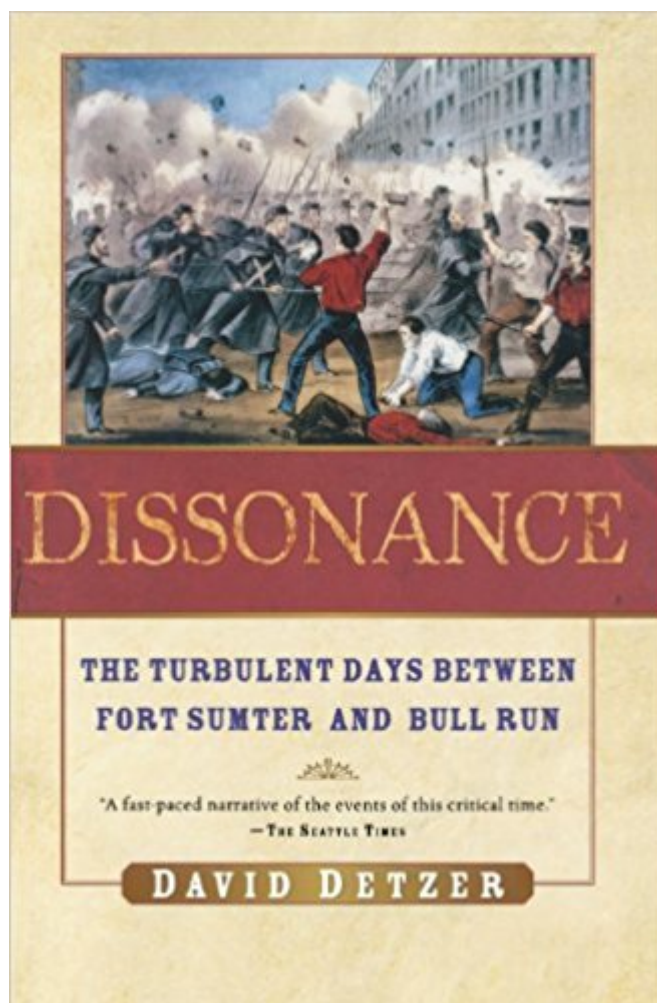


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Dissonance: The Turbulent Days Between Fort Sumter And Bull Run



Synopsis

For two weeks in 1861, Washington, D.C., was locked in a state of panic. Would the newly formed Confederate States of America launch its first attack on the Union by capturing the nation's capital? Would Lincoln's Union fall before it had a chance to fight? Wedged between Virginia and Maryland—two states bordering on secession—Washington was isolated; its communications lines were cut, its rail lines blocked. Newly recruited volunteers were too few and were unable to enter the city. A recently inaugurated Lincoln struggled to form a plan—defense or attack? In this final chapter of his trilogy on the Civil War, David Detzer pulls the drama from this pivotal moment in American history straight from the pages of diaries, letters, and newspapers. With an eye for detail and an ear for the voices of average citizens, he beautifully captures the tense, miasmic atmosphere of these first chaotic days of war.

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Customer Reviews

This fast-paced popular history of the frantic days between the attack on Fort Sumter and the Battle of Bull Run completes Detzer's "trilogy on the first hundred days of the Civil War." The earlier titles—*Allegiance* and *Donnybrook*—were critical and commercial successes, and the latest volume should also score with critics and readers. Detzer, professor emeritus of history at Connecticut State University, combines yeoman research—in official histories of the war, contemporary newspapers, journals, diaries and personal correspondence—and gritty prose. In the early days of the conflict, the nation's capital, geographically wedged between two states

(Virginia and Maryland) considering secession, was ground zero for the aspirations and fears of a divided nation. If Washington had fallen to the Confederates in those turbulent days of "incredible noise" -- hence the title -- Detzer suggests that the war would have been lost. At the center of the cauldron, President Lincoln struggled to get his bearings: cautious, anxious and uncertain in the beginning, but gaining confidence with time. Despite a tendency to hype potential dangers, Detzer has written an engaging and comprehensive account of the early days of the Civil War that should have wide appeal. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This concluding volume in a trilogy examines the opening weeks of the Civil War. With the bombardment and subsequent surrender of Fort Sumter, the illusion that the crisis engendered by secession could be solved by "reasonable" compromise was shattered. But what now? For Jefferson Davis, the wisest course seemed to be assuming a defensive posture while converting Southern state militias into a Confederate army. Lincoln was determined to resist secession, but his tools and options were limited. The army was small and concentrated west of the Mississippi. Four more states quickly seceded, and the allegiance of the border states hung in the balance. Washington, D.C., pinned between seceded Virginia and a hostile Maryland, was in danger of isolation. Detzer effectively utilizes diaries, letters, and newspaper articles to convey a sense of extreme tension as men and women, both prominent and obscure, strove to plan, cope, and even survive as a rapidly evolving situation seemed to present new challenges on a daily basis. This is an engrossing account of turbulent days. Jay Freeman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A novel devoted mostly to musical themes, but also to the holocaust, homosexuality, and general remembrance of thing past. All the story was triggered by a legacy received by the heroine from a woman whom she didn't know. Following up lead to learning things about her mother she had never known, and all revolving around musical themes, principally around the piano. Even I, ineptly non-musical, enjoyed the development of the theme.

David Detzer's third book in his trilogy about the beginning of the American Civil War in the East will not disappoint readers. The book primarily covers the period of April 12, 1861 (the day Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina was fired on) till 24 May, 1861 (the day Union troops finally captured

Arlington Heights, Virginia across the Potomac River from the District of Colombia securing the United States Capitol). Again, the author incorporates the background, thoughts, and actions of a cast of hundreds that are involved in the events that make up this early period of the Civil War. Presidents, government officials both State and Federal/Confederate, generals and soldiers, naval officers and sailors, civilians both male and female, and blacks both free and slave are represented here giving the reader a good feel of what it was all about. The primary places and events covered include Washington, D.C., Richmond, Virginia, Baltimore, Maryland, United States Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, United States Naval Yard at Gosport, Virginia, the Baltimore riots as Union volunteers passed through the city, international diplomacy, and Union efforts to reinforce the Capitol. Also explores the feasibility of Virginia/Confederate forces taking Washington D.C. Detzer's writing is always easy to read and understand and the pages just fly by, but again, the lack of good maps makes this only a four star effort (something the author just does not worry about I guess?), a general understanding of the geography of this region will aid the reader in understanding the big picture (a few period maps included in the volume help but more are needed). Also, the author is a true wordsmith! Having access to a dictionary of some sort is recommended no matter what your level of education because your vocabulary will be brushed up and expanded!! I really enjoyed reading this book. I learned a lot of things about the subject matter, and highly recommend reading it.

I recently finished Harold Holzer's "Lincoln President-Elect," which covers the period from Lincoln's election through his inauguration. Holzer's book is quite good, but leaves the story hanging with Lincoln elected, a number of states having seceded, and Washington, DC imperiled. So, I was looking for a book focused on the following period. Detzer's book was just the ticket. Although I was familiar with the outlines of the period Detzer covers -- from Lincoln's inauguration through the start of the movement of federal troops into Virginia that would result in the battle of Bull Run -- I did not know the details. Detzer turns these events into a vivid, page-turning narrative. The battles between the first Northern militias to attempt to reach Washington and a pro-Confederate mob in Baltimore is particularly well told. It requires a skilled writer to take a story whose ending the reader knows -- no, Washington is not going to fall to the Confederates before the Northern militias arrive -- and still make it edge-of-the-seat exciting. Detzer relies heavily on newspapers and magazines from the time, as well as memoirs and other nineteenth century books. He does not appear to have done much archival work. So, I would doubt that a Civil War specialist, particularly a Civil War academic scholar, would find much here that is new. Nonetheless, for the average reader with an interest in

the Civil War, this book should not be missed.

If you play music and love fine literature, then this book is a must read. Human emotion defined by and explored through music.

"Dissonance" swept me from page to page. Was it the gripping story of one woman, two families, an entire race? The mystery of a bequest from a stranger? The journey from tea and ristras in today's New Mexico to World War II death factories -- a Czech Concentration Camp and our own Los Alamos Labs? The unexpected symphonies in all these places? Or the poetry -- the sound -- that breathes in each paragraph? I don't know. I can only tell you that this book led me to a most wonderful place of the heart. This book sings.

This novel weaves its many themes together with wonderful prose and sensitivity. I read it the first time for its story and plot, but the second time to listen to the music of its language. Using music theory as a metaphor for the events of the 20th century, Ms. Lenard-Cook takes us to the concentration camp of Terezin, the nuclear labs of Los Alamos and the hearts of two generations of pianists. I have suggested this book to numerous friends and relatives and everyone has thought it a great book.

Disappointing read.

In "Dissonance," past lives and events cause ripples that affect the characters in profound ways, leading to a resolution that is both surprising and deeply satisfying. Deceptively slight, this lovely little gem of a novel holds a treasure trove of ideas and a story line that spans generations. It unfolds quietly, drawing the reader in as the story deepens. What I enjoyed most were the fully realized emotional landscapes of the characters: We know these people. We can relate to their hopes, fears and human foibles, and when they transcend their circumstances it reminds us of what's best in the human spirit.

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