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Sommario/riassunto

There have been thousands of scholarly articles written on the topic of
 suicide, including a few by the author, and the scientific method,
 combined with statistical analysis, has been applied to studies of the
 suicide rates of nations (over time and across regions) and to
 (sometimes large) samples of individuals. This book addresses the
 question of why people kill themselves, and in order to help clarify this
 topic, the author presents the background of some famous suicides.

There are papers informing us that suicides peak in the spring, that the majority (but not all) suicides would probably be given a psychiatric diagnosis, that loss of a parent is common in the childhoods of suicides, and many other fascinating results. Yet, when we read a superficial news story or hear of a friend or colleague who committed suicide, we still feel puzzled. Those research findings that we read seem to be neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for someone to commit suicide. The biographers of famous people explore the details of their lives so that we can learn more about them than we do of an ordinary person who commits suicide.
