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**Working Title:** "Boxing, Levinas, and the Ethics of Face-to-Face Encounters: First Hand Experiences in the Ring"

**Abstract:** The present study was an existential phenomenological examination of the experience of receiving a punch to the face, specifically, within the social context of the sport of boxing. Participants of this study included three novice and two seasoned boxers. Qualifications for participation in this study entailed either the one-on-one training ritual of sparring, and/or a sanctioned competitive fight in the ring. Data was collected via semi-structured oral interviews and through participant observation at the gym where they trained. Interview questions were given to each informant a few days before the interview took place. Data analysis of these interviews utilized the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) method, employing hermeneutic interpretation and focused on the idiographic experience of each informant. This research also analyzed each interview through the ethical lens of Emmanuel Levinas (1969), which incorporated his understanding that each moment of an interaction with an Other is its own unique ethical event. A number of themes were shared by many of the informants including personal identity, power and weakness, and the ability to temporarily overcome Levinasian ethics in the ring. These findings suggest that individuals can gain personal growth and awareness through the practice of boxing. This research also shows the potential for personal therapy and the practice of boxing to be used together to facilitate healing.

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