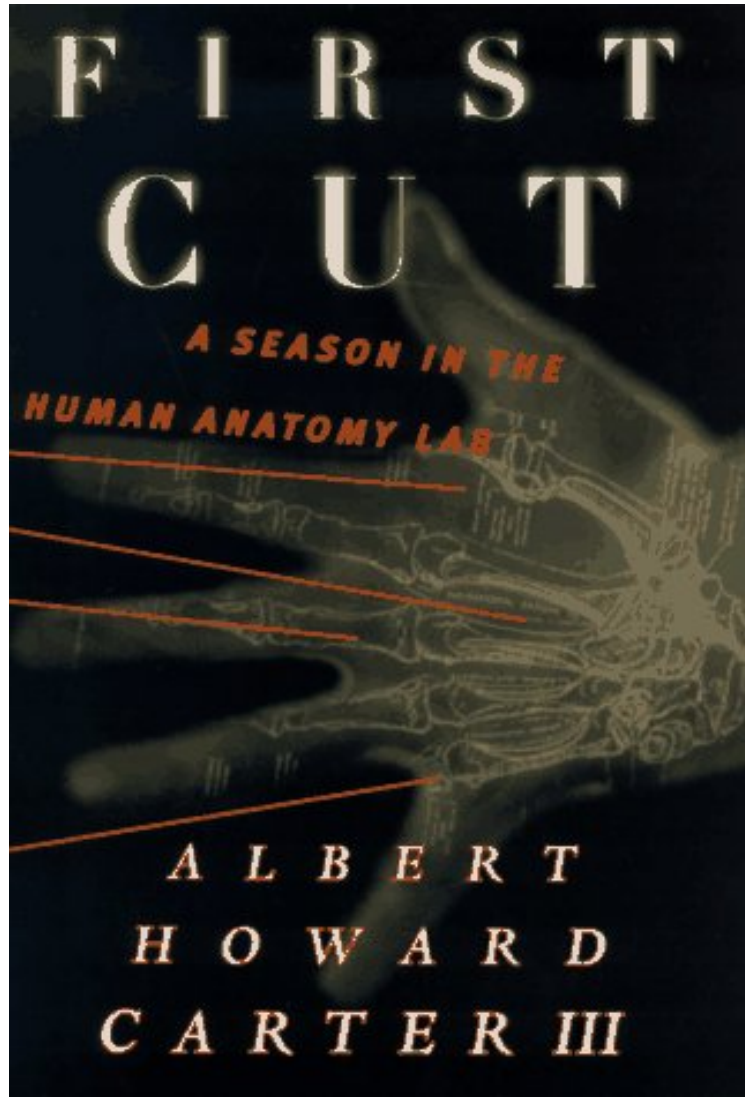


[Download ebook] First Cut: A Season in the Human Anatomy Lab

First Cut: A Season in the Human Anatomy Lab

Albert Howard Carter

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Albert Howard Carter : First Cut: A Season in the Human Anatomy Lab before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised First Cut: A Season in the Human Anatomy Lab:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautifully writtenBy EaracheMy husband and I recently had our wills drawn up, and we specified donating our bodies to the local medical school. Reading this book only confirmed the solidness of that decision for us.The reader gets to know the students profiled in the book, along with their team's cadavers. "Nero" provides much engaging commentary.One quibble...the author spends too much ink on thoughts of his deceased father. I'm sorry you lost your dad, but this book gets a little too close to "wallowing," as Mrs Lane Pryce said in "Mad Men."0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy Adriano Ferreira da SilvaAs an

anatomist, it's interesting to see how a lay person see and think about the anatomy lessons, specially the practical lessons. This book is a nice worship to anatomists, medical students and the subjects utilized as study. I really liked it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Look at the Experience in the Anatomy Lab By A. Cornell III bought this book before attending graduate school for Physical Therapy, where we have cadaveric dissection. I found this book to be a great tool to prepare myself for what it might be like in the anatomy lab. I really recommend it for anyone preparing for this wonderful learning experience.

The journey of first-year medical students through the body's mysteries. With humor and compassion, Albert Howard Carter examines the minutiae of the heart and soul, offering thoughts on what it means to be a doctor and a patient, and what the dead can teach the living. 29 illustrations.

.com Many of us have heard stories about ghoulish medical students and the pranks they play using arms, heads, or other parts "borrowed" from the cadavers in their anatomy labs. Like most urban legends, these stories are both compelling and untrue, telling us more about how we imagine the world to be than how it really is. *First Cut* contains the observations of a humanities professor allowed to watch medical students struggle with the challenges presented by their first anatomy class. Carter tracks, and mirrors, the students' progress from initial nervous joking and unwillingness to touch the bodies to familiarity and respect for their "silent instructors," culminating in an end-of-term Service of Reflection and Gratitude. As he sees changes "in personal feelings about death, touching, and the wonderfully complex activities of the human body" in the young men and women, he also puts to rest the memory of his father, who had donated his body for medical study. Pacing the story are three inspired essays on the nature of medical education and thirty beautiful and absorbing Renaissance anatomical illustrations. *First Cut*, far from being a sensationalistic account of young doctors run amok, is perfect for anyone who is interested in understanding medicine and its practitioners. --Rob Lightner
From Library Journal
Humanities professor Carter spent a semester as a Dana Foundation Fellow observing the human anatomy class for first-year medical students at Emory University, and this book is the result? a rare opportunity for outsiders. As a book, however, it's something of a missed opportunity. While readers are taken carefully through the series of cadaver dissections by which medical students begin to learn anatomy and integrate their own humanity with their chosen profession, this book is too much step by step, with too little integration. Seeming to be largely nonintrospective, the students rarely come alive themselves, because the focus of their struggle is narrowly confined to performing well on quizzes and exams. The author's search for familial identity and history (his father willed his own body to anatomical study) is human but not compellingly narrated. Note to general and K-12 collections: although maturely handled, parts of the narrative are almost gory, and the "jokes" are potentially upsetting. More suitable for academic collections. ?Mark L. Shelton, Univ. of Massachusetts Medical Ctr., Worcester
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From The New England Journal of Medicine
Dissection of the human cadaver is the first rite of initiation into the medical profession for virtually every medical student. Whatever its obvious practical educational value, human anatomy lab carries enormous symbolic value as a sort of hazing ritual. Touching and exploring a dead body violates deep taboos of our society, which shuns death. For this reason, the medical student's lay friends and relatives typically are intensely curious: What was it like? Did you faint? Were you squeamish? Most medical students have difficulty responding properly; the emotional impact of anatomy lab tends to get dissipated in the whirlwind of stress and excitement that is the first year of medical school. To capture fully the sublime quality of this experience requires the voice of a poet. *First Cut: A Season in the Human Anatomy Lab* is a compilation of the observations and insights of Albert Howard Carter III, an eloquent professor of English who accompanied first-year medical students during their anatomy course. Carter had personal reasons for taking on this project. His father had donated his body to a medical school, and the author wanted to satisfy his curiosity about his father's fate, perhaps to reach a kind of closure that he felt he was denied because of the lack of a burial. Moreover, he wished to allay his concern about whether his father's remains had been treated with proper dignity. Carter also viewed this project as a chance to take a few steps on a road not taken. He had considered becoming a physician but instead became an English professor; although he was happy with his career, his love affair with things medical persisted. He sought out medical topics within literature and even completed an emergency-medical-technician training course simply out of his love for medical terminology and ways. Carter, a superb writer, paints us a marvelous picture of the human anatomy lab. He captures the "many moods on this trip, from disgust and repugnance to elation and wonder, from jokes and high spirits to fatigue and depression." He focuses on the little things -- the sights, smells, and sounds -- that startle the students and compel them to remember the humanity of their subjects. He found that students passed through three stages in their relationship with their cadaver. First was "disgust and aversion." This was soon replaced by an effort to reduce it to a "biology exhibit." Finally, there emerged slowly a "rehumanization," as the cadaver asserted its individuality through its unique features. The philosophical challenge was to try to come to terms with death. Though a chaplain was present throughout the course, and a service of reflection and gratitude was planned and held, it fell to each student to create his own private understanding of mortality. "Our society's attitudes toward death are another kind of ice within the minds of the students, an ice that melts as the students learn." The author has

created an elegant record of the first milestone of a medical career. This book would be a very useful complement to the standard textbooks of anatomy; it might serve as an atlas for the emotional and spiritual aspects of dissection, standing alongside the classic dissecting atlases. It would also be ideal general reading for a recertification course; the senior physician is allowed to step back briefly to experience the energy and optimism of the first-year medical student. It is refreshing to peer into the medical world through the eyes of an outsider filled with admiration for what the physician is and can be. Carter's visit to the anatomy lab enabled him to conquer his personal demons. He was satisfied that his father's donation of his body was worthwhile and that the cadavers were treated with respect; he did achieve a measure of the healing and closure for which he longed. The experience persuaded him to make a serious commitment: "When the time for my death comes, I can think of no higher purpose for my muscles and bones, blood vessels and nerves, skin and, yes, even fat, than to send them to a human anatomy lab." ed by Charles Gropper, M.D. Copyright copy; 1998 Massachusetts Medical Society. All rights reserved. The New England Journal of Medicine is a registered trademark of the MMS.