**Boxing: Countdown to Injury Argumentative Essay**

A left hook smashes into the fighter’s jaw. A following right slams his head the opposite direction. An uppercut to the jaw snaps his head back, momentarily stopping the blood flow to his brain. The boxer drops, hitting the mat with a thud. His brain bounces off his skull for the second time in a matter of seconds. Is this what we should call a sport? Because of injuries, neurological damage, and ring deaths, the rules of professional boxing should be changed.

Boxing has always been a brutal sport. The ancient Greeks used gloves studded with metal spikes, which slashed the face and body and split skulls. Although gloves are no longer spiked, boxers today sustain injuries ranging from cuts and bruises to broken bones. It is not uncommon to see a boxer leave the ring with a cut on his face, an eye swollen shut, and a nose enlarged and bloody. Often, healing in is incomplete because these areas receive the same blows again and again in other matches. In fact, repeated blows almost cost Sugar Ray Leonard his sight when his retina detached in his left eye.

Besides superficial injuries, boxers suffer short-term neurological damage as a result of staggering blows to the head. A knockout punch, for example, is often delivered with such force that the brain smashes against the skull, tearing nerve fibers and blood vessels, resulting in a concussion. Even a blow to the neck can close the carotid artery, the main artery to the brain, whereby oxygen and blood to the brain are disrupted, resulting in dizziness and confusion. Later, the boxers often have no memory of the moments before or after a knockout blow.

In addition to short-term neurological damage, severe blows to the head can induce more serious injuries. For instance, Muhammad Ali now suffers from longterm neurological damage as a result of receiving repeated blows to the head. Evidence shows that Ali suffers from neurological damage caused by the blows that accelerated existing damage. As he aged, the boxer whom experts say was the “greatest of all” could not walk without the aid of a cane and could barely speak. Finally, the most serious outcome of continual beatings to the head is death. Ray Mancini retired from boxing after delivering such a crushing blow to the head of Duck-Kim that the end result of the match was death for Duck-Kim. The advent of gloves and protective headgear supposedly offers protection, but even a light punch can snap the boxer’s head back explosively, causing severe injury or death.

Thus, boxing has been a popular sport since the ancient Greeks reveled in watching one opponent physically beat another to death. To lessen the injuries, neurological damages, and deaths occurring from this sport, professional boxing rules need to be changed to those used in Olympic matches, where points are awarded for skill and precise landing of punches, not for physically maiming an opponent. To continue allowing the present, legalized assault of boxing to masquerade as another innocent challenge of skill is to remain in barbarism