



Meg Ryan isn't a boxing manager; she just plays one in the film, *Against the Ropes*. **Jackie Kallen** is the world's most successful female boxing manager and the inspiration for the film. She fought against all odds to prevail in a male-dominated profession.

A journalist-turned-publicist for Thomas Hearn and Detroit's Kronk Boxing Team, Kallen spent ten years learning the ropes of the boxing world. As a manager, she groomed James Toney to become a world champion shortly after launching her business. At the podium, Kallen reveals her secrets to overcoming adversity in all forms—sexism, discrimination and even life-threatening illness—to triumph over all. Kallen, a writer since elementary school, had a colorful career before she ever met a boxer. An entertainment journalist who interviewed everyone from the Rolling Stones to Elvis and Sinatra, her work led her from hometown Detroit to NYC and back home to raise her family. A 1977 interview with six-time world champion boxer Thomas Hearn set her on her path, beginning as a publicist for him and the legendary Kronk Boxing Team. For ten years Kallen learned the ins and outs of the business. By 1988, she was ready to strike out on her own, managing fighters including a scrappy young man named James "Lights Out" Toney. Three years after she started managing him, Toney was a champ and Jackie was on top of the game. Still, despite two nominations for Manager of the Year, a stint as commissioner of the Female Boxers Association and a wall full of awards and honors, Kallen continues to fight for acceptance.

Jackie Kallen is the author of *Hit Me with Your Best Shot: A Fight Plan for Dealing with All of Life's Hard Knocks*. She is currently managing several boxers and is very involved with l...

Jackie Kallen

Speech Topics

- ☐ Sports
- ☐ Overcoming Adversity
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- ☐ Life Balance
- ☐ Leadership
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