My Personal Review:
He began his career by suborning the perjury that put an innocent woman in the electric chair. He was very proud of this. He lied, cheated and stole his entire life. He bribed judges and threatened witnesses. As a legal technician he was completely inept, unread in the law and ignorant of basic trial practice. His best and most frequently used courtroom tactic was the continuance. He was a fixer of the highest magnitude. He was disbarred just before he withered away from AIDS, way too late to do society any good. He is unmourned and unmissed. Good riddance to bad rubbish. Still, Roy Cohn did live a life that makes for interesting reading and Nicholas Von Hoffman has pieced it all together in this wonderful biography. "Citizen Cohn" will be the source book on this annoying gnat of a man long after Cohn has joined his pal Walter Winchell in obscurity. "Citizen Cohn" is both serious and blisteringly funny, anecdotal, and gossipy. Mr. Von Hoffman trods the well-worn path of Cohn's early years-how he got David Greenglass to lie from the witness stand and send his sister Ethel Rosenberg to the death house at Sing Sing, how he used the notoriety he gained from the Rosenberg trial to vault to a position as Senator Joe McCarthy's witch hunter in chief, how he was caught red-handed trying to arrange special favors for his "special friend" G. David Schine, a humble army private who was also a member of McCarthy's staff (in Lillian Hellman's great phrase, Cohn and Schine and McCarthy were "...Bonnie and Bonnie and Clyde")-but it is Roy Cohn in New York where "Citizen Cohn" sparkles.Cohn the uber lawyer was both powerful and petty. He could make or break a federal judicial nominee; he also wouldn't pay his electric bill. Cohn needed massive amounts of cash to maintain his dashing man about town persona (dashing, but closeted in the most transparent of closets) and he didn't care how he got it. He stole so much money from so many clients that the wonder isn't why it took so long to disbar him but why some outraged victim didn't simply shoot him. Mr. Von Hoffman minces no words in describing Cohn's lifetime of thievery and fortifies his revelations with the testimonials of those who were there. The
writing is evocative, gray and somber during the McCarthy era, light and breezy during the disco years. There is an illuminating word picture of Roy Cohn at Studio 54, where he was royalty, standing with one of his handsome young men, both clad all in black, sunglasses, lights beating down on them in the middle of the floor, music blaring, the two standing stock-still, posing, profiling "...like secret service agents at the beach". When it was almost over he took to wearing an orange phosphorescent tuxedo. This blatant self-promoter was reduced to wearing an outlandish coat that screamed "Look at me! Look at me!". It was a pathetic, but fitting, end to a pathetic man.

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