



Knockout: The Boxer and Boxing in American Cinema

Leger Grindon

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The boxer stands alongside the cowboy, the gangster, and the detective as a character that shaped America's ideas of manhood. *Knockout: The Boxer and Boxing in American Cinema* is the first book-length study of the Hollywood boxing film, a popular movie entertainment since the 1930s, that includes such classics as *Million Dollar Baby*, *Rocky*, and *Raging Bull*. Leger Grindon relates the Hollywood boxing film to the literature of Jack London, Ernest Hemingway, and Clifford Odets; the influence of ring champions, particularly Joe Louis and Muhammad Ali; and controversies surrounding masculinity, race, and sports.

Knockout breaks new ground in film genre study by focusing on the fundamental dramatic conflicts uniting both documentary and fictional films with compelling social concerns. The boxing film portrays more than the rise and fall of a champion; it exposes the body in order to reveal the spirit. Not simply a brute, the screen boxer dramatizes conflicts and aspirations central to an American audience's experience. This book features chapters on the conventions of the boxing film, the history of the genre and its relationship to famous ring champions, and self-contained treatments of thirty-two individual films including a chapter devoted to *Raging Bull*.

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