

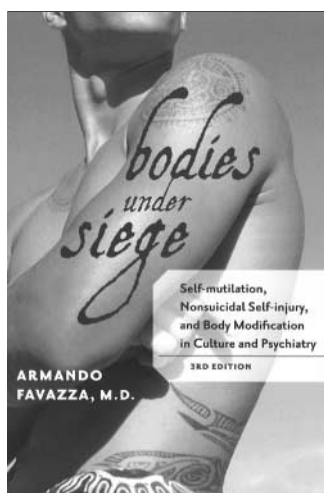
The editors, both senior lecturers in clinical psychology at the University of Limerick in Ireland, aim to present the reader with discussions of mental health issues in old age within the context of normal as well as problematic development across the lifespan. They are upfront about their intention to provide a collection of chapters that pay attention to understanding the positive and salutogenic aspects of ageing. These aims are achieved in part as we read about the potential of theories, such as Erikson's lifespan developmental theory, attachment theory and the dual process model of assimilative and accommodative coping, to shed light on thinking about matters such as adjusting to bereavement or to life in care. In this respect, the book succeeds in drawing these ways of thinking to the fore.

In other respects, when I was not finding the book fascinating, I found it frustrating. There are many spelling errors, a paucity of tables or figures (four in the entire volume) and considerable repetition between chapters, with population demographics and the basics of Erikson's theories being the main victims. It promises to appeal to students, educators, practitioners and policy-makers, yet its coverage of fundamental research evidence is often sketchy and sometimes superficial – the chapter on treatment of mental health issues, for example, tries to cover treatment of major conditions within sections of just 1–3 paragraphs each; that on carers fails to acknowledge the role of spouses; whereas that on assessment mistakenly cites the Mini-Mental State Examination as an assessment of mood. Students should not rely on this book for basic education in this field, nor should professionals rely on it for an update on the latest research or practice.

This book lacks polish but it is a bit of a rough diamond. I feel it needs to be read as a collection of interesting essays rather than as a conventional text.

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**Bodies under Siege:
Self-mutilation,
Nonsuicidal Self-injury,
and Body Modification
in Culture and Society
(3rd edn)**

By Armando Favazza.
Johns Hopkins University Press.
2011. \$35 (pb). 352 pp.
ISBN: 9780801899669

Self-harming behaviour is a global public health problem. It is one of the main risk factors for suicide and it results in extensive mortality and morbidity. Every year in the UK, self-harm results in more than 200 000 attendances to casualty departments, placing considerable strain on the National Health Service.

Favazza's original *Bodies Under Siege*, published in 1987, rapidly became the seminal textbook on self-harm. It contained an unparalleled cultural exploration of an array of self-harming behaviours. By dedicating separate chapters to specific variants

of self-harm (the head, limbs and genitals each warrant their own chapter), and examining different beliefs, practices and customs across the world, Favazza brought into a very public discourse a previously unmentionable topic.

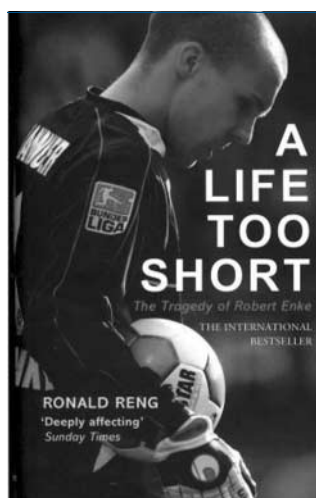
The third edition, although 40 pages shorter, retains most of the aforementioned trove of information, while also summarising the subsequent decades of academic and clinical endeavour into the prevention and treatment of self-harm. Notable additions include an in-depth discussion of the social forces behind the exponential increase in tattoos and body modification observed in modern popular culture, as well as the pivotal role the internet now plays in providing information about self-harm, including treatment for people who self-harm and their families. Thousands of websites, chat rooms and forums dedicated to self-harm have been created since the second edition was published in 1996.

The latest edition includes Favazza's personal reflections on his career-long exploration of self-harm and body modification, in which he reaffirms that there is hope for those whose lives have been overtaken by such potentially destructive behaviours. The book ends with a fascinating epilogue by Fakir Musafar, a pioneer of the 'modern primitive' body modification movement, who discusses the attractions, dangers and possibilities represented by such behaviours.

My only criticism of the book is that Favazza confusingly uses a number of interchangeable terms for self-harm, the preferred UK term. Indeed, the proliferation of terms describing the same phenomenon has arguably held back research in this field. Overall, however, the book is very well written and extremely informative, and Favazza has produced a refreshingly honest and objective account of self-harming behaviour. It is, as stated by Favazza, more than a catalogue of horrors; 25 years on, it is still an important publication in this challenging area of psychiatry and a particular strength of the third edition is its comprehensive (26-page) reference list, which spans more than 130 years of literature about self-harm. There is much to be learned from this book and, for clinicians or academics working with people who self-harm, it is an invaluable resource. Highly recommended.

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**A Life Too Short: The
Tragedy of Robert Enke**

By Ronald Reng.
Yellow Jersey. 2011.
£16.99 (hb). 400 pp.
ISBN: 9780224091657

In late 2009, Robert Enke was at the peak of his footballing powers, acknowledged as one of the German *Bundesliga*'s best goalkeepers and expected to represent his country in the 2010