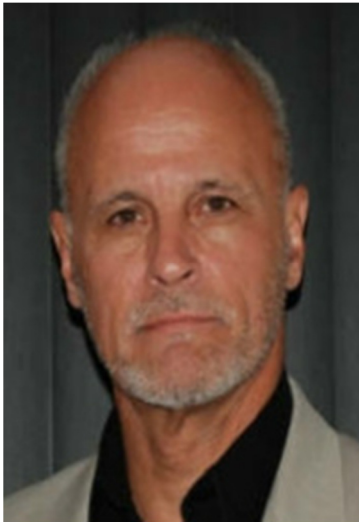




I'm honored to introduce STORYTELLER JOE CARVALKO



Joe Carvalko, born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, has traveled throughout the world and lived variously between the Southwest, Mid-west, the South, and the Northeast coast. He writes about his experience across a wide variety of genre including, fiction, poetry, science, technology and law. Most recently he authored *We Were Beautiful Once, Chapters from the Cold War* (Sunbury Press, 2013), a fiction inspired by a case Carvalko tried against the U.S. government for an accounting of a Korean War soldier it claimed was MIA. The trial was featured in a 2004 documentary *Missing, Presumed Dead: The Search For America's POWs* narrated by Ed Asner. He authored *The Techno-human Shell-A Jump in the Evolutionary Gap* (Sunbury Press, 2012), about how future medical technology will transform us into part cyborg, as well as academic papers such as: *Law and Policy in an Era of Cyborg-Assisted-Life (2013)*; *Introduction to an Ontology of Intellectual Property (2005)*; *Intellectual Property Issues in the Financial & Banking Industries(2007)*. In 2012, he was one of two finalists for the Red Mountain Press, top poetry honors for *The Interior*; and one of three finalists for the 2012 Esurance Poetry prize for *The Road Home*. In 2007 he authored *A Road Once Traveled, Life from All Sides*, a narrative on the fabric of American life, and 2004 he authored *A Deadly Fog*, poems, essays and short stories about war in America. Recently he co-authored and delivered *Law, Science and Technology* to his publisher (ABA Publishing). This fall *Notes Out Of Time-Verse-In Five Movements* (a memoir in poetry) will be published (Amphora Literary Press). When not writing, he is Adjunct Professor of Law at Quinnipiac University, School of Law, a member of the Community Bioethics Forum, Yale School of Medicine and a member of the Yale Technology and Ethics working group, a jazz pianist and a member of a pride of four 4 cats. He holds: BS, JD and MFA (writing).

Here's one of Joe's stories.

Reminders of the Next Round

It's past midnight and I have put the pen down to scan the four framed pictures hung over my desk—, two abstract, colorful geometric figures; two portray boxers with an uncertain fate. I wonder why I chose to hang them where I spend most days and nights. One of them is a jumble of tangled squares and triangles—maybe my subconscious placed it where I make eye contact so it sparks my imagination. The fighters show deadly emotion, maybe this too has been purposely placed, to remind me of the seriousness of my work—mostly I represent clients in trouble, one's that need a boxer in their corner.

The paintings depict Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr. A/K/A Muhammad Ali. In the 60's, he swaggered, but in one painting he's on his butt trying to get-up off the mat . . . must be the Frazier fight. Half crouched, a referee hovers, counting, while Ali's opponent, satiny-silver trunks, stands menacingly near four parallel ropes, a combination of worry and bravado, hands lowered, maybe unsure of the damage he's done. He could be one of the few that got the best of Ali: Norton, Frazier, Spinks, Holmes, and Berbick. The second painting, also of the fighter, puts him in his corner, trainer Dundee to his left. The pugilist glowers into nowhere; he's sweaty, his mouth agape exposing a stark zinc-white acrylic tooth-guard.

No, I'm almost sure it's Frazier, '71, March, when two gladiator-like combatants squared-off in Madison Square Garden. I listened on my Walkman, while a few thousand watched live. Ali dominated the first three rounds using Frazier's face as backstop for rapier-like jabs—, until the fourth when Ali's chin stopped a left hook, Frazier pinned him against the ropes; Ali,, head-jolting, side-to-side, rope-a-dope-like, demonstrated of the art and pain of boxing, the pummeling that leads to *dementia pugilistica*. Late in the eleventh I sensed Frazier's victory, when he left hooked Ali into the ropes, and again in the last round, when he left hooked Ali to the mat . . . like in the painting. He bounced up, but by then the score cards had him dead last in a two man bout.

What is it about the paintings that draw my attention? Why these rather than others I could have hung? The artist, a friend, died suddenly, just a few months ago. On nights like this they remind me of his rope-a-dope-like resilience, until he collapsed. But, other things remind me of his pluck, too, his friendship, our parallel lives as husbands, fathers, grandfathers, lawyers . . . the cases we worked on, the battles we fought. So is that all that draws me to these fighters, their fate yet determined?

It seems that fighters represent a general condition of a particular type of individual, regardless what they do for a living: write, fight, paint, community activism. . . For some of us, it's a way of life, either on the mat or in the corner pondering the next round, where we beat our heads against the wall, wondering if it's a new beginning, or the last of many hard-fought matches, whether it ends in victory or defeat. I doubt that the man sitting vacantly contemplates the next round; perhaps he is like me, a man struggling to rise up from his position, to put his jaw in front of a rival, sometimes it's someone in a business suit, sometimes it's someone in black robes.

I will keep both pictures where they are as I move across the day, as I try to regain my footing from what's been a strenuous week, my own battle, defeating the foe-of-the-week, a little beat up in the later rounds of a full life, wondering if I have a few more rounds in me, wondering if perhaps it's time to retire before I go one-too-many rounds and I'm counted out.