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Lee Rosenbaum's Cultural Commentary

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Gloves Off: Sozenski Socks the Barnes Move

Edward Sozenski (above), art critic for the **Philadelphia Inquirer**, has taken off the kid gloves and put on the boxing gloves, pummeling the proponents of moving the Barnes Foundation from Merion to Philadelphia. In doing so, he is battling his own newspaper's MegaBarnes-friendly news coverage, as well its editorial page's campaign in strong support of the Barnes move.

Desperate times call for desperate measures: The last legal impediments to the move appear to have been removed. Sozenski has been on the right side of this issue all along, but now he's giving full vent to the frustration that so many of us feel about this wrongheaded project.

Some roundhouses from Sock-It-To-'Em Sozenski:

---[Dr. Albert Barnes'] historical and aesthetic legacy is being threatened by a cabal of interests that appear not to appreciate its essential nature.

---The track [is] cleared for the most audacious art heist in American history.

---Unfortunately, in America, history isn't taken seriously unless it can turn a profit. As for aesthetics, it musters about as much force against a balance sheet as a ping-pong ball against a steamroller.

The Friends of the Barnes, standing in front of the steamroller, continue to express their objections to the move and to question the financial viability of the future facility.

I admire their fighting spirit. But I think they're going to be flattened by that steamroller.