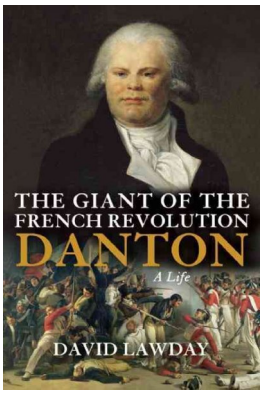
"The giant of the French Revolution : Danton, a life" reviewed by Bill W on January 15, 2013



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This energetic and sympathetic biography of one of the key personalities of the French Revolution goes further than many general histories to explain the way events led to their tragic conclusion. Danton was a larger than life figure who loved life and defined his own role in the revolution by using the rowdies in his Parisian neighborhood as a power base, and who never held an office in government until he was made (briefly) leader of the nation. He was a man who embraced violence as a revolutionary tool in time of war and reaction yet lost his life in his attempt to curb that violence. He was a man who could have been a tyrant yet turned down that role as unworthy. Ultimately, he proved a man out of his depth with an extraordinary power to improvise up to the final moment of his life. Lawday sets the scene for Danton's life in a readable, entertaining, and informative book set against one of the most profound epochs in modern history.
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