

**Topic:** Boxing

**Abstract:** In my family Pay per View Boxing is an event that we never miss and never get tired of viewing. Along with the excitement and the punches being exchanged we enjoy spending quality time with family, friends, and neighbors not to mention the appetizers and cultural foods such as homemade nachos, tacos de carne asada (beef tacos), rice, and beans. Boxing has also inspired us to put my nephew Ruben in the sport. He has been boxing since the age of six and continues to this day winning several national titles. Our goal is to watch my nephew fight on national television one day so other families can enjoy their own boxing tradition, like our family does.

**Key Words:** Boxing, Pay per View, Family, Tradition, Cultural Food, Mexican Heritage  
El Boxeo

When we think of “Boxing” we think of blood and TKOS and we think of great fighters like Julio Cesar Chavez, Iron Mike Tyson, Manny Pacquiao, Juan Manuel Marquez, and Oscar De La Hoya. In my family we’ve never missed a Pay per View fight on HBO or Showtime. Watching a Pay per View fight is a family tradition of ours that we share with our neighbors and friends. Along with this we have several other practices that we do as well, such as boxing pools, side bets, and eating and making cultural foods. Everyone gets involved and enjoys these practices but overall we go crazy for the boxing event.

As a Mexican family I think we enjoy blood and violence and watching two warriors box each other for orgullo (pride) and most important a world championship belt. I believe it is in our blood to get excited when we see violence or a similar type of action. This is probably because it

relates to our heritage. Mexicans have endured many hardships, mistreatment, exploitation, and abuse making them violent. In addition to this our Mexican heritage has also overcome many challenges and obstacles and fought against all odds.

As a child I remember how crowded our house to the point that all the kids would have to sit on the floor in the living room. This was a special time because our relatives who we would rarely see (except for weddings or holiday gatherings) would come into town. Family and friends as well as our neighbors would walk in with all types of beer like Corona, Modelo Especial, Pacifico, and Bud Light. They would also give my father five or ten dollars for the coperacha. A coperacha is where everyone would help contribute money by passing a hat around asking for donations to pay for the Pay per View fights, because we couldn't afford to pay it all by ourselves. This saved my father a lot of money as well as our family and friends. A Pay per View fight would range anywhere from \$60-\$75. If the guests totaled about twenty people we would charge each of them five dollars for the coperacha, so you would easily make your money back plus a little profit. This makes friends and family happy because we all save money, we all drink plenty of beer, and we all get to spend quality time together as well as get a bite to eat.

A majority of Pay per View fights land on a Saturday night around 6 pm where there are always under card fights, these are fights that precede the main event. During under card fights, the women in our family prepare botanas (appetizers), so our guest can have something to snack on with their beers. The botanas consist of sliced cucumbers on a plate with lemon squeezed on top of the slices accompanied by dried or fresh chili peppers cut into thin slices. Another appetizer was nacho chips topped with hot cheese, jalapenos, and carne asada (Mexican skirt steak). After the appetizers the women would make the usual carne asada tacos with rice,

beans, salsa, and guacamole for the main course. This was typical Mexican food which we all enjoy and never get tired of.

One of the biggest memories I have of our social gatherings was when I was about 8 years old and Julio Cesar Chavez fought Hector “Macho” Camacho. This was the most anticipated fight of the year. What I remember the most is when Hector Camacho came out with a colorful skirt being very flamboyant. He is known for being arrogant and having flashy behavior. On the other hand, Julio Cesar Chavez came out very humble playing a Vicente Fernandez song, ready to go to war for himself and for all his Mexican fans. Throughout the fight Chavez had Camacho running all around the ring by using his Mexican style hook “el gancho” to the body. In the end, Chavez defeated Camacho who was no longer dancing flamboyantly. Our family, friends, and neighbors were so excited because Chavez had won. Everybody was under the influence of alcohol and decided to call a Mariachi (traditional Mexican band) at two in the morning. Seeing everyone’s face light up with happiness once the Mariachi walked in playing “El Rey” which is a song by Vicente Fernandez. I especially remember my mother’s face flooded with happiness. I will never forget that night.

There are financial rewards in a boxing pool if you are willing to take a risk . A boxing pool is a type of raffle where you cut pieces of paper into squares and write numbers on them, depending on the number of rounds the main event will host. For example, if a boxing fight has 12 rounds then you would cut 12 pieces of square papers and fold them up and put them into a hat. The object of the game is to pick the number that corresponds to the round the fight ended in. Each square costs anywhere from five to ten dollars, depending on what price everyone decides on. So if you pick a square and the number is 6 and the fight ends on the 6th round you automatically win the pot. If you pay 10 dollars for a square and you have the number 12 and if

the fight goes all the way to 12 rounds you win the \$120 pot! This game is customary and almost a religion for us to play. It gives us more excitement along with the fight to enjoy.

Our family loves boxing so much that my brother decided to put his son into boxing at the age of six and is a great amateur fighter with a record of 15 national titles, over 100 wins and 4 losses. I will never forget the moment when my brother told me that my nephew Ruben Villa qualified for the Junior U.S.A Olympic Boxing team. Ruben was flown from San Jose, California to New York and finally to Kargen, Russia. Our family, friends, and neighbors were able to watch my nephew live on the internet. We all gathered together at my house at 2am in the morning, because Russia is ahead of Pacific Time by 14 hours. This was not like a Pay per View fight filled with excitement and beer and food. This gathering was filled with nervousness, stress, even my aunts were saying a few prayers to God hoping for a victory. Having a family member in an international tournament for the first time is pretty nerve wrecking because you don't want to see your family member get knocked out or injured whatsoever. Our family, friends, and neighbors met up for three nights in a row to watch my nephew fight against two Russians and a kid from Ireland. Ruben ended up winning a Silver Medal. Our next goal is for him to qualify for the 2014 Olympics in Rio de Janiero.

Watching boxing has been such a tradition in my family and keeps our family closely knitted together. It has influenced my brother to put my nephew in boxing who continues to be an outstanding amateur boxer. Our goal is to make him a world champion where our family and friends will be able to watch from the stands versus from a living room. I hope to carry out this tradition with my family and be able to keep the fire alive in our social practice for many generations to come.