



Tough Bond

Film Study Guide

Director: Austin Peck, Anneliese Vandenberg

2013 | Documentary | 84 Minutes | USA | Swahili | Unrated

Synopsis: On the streets of Nairobi, Tough Bond-brand glue is the drug of choice for kids living on their own, numbing themselves to hunger while surviving off scraps. This incredibly moving documentary provides an intimate look at four of these kids – who call themselves “Survivors” – following them over the course of three years and taking the viewer deep into their lives.

Post-Screening Discussion Questions

1. The title of the film refers to the brand of glue used as a recreational drug throughout Kenya. Why do you think the directors chose this as the title, and what deeper meaning does “Tough Bond” have?
2. The directors of the film said that they chose the central characters because they were relatable. Even though the film follows people who live in a place foreign to you, they still deal with universal issues like loyalty, love, and coping. In what specific way did you relate to these characters? Who did you relate to the most, and why?
3. Sinbad talks about the factors that create stress in his life, including the need for food, shelter, and finding work so that he can provide for those he cares about. How are the stresses in your life different than those of Sinbad? How are they similar?

4. Many of the characters in the film use sniffing glue as the only way to escape or cope. How do you cope with the difficult issues in your life?
5. One of the major themes in the film is community. How do you define community? To what community or communities do you belong? How are your communities the same or different from those seen in the film?
6. Lucy, a social worker in Isiolo, talks about how the children of the village used to be “community children,” and that people in the community would take responsibility for looking after them. Now, she claims that no one is looking after the children, not even their own parents. Why do you think this happened?
7. Sinbad says that he is loved, and that people look out for him and protect him. Why do you think that is? What qualities does Sinbad possess that might indicate his popularity among the other villagers and “survivors”?
8. The glue manufacturer who is interviewed says he is powerless to do anything about the abuse of his product. Do you agree with him? Why or why not? If you were in his position, what action - if any - would you take?
9. The glue manufacturer and the Vice President of Kenya both think that government regulation can solve both the glue abuse and street children crisis. What do you think? Based on your own knowledge of history, your community and what you have seen in this film, how effective do you think the government will be in solving these issues?
10. There is not a clean, easy ending to this film. What conclusions do you come to after seeing it?