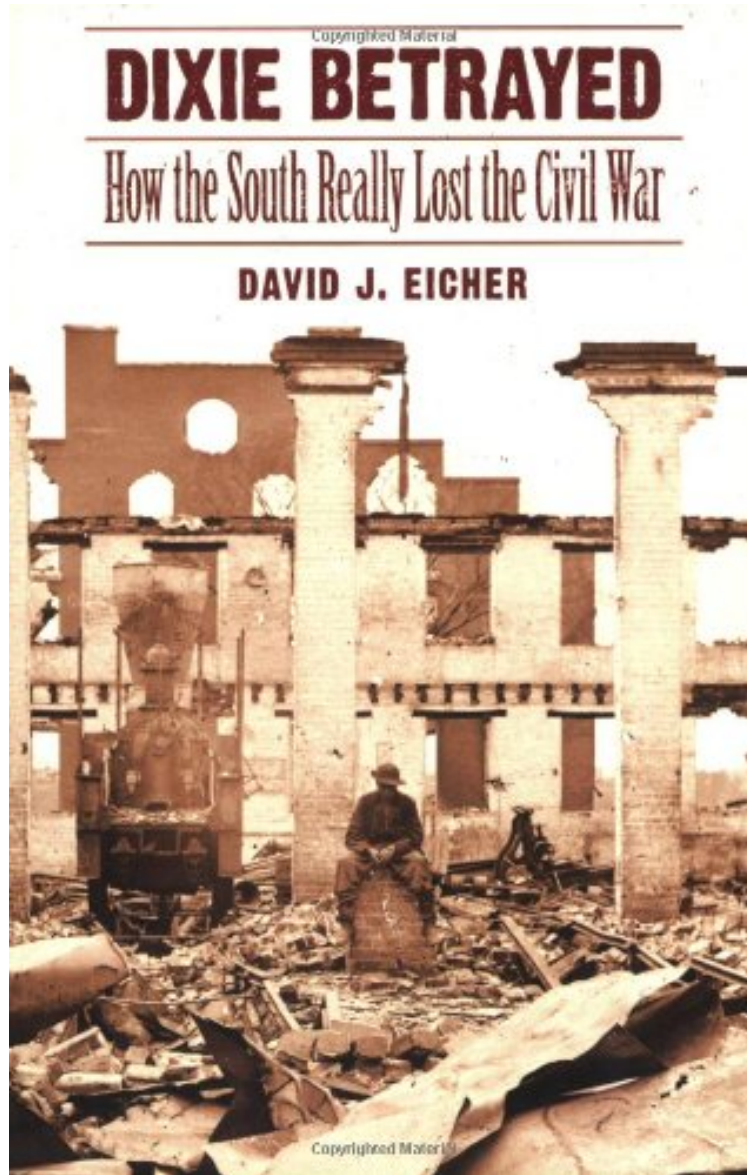


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Dixie Betrayed: How the South Really Lost the Civil War

David J. Eicher

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David J. Eicher : Dixie Betrayed: How the South Really Lost the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dixie Betrayed: How the South Really Lost the Civil War:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Good book on a little discussed subject By Chris Let me say this first - If you still cannot say the word Yankee without having Damn in front of it - Don't read this book. If you still blame that villain Lincoln for destroying the perfect Confederacy - Don't read this book. Don't bother - all you'll do is

make yourself mad. Go reread *The South was Right* and blame it all on Lincoln. BUT if you want to see a side of the civil war never seen before then I heartily recommend this book. It describes the civil war from the point of view of the confederate government. Something I've never seen before. Do we really need ANOTHER book on Lincoln or Lee? No those subjects have been discussed and booked to death! When I read this i was amazed by the utter chaos and sheer pointless stupidity of many actions done by the southerners. Men who came together to found a country but then seemingly went to great lengths to destroy it. Not deliberately but with an amazing narrow mindedness and self centered nature. They quite openly put their own and their states good ahead of that of the country. The title is a bit confusing but accurate - The confederacy was betrayed by the very men who were trying to create it. This book should be required reading for EVERYONE in Congress. The downside - it drags in parts. There is little or no action and battles are only mentioned in passing. 34 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Rewarding and worth the effort

By James W. Durney
David Eicher has a difficult premise to prove but makes a good logical case for it. The short form is that the Southern mentality contained the seeds of the South's defeat. In saying this, he upsets all the Lost cause Mythology types, the new crop of Political Correctness types, in addition to all those that will disagree with his premise. This is a very heavy load for one book to bear and with all the naysayer's, I'm not sure a fair review is possible. One problem is the to lurid title, promising more than the premise can possibly deliver. However, with 120+ books on the American Civil War being released in 2006, I can understand wanting a "grabber" tile. What this book contains is an intelligent description of CSA politics during the war. Detailing the waste of time, petty feuds and nastiness that the President, Congress and the state governors engaged in opens a window into a world that most histories ignore. Jefferson Davis often bears this alone. The book shows how much help he had from Stephens, Wigfall, Cobb, Brown and a legion of others. Their preference for obstructing, debating and endless obsession with "State's Rights" ended whatever small chance the South had for victory. The war plays out in the background as Richmond and the states fight it out on center stage. The "CSA government" often is the President vs. the Vice-president with congress back stabbing both. The other option is the CSA congress unable to produce anything but endless debate. The sovereign state governors, see little reason for a central government and bicker with it over everything, until a Union Army appears on their borders. This leads to endless agreement over state regiments, where they are stationed and who commands them. At the heart of the problem is the life experience of these men. They are the "opposition", a role that they can not abandon when they become the nation. All of them had spent their political life fighting the United States of America, if their party was in power or not. Proud to a fault, ready to argue the smallest point of order and used to obstructing legislation they carry these traits to Richmond, damaging their cause and reducing any chance of winning the war. The chapter "Peace Proposals" and the Epilogue are worth the price of the book. The Epilogue contains as good a short history of the development of and Northern response to the "Lost Cause" as I've found. "Peace Proposals", shows how the years of silliness finally cause an almost total breakdown of the Confederacy. David Eicher is a very good writer but this is not an easy nor quick read. If you stay with it, you will gain a valuable insight into why the CSA government didn't work and the impact this has on the war effort. 16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. An interesting attempt...with a good Epilogue

By Colonel Moran
Eicher presents his view of the downfall of the Confederacy, based on internal political dissent and the failure of Jefferson Davis and the Confederate Congress to resolve their many differences. He raises good points, although William Davis addresses many of these issues, in *Look Away*, in a somewhat more cohesive book. Eicher is strong on character sketches of key Confederate politicians, some of whom are not well known. The book drags at times, with long, somewhat tedious, quotations filling up more page space than is needed. However, the final chapter, his Epilogue, does an excellent job of explaining why the South lost the military aspects of the war but won the subsequent intellectual history of the conflict.

For more than a century, conventional wisdom has held that the South lost the Civil War because of bad luck and overwhelming Union strength. The politicians and generals on the Confederate side have been lionized as noble warriors who bravely fought for states' rights. But in *Dixie Betrayed*, historian David J. Eicher reveals the real story, a calamity of political conspiracy, discord, and dysfunction that cost the South the Civil War.

From Publishers Weekly
Eicher follows up his impressive Civil War military history, 2002's *The Longest Night*, with this dynamic, if frustrating, history that begs the question of whether the Confederacy would have remained a unified nation if the South had won. As Eicher notes, the South was undermined by its paradoxical efforts to fight a war and retain state rights. Derision began immediately, as governors from Georgia and Texas wanted to control their own militias, and politicians from Virginia resented president Jefferson Davis's plan to construct a railroad within their state. Arguments erupted over conscription acts, military assignments and the limits of presidential power. Although Davis was a victim of a subversive Congress, he brought on much of the enmity by micromanaging the war effort, appointing an inexperienced war secretary, placing friends in positions of authority and doggedly guarding his power. By the end of the war, frustration over the constant arguing manifested itself in cunning acts of betrayal: vice president Alexander Stephens and a newspaper editor bought a newspaper to use as a conduit for airing their discontent. Another

nemesis was arrested while on his way to Washington on an unauthorized peace mission. If Eicher's narrative chases its tail, it's because the South's leaders quarreled repeatedly over the same issues, though Eicher keeps the repetitive story lively through his nimble storytelling. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Much ink has been spilled debating the question of why the South lost the Civil War. Eicher offers his own significant analysis of what he views as the central issue: how the Confederacy shot itself in the foot because its leaders "together . . . founded an imperfect union, and together they destroyed it." How was a nation built primarily on the concept of states' rights ever going to create for itself sufficient unity of effort to win a war the very purpose of which, from the Union perspective, was to ensure the preservation of the Union those states had pulled out of? With great difficulty, of course, and this author sees that the problem for the South was never solved. President Jefferson Davis bickered with the Confederate Congress, the state governors bickered with him, the military also bickered with Congress, and Davis attempted to micromanage the whole enterprise; thus, Eicher considers the project doomed to failure from the moment of its inception. "The Confederacy," he insists, and building a strong case for his position, "was born sick." Brad Hooper Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "Much ink has been spilled debating the question of why the South lost the Civil War. Eicher offers his own significant analysis of what he views as the central issue: how the Confederacy shot itself in the foot because its leaders together . . . founded an imperfect union, and together they destroyed it."—Booklist