

The death of bennay paret essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Norman Mailer, in his essay “ The Death of Bennay Paret”, recounts the tragic boxing match between Benny Paret and Emil Griffith in 1963. With precise details and animal imagery, Mailer establishes his disapproval of the uncontrollable violence in the sport of boxing.

When retelling his eye witness experience, Mailer states that “ Griffith was in like a cat ready to rip the life out of a huge boxed rat”. This simile illustrates the horror that commonly occurs in the boxing ring and that such animalistic desires of boxers tend to overtake all rationality. During the violent beating, “ Griffith making a pent-up whimpering sound...” emphasizing the moment as one of pure brutality, with sounds like an illegal cage fight between animals. Further similes describe the vicious beating of Paret, such as, “ the right whipping like a piston rod which has broken through the crankcase, or the like a baseball bat demolishing a pumpkin”. The choice of figurative language leaves readers with a sense of disgust at the carnage inside the ring. While boxing is a form of entertainment, Mailer clearly contrasts the differences between the amusement of sports to the reality of brutality. While it isn't clearly stated, the author leaves his experience as a wakeup call for the people who enjoy boxing with such vehemence that they cannot realize the difference between fighting and massacring.

Though boxing is a profession that involves the intense physicality, the author goes to great lengths to provide details about Paret's formidable skills in the ring. He states, “ At the end of ten rounds, he would still be bouncing, and his opponent would have a headache.” Paret was the type of boxer that wouldn't fall down despite the amount of hits he took, “ taking three punches to the head in order to give back two.” Yet during this clash, the exchange of

blows was too much for him, making the loss so much more unbearable. While the loss itself is something so amazing for the fighter known as “ the Kid”, Mailer dramatizes his fall by writing that, “...he went down like a large ship which turns on end and slides second by second into its grave.” By combining these details together, readers can envision what type of beating that Paret endured, as the punches, “...echoed in the mind like a heavy ax in the distance chopping into a wet log.” Regardless of how strong a man is, the combat that occurs in the ring of boxing is depicted to be more than just a game, a contest of wills, but rather a battle to till the end, figuratively and literally.

Mailer does not address the audience just to recap the events that occurred that day, but to discourage the cruelty that transpires within boxing. Eliciting sympathy for the renowned Paret provokes readers to question the “ entertainment” value of such a sport. Going toe-to-toe in a fair fight is a reasonable, yet when the skirmish turns into a war field, there might be no hope to be saved by the bell. Paret symbolizes such an incident through his momentous demise in the world of pugilism as well as the world of entertainment. Maybe things will change in a few years or so. Yet in truth, there will never be a peaceful fight for quite some time due to the fact that in recent years, maybe Benny Paret will still live on in many heart