



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Victims of Domestic Abuse Should Get the Same Top-Notch Concussion Care As Athletes

Earl Smith, University of Delaware

Two vastly different experiences — serving as a “guest coach” on the sidelines for a Division I football team and volunteering in a busy emergency department — showed me just how unequal and damaging the lack of care provided for women who are victims of domestic violence can be.

In the first decade of the 2000s, one of the benefits of being a professor at Wake Forest University was the opportunity I received nearly every year to serve as a guest coach. A reward for supporting the academic endeavors of football players, it allowed me to stand on the sideline during home games. From that vantage point I saw — and heard — the hits that many players made and received, some hard enough to knock them out. I watched as the injured were ushered into the medical tent and put through the **concussion protocol**.