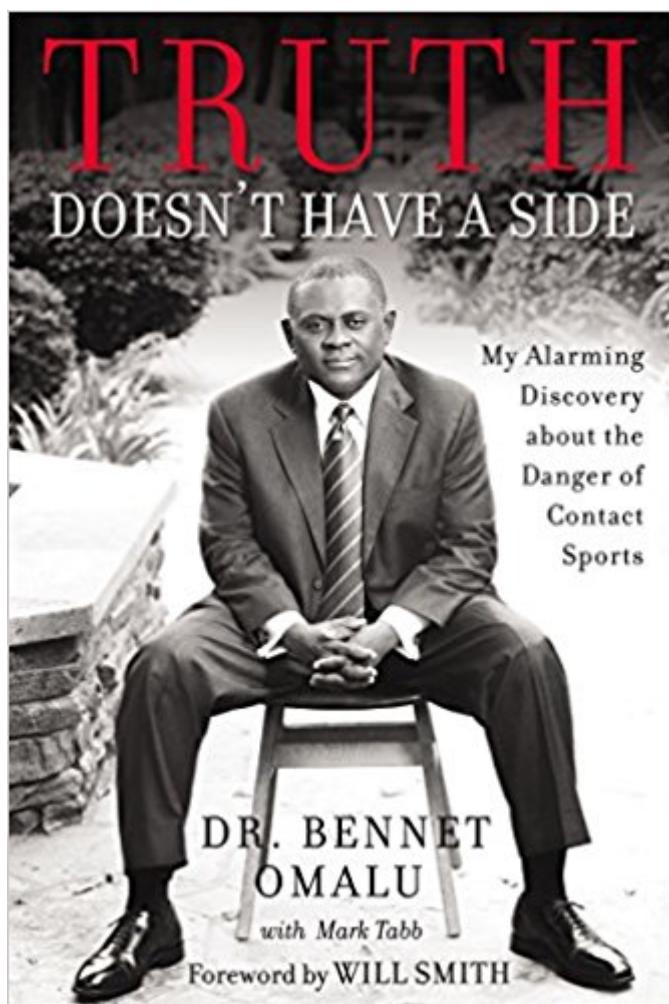


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# Truth Doesn't Have A Side: My Alarming Discovery About The Danger Of Contact Sports



## Synopsis

One day in 2002 the fifty-year old body of former Pittsburgh Steeler and hall of famer Mike Webster was laid on a cold table in front of pathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu. Webster's body looked to Omalu like the body of a much older man, and the circumstances of his behavior prior to his death were clouded in mystery. But when Omalu cut into Webster's brain, it appeared to be normal. Something didn't add up. It was at this moment, Omalu studying slides of Webster's brain tissue under a microscope, that the world of contact sports would never be the same: the discovery of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. CTE can result in an array of devastating consequences including deterioration in attention, memory loss, social instability, depression, and even suicide. And Omalu's discovery of CTE in the brain of an American football player has become the catalyst of a blazing controversy across all contact sports. At the center of that controversy stands the unlikely Dr. Bennet Omalu, a Nigerian-born American citizen, a mild-mannered, gentle man of faith. It is fascinating that it would take someone on the outside of American culture to make this amazing discovery, and refuse to let it be kept hidden. Dr. Omalu began his life in strife, growing up in war-torn Nigeria. But his medical studies in forensic pathology proved to be a lifeline. It fed his natural curiosity and awakened within a deeper desire to always search for the truth. Who would have thought that such an unexpected character would play such a role in bringing to life this world-changing data? In *Truth Doesn't Have a Side*, discover the truth about CTE: Its causes and symptoms, how we might keep our children safe and guide professional athletes when CTE sets in. The problem of CTE is coming to light with each new story about an athlete's concussion problem, and we are likely facing dramatic changes to professional sports. You'll be inspired by Dr. Bennet Omalu a man driven by his love and concern for the welfare of all people, and his professional vow to speak the truth.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you want to understand Dr. Bennet Omalu, don't look at the acronyms that come after his name or read the papers he's authored; listen to his laugh. It's the laugh of someone who possesses the freedom that can only come when you know that you are doing exactly what you were destined to do. (Will Smith)The name Bennet Omalu is one that many people may not be familiar with. But if you are a current or former athlete, a wife or a significant other of an athlete, or a parent of an athlete who competes or has competed in a contact sport that could produce concussions, his is a name you should know. His discovery of CTE gave a name to a cause of a neurological condition that many former athletes suffered from later in life. For many former football players like me, Dr. Omalu is our hero because he was that one person astute and bold enough to dig deeper in his neuropathology research to discover the cause of neurological ailments that may have affected countless former athletes long after the cheering stopped. (Harry Carson, New York Giants (1976-1988), and a member of the Professional Football Hall of Fame, class of 2006)Truth Doesn't Have a Side is a critically important book. If you care about your brain or the brains of those you love, please read it. (Daniel G. Amen, MD, author of Memory Rescue)Dr. Bennet Omalu's tireless pursuit of the truth is inspiring, and being able to relive his journey alongside him makes it all the more incredible. The world is a better place with doctors like Bennet Omalu in it. (Giannina Scott, actress and producer)The world craves elite examples of courage from selfless crusaders who genuinely care first about the needs of others. Dr. Omalu is that man, and his story will inspire you and challenge the sleeping hero in each of us! (Ben Utecht, musician, former NFL player, and author of Counting the Days While My Mind Slips Away)Truth Doesn't Have a Side is a provocative, passionate, and enlightening discussion of football, forensic science, and religious faith. Dr. Bennet Omalu's research has focused much-needed attention on sports-related brain injuries. Whether readers agree or disagree with Dr. Omalu's dramatic conclusions, they will find his life story fascinating, highly informative, and truly remarkable. (Dr. Cyril Wecht, forensic pathologist and medicolegal consultant; past president, American Academy of Forensic Sciences and American College of Legal Medicine)Truth Doesn't Have a Side tells the remarkable story of Dr. Bennet Omalu's journey of perseverance in an imperfect world and his reliance on the absolute faithfulness of God. It is the

story of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. (Father Carmen D'Amico, pastor of Miraculous Medal Parish, Meadow Lands, Pennsylvania)

Dr. Bennet Omalu is a Nigerian-American neuropathologist who discovered chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) in American football players, other athletes and military veterans. He is the chief medical examiner of San Joaquin County, California, and a clinical professor at the University of California, Davis. His story is told in the major motion picture *Concussion*, starring Will Smith. Bennet and his wife have two children and reside in Sacramento, California. Mark Tabb has authored or coauthored more than thirty books, including the number one New York Times bestseller, *Mistaken Identity*.

I so admire Dr. Bennet Omalu. He is a blessed guardian. Bennet is like Joshua as he leads us to state of understanding about the impact of sports on the brain & how God is part the answer.

A very important book with a very important message for all parents and the nation as a whole. The game of football especially mirrors our fascination with violence which is not healthy

What an amazing human being

Liked it better than the movie

Phenomenal read!

Phenomenal book.

I really had no interest in CTE, not that I hadn't heard about, and I'd seen the movie "Concussion," though it really didn't leave much of an impact on me. I mostly dismissed the subject as typical Hollywood hypocrisy, decrying the violence in society on a pedestal, while promoting it on every celluloid frame. What lead me to read the book was following an interview I saw on EWTN with Dr. Omalu. These weren't the words of your typical left-wing liberal calling for government mandated utopia for the masses (but never for themselves). This Doctor seemed to actually believe what he was saying, and was willing to testify to it as God as his sole witness and only judge. I wanted to read this man's story. And an amazing story it was. Not the CTE, though of course that's a part of it,

but the autobiographical representation of his life as lived out in radical obedience to his Catholic faith.I can't say if I agree with the science of CTE. I am not qualified to make any judgment on the issue, and I believe Dr. Omalu would want it that way; better for me to just admit that I don't know. But I am 100% convinced that he believes it. And that's enough to make the book worth reading.Dr. Omalu made this comment in his book regarding prohibiting children under 18 from playing football but letting adults make their own informed decision: "This means we can still enjoy college football and NFL football as we play and enjoy them today!" I am not sure if he is being intentionally coy or truly doesn't understand. (He readily admits to not understanding the game,)Because football is a game that takes decades to perfect, and the NFL only has room for the perfect...and the young.That means without Pop Warner, Middle school, and High school Football, there is no college and NFL to "enjoy as we still do today." It would be. in Dr. Omalu's world, like going for brain surgery to someone in their first year of medical school. In fact it would be even more dangerous to the player "patient" who never learned the proper techniques.Football, Hockey, Lacrosse, Boxing, are choreographed chaos. Particularly Football where the ability to move in unison (like the way schools of fish and flocks of birds do) takes years of practice. Starting that learning process would be like picking up the piano at 19 yrs old in hopes of becoming a virtuoso. It doesn't happen, the brain we're trying to protect is the same brain that has the unique ability to absorb immense amounts of information as child that it loses rapidly after the onset of adulthood.So Dr. Omalu is really authoring the manifesto for the end of Football (and all major contact sports). His comparison to smoking is relevant. In just 50 years we have gone from smoking as a symbol of American individualism to one of smokers being ostracized out of the public sphere. Perhaps football awaits a similar fate? If parents begin to pull their kids away from Football, Boxing, Hockey, Lacrosse...the sport will die as sure as smoking in restaurants has. Dr. Omalu's Hollywood friends however, still appear on film with cigarettes as props, the mystique of the lady blowing smoke is still too powerful to eradicate from their films...like violence, sex, and guns...and football. In true progressive fashion, their prescriptions in the "pulpit" have nothing to do with their actions outside the "church doors." Dr. Omalu would do well to remember who he's associated with, as some of his recent comments on politics has shown, and as he makes clear in his book, he is easily fooled by the glamour of celebrity.Like smoking, the penalty for the patient lies in a distant future. The glory of the gridiron for parent and child will be hard to walk away from based on a potential outcome on the other side of a yet invisible horizon.As a person who played football, boxing, lacrosse and hockey...and smoked...as young person....the threat of tomorrow when you're young and strong is seldom enough to prevent you from poor decisions today. I didn't play any of

them at the high level of college or pro-sports, but they remain some of my fondest memories as a child. Sandlot football, black tar basketball, sparing in the local club. I doubt any warning would have been enough for me to have avoided these games in favor of chess and checkers. So it falls on the child's guardian. Are parents ready to prevent their child from fulfilling his/her dream of the Hall of Fame? Is the next Mother of Joe Montana ready to except a role as 25th place in one of Dr. Omalu's acceptable athletic pursuits. Are you the parent, or grandparent, prepared to to say "no?" Probably not...yet.....but what if, your sole witness and only judge is the same as Dr. Omalu's? EDIT: after finishing the book, I went back and watched the movie a second time and got much more out of it. It still reeks of Hollywood pabulum, but Dr. Bennet Omalu does manage to come through in ways that I didn't recognize before reading the book.

On page 177 of the book, Dr. Omalu recounts a fifth-century gladiator battle in the Roman coliseum in which the two combatants begin to draw blood. Horrified by what he sees, Telemachus, a spectator, jumps in the ring to implore the gladiators to stop the fight. The crowd, who had come to see this violence and bloodshed, boos and ultimately stone Saint Telemachus to death. Dr. Omalu likens himself to a modern-day Telemachus, and after reading the book, you will agree with the comparison. Throughout the book, Dr. Omalu repeats that he wished he had never met Mike Webster, which led him to his discovery of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE). Yet he also believes that God placed an immigrant here to make the discovery, and to fight the richest and most powerful sports league in the country. Dr. Omalu uses logic and scientific facts to explain his findings, not emotion. Yet he is able to make the average reader understand without being condescending. Once you read what happens to a player's brain as he plays the game of football (something the Jell-O-like brain was never intended to do), you will shake your head and wonder why we both play the game, and cheer for those who engage in this brutal, violent and debilitating sport.

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