I have full confidence in, pardon the expression, my boy. Rather it is the spectacle of horror in my comrades shocked expressions of outrage at my apparent acceptance of such a brutal and cruel sport as boxing. Well, fie on all of you, I say. Boxing is no crueler a punishment on a man than playing the power game in the civil service, or the money game on Bay Street, or the pusher game of the street culture.

We live in, as any York academic will tell you, a sick world. A

heavyweight boxing match conjures up images of the good old days when life was pure, when Ed Sullivan was a syndicated sports columnist, and Fred Allen feuded with Jack Benny. I must confess my colonial consciousness. Days of innocence for me do not conjure up images properly Canadian, such as my days as a child on a prairie wheat farm or on a Maritime schooner, rather I remember the old days of Walter Winchell, Eddy Cantor, Ethel Merman and Mortimer Snerd.

metaphor of my innocence, and heavyweight boxing at Madison Square Gardens is an integral part of the metaphor. Therefore I refuse to hear anything bad about the sport of boxing.

Fortunately though, I still can be reasonably hip and counter cultural in my support of boxing thanks to Muhammad Ali. Why Mr. Ali is just the sports hero for counter culture man. He is Black. And he is more of the Malcolm X variety than the Martin Luther King. He is also a draft dodger. He is into Eastern religions. He spends his time on college campuses rather than on buying sprees with Derek Sanderson. Ali is the sports hipster. And therefore it is within the rules that he should be my idol.

On March 8 then, I hope to be at Maple Leaf Gardens if only to catch the fight on a screen a hundred yards away. It shall be a grand day. And I have full confidence that Muhammad Ali will indeed beat the shit out of goody two shoes.

University of Toronto Summer Courses in NICE, FRANCE

In addition to the regular Summer Session, the University of Toronto is offering degree courses in Nice, July 5 - August 20. Credit courses in French, English and History will be given by professors from the Universities of Toronto and Nice. Classes will be held each weekday morning in the Centre Universitaire Mediterranee on the Promenade des Anglais.

Accommodation will be provided in the university residences, private homes and pensions.

Cost? Approximately \$750.00 (includes round trip, tuition for two courses, room and board).

INQUIRY DEADLINE: MARCH 15

For further information contact:
Toronto-Nice Summer Programme, Division of University Extension,
84 Queen's Park, Toronto 181, Ontario. Telephone: 928-2405

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