



Veneer

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In the city-state of Easton, an augmented reality known as Veneer has spread to every facet of daily life. It has replaced computers and televisions, books and paintings. Those who can control the veneer live in a constant state of redefinition, of the world and of themselves. Those who cannot are forced to stand by and watch the world change without them.

Deron Bishop wants to live in the augmented world, but reconciling the veneer has always been a challenge. Already resentful of the one thing he could never master, Deron doesn't realize how much he needs the veneer until a violent run-in with a childhood rival robs him of his virtual sight.

Now able to see the world as it truly exists, Deron must choose to abandon Easton or fight his way back to the veneered fantasy of his previous life—a fight not everyone wants him to win.

Veneer Details

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From Reader Review Veneer for online ebook

Tara says

I added this book because of its glowing reviews and I'll give it that it had an interesting idea. But that's about all I can give it. The dialogue is unnatural, characters are incredibly flat, relationships are undeveloped, plot-holes abound, and there's a rape in the book that served no purpose whatsoever in the long run. Interesting idea, carry-through was too rough, though.

Jennifer says

I really enjoyed this book. I was worried as it started out great with the elementary school scene, and then started up with high school and I thought I hope this stays as good as it was. Thankfully it did. I loved it. I found the world that was created was really interesting and instead of a lot of long drawn out explanations of what things are and do, they are shown to the reader instead which I loved! I did like reading the different chapters from different characters POV, some evil people some good people some of everyone. I loved it. I really would like to read more.

Jessica says

The premise of this book - the idea behind the city-state of Easton - was pretty cool. I feel like this is the kind of book I'd have loved reading when I was about fourteen. It has a cool science-fantasy theme going, good-for-nothing government agents, and more. As an adult I appreciated the way it depicted the complete irrationality and melodrama of teenage love (I don't know if it was trying to or not, though). I have to say that some of the characters were better than others, and I was really disappointed with the trotting out of the "predatory lesbian" trope. Aside from that I think the teenage characters were very thoroughly teenage, to such an extent that I couldn't help but feel second-hand embarrassment for some of them (view spoiler).

I'm also not totally sure who the intended audience was. When I first opened it on my Kindle, the blurb had a section that went along the lines of "THIS IS AN ADULT BOOK WITH ADULT THEMES FOR ADULTS," but thematically it was a pretty typical coming-of-age YA kind of a book, with *very* teenage characters who were not at all "mature beyond their years". It just had lots of sex scenes in it. And really, what problem is there with teens reading that? The fanfiction they put out suggests they're pretty well acquainted with the idea. So, I would recommend the book to teens ahead of adults. The setting is really cool and deserves to be experienced, but I feel like the plot would appeal more to people younger than me.

Matt says

I was extremely disappointed to find that this book was homophobic. It is also disappointing to see that the other reviewers had no problem with an author and book with a homophobic agenda. It supports bigotry. If reviewers has warned about the homophobic bigotry, it would prevent people from wasting money on offensive books.

Joyce says

I found the story line intriguing and it kept me reading. Though the beginning was a bit slow and I almost gave up. But am glad I kept reading. The ending left me hanging. So is there a second book.

Jess B says

I read this book because I downloaded a free copy for my Kindle and the description left me very intrigued: "an augmented reality known as Veneer has spread to every facet of daily life. It has replaced computers and televisions, books and paintings. Those who can control the veneer live in a constant state of redefinition, of the world and of themselves. Those who cannot are forced to stand by and watch the world change without them".

After reading Robopocalypse by Daniel H. Wilson my mind was primed for an alternate reality. In that sense this story didn't disappoint. The development of the world where "veneer" hides the reality of everything that exists and people can be anything they want to be left me enthralled. However, the characters fall short of making me really care.

Katie Bearor says

I was lucky enough to have been given a free copy of this book through Goodreads: First Reads, and did not purchase this novel.

First off, I will say that I did enjoy this book quite a bit. It was pretty original, and Daniel Verastiqui did a lovely job of creating an intriguing, futuristic setting for the story. The characters were realistic and easy to relate to, which definitely made me wish to read more about them, even after I finished the book. Beautifully written, the story hooked me from the first page and kept me interested until the very end.

I've read my fair share of sci-fi futuristic novels, though not many of them have pleased me as much as this one did. Daniel Verastiqui certainly has a knack for writing for this genre, and in my opinion, has some much-needed creativity that many other authors lack. For this kind of book to work, and be enjoyable, the author has to both be imaginative and able to bring their thoughts to the pages. Luckily, this author can do both of these things quite well.

But, despite the book's greatness, it also had a few things that require improvement. One of those things is language. The author curses many times over the course of this novel, despite the fact that he really doesn't have to. This gives some of the writing an immature feel, and was slightly annoying to have to read. Also, Daniel Verastiqui used the words "reconciled" and "veneer" WAY too many times during the course of the book. I understood that they were part of the world he created, but I felt as though he could have swapped them out a few times to seem less redundant.

Grammar and spelling was great, and I found only a typo or two in the entire book. The formatting was good, and the author used nice sentence structures that kept the story flowing smoothly. The vocabulary used was irritatingly advanced at times, however, for the most part, it was good. There was little confusion or jumps in the storyline, and the ending was crafted beautifully, which makes me hope that there will be sequel coming soon.

Overall, I read the book in record time, and was quite pleased with it. I will certainly be looking into reading more of the author's books, and will be giving this to a few of my friends for them to read. I would recommend this novel to any fan of futuristic novels or stories involving advanced technology and its consequences. Any fan of Sci-fi and action would probably enjoy this book as much as I have. Veneer is certainly worth reading, and I am happy the author gave me the opportunity to read and review it.

Brenda Ayala says

It was so close to being great. So close. There is a very real ability to write, a way of describing the futuristic aspects without being overindulgent. Perhaps this is because the idea of the veneer is one that is easy to relate to. Everyone knows about smartphones, about how we are making it increasingly easier for media to pervade every facet of life. So upon reading this book, I can honestly say it felt like a very real potential future; one in which the platforms for media cover every inch of our world.

The author brought to life some behaviors that felt chillingly real--a bit too realistic, and a bit too close to home. Because Steb's twitchy fingers after playing his videogame, the restlessness that he exhibits with the lack of visual stimulation, seems far too truthful. Everyone reconciling their veneers so that they can be the best parts of themselves was far too graphic, given the fact that everyone would change parts of themselves if given the opportunity. And the lack of self-worth and self-identity was far too accurate too. The world has learned to live behind a beautiful facade--how do you come back from that? How do you go from seeing the best version of yourself everyday, to seeing the mediocre version, at least in your own eyes?

It's incredibly intelligent world building. It stems from very real issues we face today, particularly the obsession with ourselves that is so prevalent in my generation. Really, this world was terrifically clever and I was impressed by the writing ability.

Maybe you're wondering why I gave it three stars, if I was so impressed? Because it deteriorated into schoolyard antics and romances. Schoolyard bullies who have no reason for the hatred. I suppose it works in that Russo, the bully, was ostensibly a psychopath and a sociopath. He goes so far as to kill two people and to attempt to kill another; even his failure not serving as a deterrent. It made for a damn good villain, but I still had a hard time reconciling this dastardly asshole with the image of a schoolyard bully. It didn't make it any less believable, only took a little of the enjoyment out of it for me.

What really killed me though was the whole romance part of it. I really don't have any clue what point Ilya had to the novel, aside from being a nice little side venture while we're waiting for Deron to return to Rosalia. The tryst between Ilya and Rosalia, at least as far as I could tell, really didn't hold any value to the plot other than maybe popping some tents for the reader. Which is fine and all, but it just drove me crazy! You've created this awesome world that actually *makes sense* and you instead choose to focus on a girl being raped by another girl?

Given the opportunity, I would tear out all of those excess pages and just stick with the meat of the book. It was such a strong, fundamentally engaging idea. And after it was over, it was still a fundamentally engaging idea, just with a little less power in the punch.

(I received this in a First Reads giveaway.)

Emily says

This was a fine, quick read that reminded me of several other stories I've read. Bradbury handled it quite well if I remember correctly. I assume he got the idea for the book while commuting on Mass Transit. Could have used a good editor.

David Ketelsen says

I received a free copy of this book through Goodreads: First Reads.

I really enjoyed *Veneer* quite a bit. It was very original and **Daniel Verastiqui** has created a realistic and very futuristic setting for the story. The characters really came alive due to Verastiqui's eloquent writing and apparent insight into the minds of teenagers.

The book isn't a casual read but it's well worth learning the lingo used in the book because it's a very compelling story. As a cautionary tale for what might come in our future, it's chilling---but also hopeful since having the Veneer technology would be really wonderful--and dangerous in the wrong hands. Technology often presents a double edged sword.

There's violence in this book and it's a testament to Verastiqui's skills that you feel so bad for the victims. The violent scenes are used to demonstrate the dangers of this future world and it works. You really wonder whether it's better to buy-in or scram and go back to nature.

This is an incredible book, and the paperback version has an amazing cover. I love the graphic design. It's a true work of art.

A.J. van Rooyen says

The idea is awesome, but the implementation made it a difficult read. Too much teen drama centered around a society where teens only care about violence and porn. The antagonist, Russo, is the worst written villian I've encountered. He is one dimensional and basically just wants to kill Deron for no reason (spoiler alert: the whole 'he embarrassed me when I was like 3' is a weak excuse for the level of his violence). The only character I started to like and that showed any development was Jalay. The ending was just horrible. And what happened to the people outside of Easton that can't see the Veneer? The story has a lot of potential, but in its current form, I can't recommend it.

Tim says

Verastiqui's book was a fascinating take on the myopic world of teenagers. He imagines a world in which everything is a computer generated facade (veneer in the books' parlance) over concrete blocks and real people's visages, that can be easily changed with just a thought. Teenagers are able to look like cartoon characters or any other way they want. A fight between two teenagers leads to a glitch in the system that makes all the characters deal with what reality really means. Fascinating ideas about the identity of who we

are vs. the way people perceive us.

Bill Brent says

What could have culminated as a possible dystopian future based on a critique of our current state of affairs and our dependence on i-devices, only resulted in an "at least I didn't pay for it."

What promise this book had was dashed by the lack of character depth. I know it took a lot of effort to write and publish this book, but the fact of the matter is; this book could have been a short story that was elongated. Additionally, as a novel this was a great 2nd draft but not a final draft.

Sam says

This was a pretty entertaining story. The futuristic world and technology was intriguing with just the right amount of mystery.

Elena says

This book had a lot of borrowed themes. It was almost too much Matrix and Minority Report thrown in. There were some interesting ideas: Would you stay if you knew your whole world was a sham? Would love be the same if you looked differently than what other's thought? Although, I could really get into the "why" of the characters. What really drove them? That being said, I read the whole thing.
