Title: A Matter of Life and Death: Conversations with Pathologists

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Summary:
This book aims to inform public opinion by giving eminent pathologists an opportunity to talk about themselves and what they do. It explores some of the philosophical, ethical and practical issues facing the profession today.

Pathologists have been dubbed by the media ‘doctors of death’ but this is a misnomer. Post mortems are a very small, though vital, part of the pathologist’s job, which is mainly to identify, from specimens sent to the lab from hospital wards, clinics and operating theatres, exactly what a patient is suffering from, and what treatment he or she is likely to respond to. Pathologists are disease specialists – some are experts in diseases of the tissues, the brain or blood, others in diseases caused by bacteria and viruses; only a small proportion are experts in forensic science.

Contents:
Conversations with 14 pathologists who have trained and worked in the UK, the US, South Africa, Latin America and Italy, and have a diversity of special interests.

Topics include:
- AIDS in East Africa when it first began to overwhelm hospitals
- the recognition of a new form of CJD associated with mad cow disease
- the search for the mutations that make flu viruses specially deadly
- doubts about shaken baby syndrome
- the quest to ‘build’ new organs for transplantation
- efforts to unravel the deep mysteries of cancer
- what you can read in bones
- what pathologists have learnt about life and death from their work

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