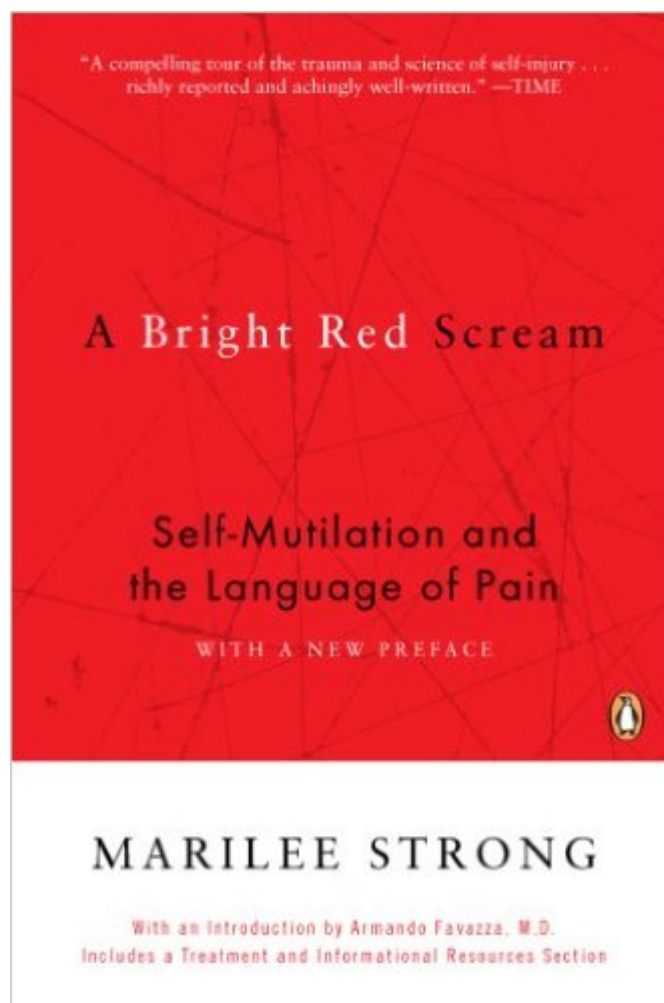


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# A Bright Red Scream: Self-Mutilation And The Language Of Pain



## Synopsis

Self-mutilation is a behavior so shocking that it is almost never discussed. Yet estimates are that upwards of eight million Americans are chronic self-injurers. They are people who use knives, razor blades, or broken glass to cut themselves. Their numbers include the actor Johnny Depp, Girl Interrupted author Susanna Kaysen, and the late Princess Diana. Mistakenly viewed as suicide attempts or senseless masochism--even by many health professionals--"cutting" is actually a complex means of coping with emotional pain. Marilee Strong explores this hidden epidemic through case studies, startling new research from psychologists, trauma experts, and neuroscientists, and the heartbreaking insights of cutters themselves--who range from troubled teenagers to middle-age professionals to grandparents. Strong explains what factors lead to self-mutilation, why cutting helps people manage overwhelming fear and anxiety, and how cutters can heal both their internal and external wounds and break the self-destructive cycle. *A Bright Red Scream* is a groundbreaking, essential resource for victims of self-mutilation, their families, teachers, doctors, and therapists.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Now in my mid-30's, I bought this book after seeing the movie *Secretary* and recognizing myself as a teen in the main character of the movie. Although, in my case, I overcame my urges to self-injure (in ways other than cutting, which this book addresses) on my own and through the process of maturation and some very focused self-examination in my 20's, I still found myself fascinated as to

why I, or any person, would resort to self-mutilation as a way to feel relief and a temporary sense of peace since the act and the resulting feelings seem so incredibly incongruent. This book took me back and allowed me to see and understand myself in ways I never expected and far beyond what I had already ascertained self-mutilation was about based on my own self-understanding. It also allowed me to see where I still lean toward the behavior in subtle, almost undetectable ways even though I have been under the impression for over 15 years that I no longer "act out" or would be considered a self-mutilator. The book is extremely well written and researched and the case studies cited enable the reader to identify - whether you are or were a self-injurer yourself or know someone who is. The author suggests many reasons why self-mutilators do what they do, why and how this gamut of behaviors addresses crucial needs they have and why it isn't as easy to refrain from when a loved one who doesn't really understand says, "Stop that!" Strong explains the behavior from psychological, emotional, spiritual, physical, chemical, environmental and medical perspectives so that one can gain a full and well rounded picture of self-mutilation, it's causes and it's effects - both overt and obvious as well as subtle and nearly imperceptible.

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