By

[**phi1481**](http://www.amazon.com/gp/pdp/profile/A3393641NBX0P/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_pdp) - [See all my reviews](http://www.amazon.com/gp/cdp/member-reviews/A3393641NBX0P/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_auth_rev?ie=UTF8&sort_by=MostRecentReview)

**This review is from: Culpable Innocence: The American Dream Reprised (Hardcover)**

This is an amazingly strong debut by a newly published author. The story is incredibly convincing and capturing, mirroring the dichotomy of life in war and love. The well-conceived and developed characters are numerous, but their story is cohesive, and unfolds as a very real, vivid reality in an environment that is at once gritty, harsh, romantic and inspiring. For anyone who appreciates strong and coherent writing, interesting characters and an intriguing story of survival, betrayal, love and actualization, this is for you.

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful

5.0 out of 5 stars **Culpable Innocence**, June 19, 2012

By

[**Jim Below**](http://www.amazon.com/gp/pdp/profile/A1MQ7I7H6PUOQU/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_pdp) - [See all my reviews](http://www.amazon.com/gp/cdp/member-reviews/A1MQ7I7H6PUOQU/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_auth_rev?ie=UTF8&sort_by=MostRecentReview)

**Amazon Verified Purchase**([What's this?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/community-help/amazon-verified-purchase%22%20%5Ct%20%22AmazonHelp))

**This review is from: Culpable Innocence: The American Dream Reprised (Hardcover)**

This is a work of fiction, but extremely realistic in depicting the life of a new draftee thrust into the horrors of the Viet Nam War. Anthony Debenedict does an excellent job showing us the secret lives of the Viet Nam vets, and does well in contrasting this experience with the anti-war sentiment of the times.

What is refreshing is that the reader is not forced to view this turbulent period through the eyes of a biased philosophy, but is allowed to see this geo-political struggle from the points of view of the American solder, the Viet Cong sympathizers, the Vietnamese civilians and even the Viet Cong themselves.

Another highly charged issue of that time was interracial relations, and the author not only tactfully addresses this subject, but made it an integral sub- theme of the story.

A Culpable innocence is a compelling and controversial story. First time author, Anthony Debenedict does nothing less than a first rate job.

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful

5.0 out of 5 stars **Exciting story and inspiring message**, February 26, 2012

By

[**Virginia Tormey**](http://www.amazon.com/gp/pdp/profile/A3PJH9VWMYPP1X/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_pdp) - [See all my reviews](http://www.amazon.com/gp/cdp/member-reviews/A3PJH9VWMYPP1X/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_auth_rev?ie=UTF8&sort_by=MostRecentReview)

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**This review is from: Culpable Innocence: The American Dream Reprised (Hardcover)**

Anthony DeBenedict deftly portrays his lead character, Regis Fallen, an ordinary young man caught up in the chaos of war. He takes Regis through dangerous, exciting, harrowing wartime situations in a highly entertaining thriller. But it is Regis' personal story of growth and his moral conundrum which the author carefully develops that is equally if not more involving.

Through the skillful use of dialogue, DeBenedict develops his interesting characters well. He uses historical facts and what has to be his own experiences to paint a very vivid picture of the war ravaged Vietnam. He describes gnarly deaths with such poignancy and compassion, almost tenderness that it breaks your heart. The love story and political themes are seamlessly woven into the narrative. This detailed authenticity enhances the plot, forms the crucible for Regis' inner triumph and builds the intrigue and tension until the conclusion.

"A Culpable Innocence" is an exciting story moving quickly around the backdrop of Vietnam and the U.S. military. The novel is well constructed flashing back and forth, for example, between California and Vietnam or the guard tower in the first chapter and Saigon. I found the book's story thrilling, touching and engaging and its message on the wholeness of self and humanity an inspiration. Read it.

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful

5.0 out of 5 stars **Fiction Meets the Mind**, November 6, 2011

By

[**Mary L. Hyland "Nutrition Nut"**](http://www.amazon.com/gp/pdp/profile/A1EZZ6F8ZQ38LA/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_pdp) (Philly, PA) - [See all my reviews](http://www.amazon.com/gp/cdp/member-reviews/A1EZZ6F8ZQ38LA/ref%3Dcm_cr_pr_auth_rev?ie=UTF8&sort_by=MostRecentReview)
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**This review is from: Culpable Innocence: The American Dream Reprised (Hardcover)**

This is a work of fiction from a new author which needs to be read. It is an important work regarding the Vietnam War. That said, there is so much more to this book than merely recounting a most violent and destructive war and period in the lives of Americans as well as Vietnamese. Think about a bright, young man, fresh out of college, looking for the American dream. The dream dissolves into the nightmarish reality of violent death, psychological trauma and a gross misunderstanding of a war that makes no sense to the mind, body or the spirit. Interwoven in this work are storylines that are important to the time period: civil unrest, bigotry, and protesters who know the war is wrong but don't see and do not understand the suffering of the soldier out in the jungle doing his or her "patriotic duty." In this work of fiction, there is much information regarding the history of Vietnam. For me, it put to rest once and for all that this was a war that never should have been. There is so much beauty and sadness in this story, with some extremely poetic phrasing that juxtaposes the vileness of what is happening in the story. Fresh and timely, our society is supposed to learn from its vast historical mistakes, This gritty and captivating book will have you wondering if that has or can ever happen in our time. Not just for the reader interested in Vietnam, although a great selection, this book is for anyone who appreciates an intelligently and sensitively written account of a time frozen in hatred and death, but also of yearning, love and passion.

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