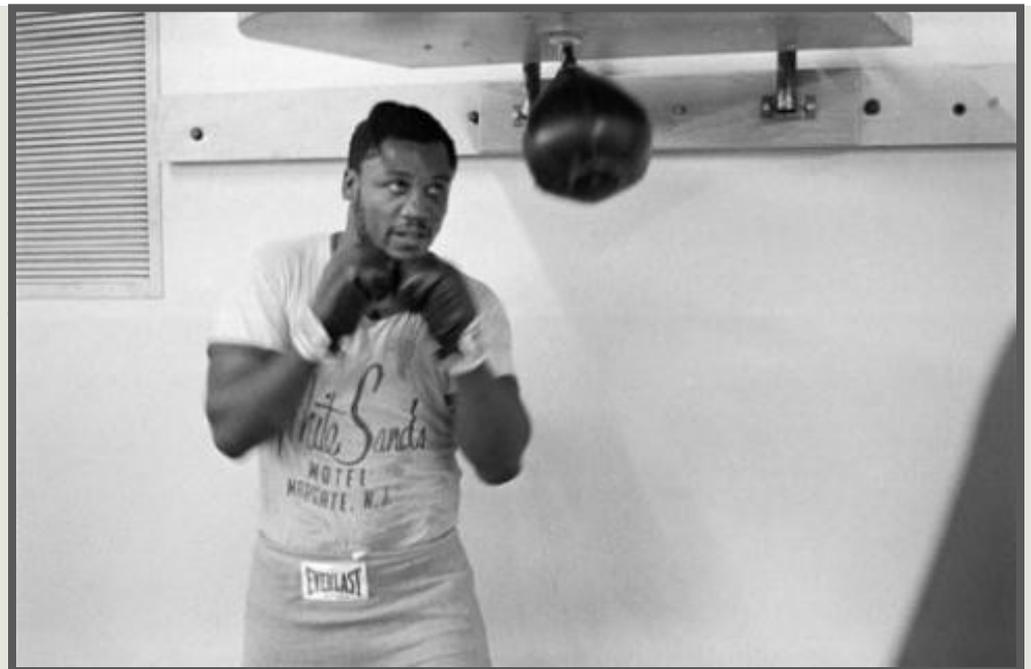


# Boxing and Urban Cultures

**'Boxers and their Bodies'**

SOC280: Lecture IV



# Boxers and their Bodies

- Boxing as reflexively embodied sport
- Use of the body in boxing congruent with reflexive use of the body in other working-class (proletarian) crafts
- The boxer's body is an explicitly 'working-class body' (as opposed to a 'body-builder's body')
- 'In shape' versus 'in boxing shape'

# Boxers and their Bodies

- The four bodies of the boxer:
  - Machine/Engine
  - Weapon/Armory
  - Tool/Instrument of use
  - Work of art

# Boxers and their Bodies: Machine

- Inorganic machine—well-tuned, engine-like—forged in the civilizing machine of the gym
- Automobile-like, always in need of tuning and tinkering
- ‘I say it like a engine...’ (p. 330-331)
- Reflexive objectivation of the body by fighter and trainer
- A complex but paradoxical ‘machine’ of flesh and blood
- A ‘generative matrix endowed with its own agency’ (p. 331)

# Boxers and their Bodies: Weapon

- Weaponization of the body
- Weapon of attack but also weapon of defense
- Boxers as 'warriors' or 'gladiators' engaged in 'war'
- 'It's my tool, my weapon...' (p. 332)
- John 'the Terminator' Turlington; Jesse 'the Mexican Assassin' Aquino

# Boxers and their Bodies: Tool

- Body as means to a specific end rather than a means unto itself—reflexive objectivation of bodily self by boxers
- Body as both instrument and instrumentalizing entity in need of continuous fashioning
- Boxers's bodies an extension of the instrumental bodily comportment of the urban milieu in which they are characteristically embedded (examples of 'slap-fighting' and the familiar past times of everyday urban life)
- 'I try to look...' (p. 333)

# Boxers and their Bodies: Art

- Boxers' bodies versus body-building bodies
- Body of the boxer is an expression of unique self and working-class ethic
- 'To me [my body] is like a work of art...' (p. 335)
- Bodily adornment also key, as we see in the carefully chosen costumes and outfits/adornments of professional fighters as they enter the ring

# Boxers and their Bodies: Art

- <http://mydisguises.com/2010/12/27/professional-boxers-in-costumes>