

French Legends: The Life and Legacy of Jean-Paul Marat



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*Includes pictures of Marat and important people, places, and events in his life.

*Includes a detailed analysis of Marat's notorious assassination and his legacy. *Includes a Bibliography for further reading. *Includes a Table of Contents “People, give thanks to the gods! Your most redoubtable enemy has fallen beneath the scythe of Fate.” – Jean-Paul Marat A lot of ink has been spilled covering the lives of history’s most influential figures, but how much of the forest is lost for the trees? In Charles River Editors’ French series, readers can get caught up to speed on the lives of France’s most important men and women in the time it takes to finish a commute, while learning interesting facts long forgotten or never known. King Louis XVI gave the French Revolution a scapegoat. Robespierre gave the French Revolution a leader. And Jean-Paul Marat (1743-1793) gave the French Revolution a voice. One of the most memorable and notorious revolutionaries, Marat became one of the Revolution’s best known figures through his speeches, writings, and scathing attacks on everyone he perceived as "enemies of the revolution". It’s possible that the Jacobins might not have come to power in 1793 without Marat’s fiery work championing the lower classes and branding his political foes with the harshest demagoguery. No revolutionary was more passionate, determined and willing to die for the cause. Marat’s work during the French Revolution and his notorious death at the height of it remain the best known details of his life. Indeed, the image of the Death of Marat by Jacques-Louis David is one of the most commonly associated with the Revolution. But those facts have obscured what the man himself was really like.

A trained scientist who served as a doctor before the Revolution, Marat counted among his acquaintances luminaries like Goethe and Benjamin Franklin. At the same time, Marat was an Enlightened political philosopher who advocated for basic human rights and reforms such as fair trials by jury. Of course, all of his work took a backseat to his writing as “Friend of the People” at the beginning of the Revolution, setting Marat down his fateful path. Perhaps no revolutionary has a more controversial legacy; Marat has long been praised by those who appreciate his work on behalf of the masses, and reviled by those who point out his violence and the course of the Jacobin-led Reign of Terror. *French Legends: The Life and Legacy of Jean-Paul Marat* looks at the life and work of one of history’s most famous revolutionaries, explaining his role in the French Revolution and analyzing his legacy. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Marat like you never have before, in no time at all.