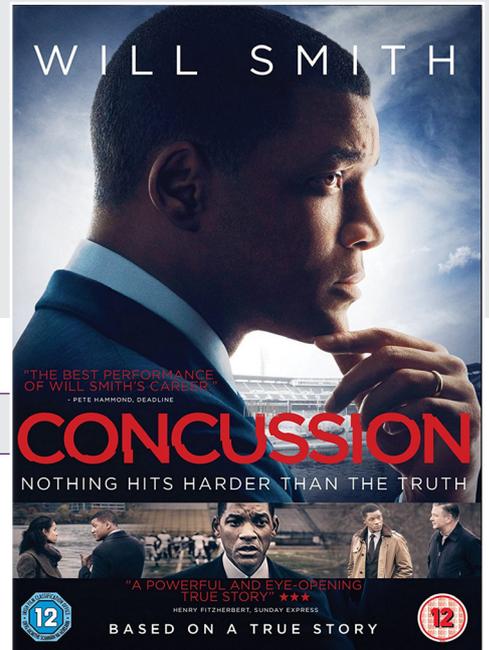




Leader's Guide



Download the discussion starter video from **Take-One.TV**



Background Information

- *Concussion* is the true story of pathologist Dr Bennet Omalu (played by Will Smith) who discovers that the repeated knocks on the head experienced by American Football players cause irreparable brain damage - called Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) - which gradually makes them confused, aggressive and depressed.
- In the film, Dr Omalu explains that the human brain moves freely in the head with nothing to prevent it banging against the skull when knocked. Unlike other animals, such as the woodpecker whose head is specially developed to support and protect the brain, humans are just not designed to cope with more than gentle impacts.
- Dr Omalu is a highly qualified professional who is committed to telling the truth no matter what it costs him. So he spends his own money on the research, faces ridicule from fans, organized opposition by those with financial interests in the sport, and even death threats from those who want to stop him.

Discussion Questions

1. Should people be free to put their own health at risk, through sport, in order to make a better life for themselves and their families?
2. How should we balance individual liberty and communal responsibility? If sports players know the dangers what business is it of anyone else?

A Few Key Facts

- Concussion is a temporary disturbance in the brain's functioning as a result of a blow to the head. It is often also referred to as a minor head or minor traumatic brain injury (mTBI).
- A seemingly minor blow to the head can leave a person concussed, even if it doesn't result in a loss of consciousness.

Source: www.headway.org.uk/media/3798/concussion-in-sport-1.pdf

- Coincidentally, a few weeks after the release of this film in the UK, a group of doctors sent an open letter to the UK government calling for a ban on tackling in rugby matches played in UK and Irish schools, sparking a debate about such contact sports in schools

Source: www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-35696238