



Slip

David Estes

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Someone must die before another can be born...

As sea levels rise and livable landmasses shrink, the Reorganized United States of America has instituted population control measures to ensure there are sufficient resources and food to sustain the growing population. Birth authorization must be paid for and obtained prior to having a child. Someone must die before another can be born, keeping the country in a population neutral position at what experts consider to be the optimal population. The new laws are enforced by a ruthless government organization known as Pop Con, responsible for terminating any children resulting from unauthorized births, and any illegals who manage to survive past their second birthday, at which point they are designated a national security threat and given the name Slip.

But what if one child slipped through the cracks? What if someone knew all the loopholes and how to exploit them? Would it change anything? Would the delicate resource balance be thrown into a tailspin, threatening the lives of everyone?

And how far would the government go to find and terminate the Slip?

In a gripping story of a family torn apart by a single choice, Slip is a reminder of the sanctity of a single life and the value of the lives we so often take for granted.

Slip Details

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Author : David Estes

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From Reader Review Slip for online ebook

Brittany says

Check out my blog to see Reviews of Book and Movies, and check out some Recipes!

Slip is written by David Estes, and is the first book in the Slip Trilogy. It is a fast paced dystopian sci-fi thriller geared for a young adult audience and older.

The book opens up to a view of the now Reorganized United States of American. After natural disasters have changed the landscape of the country and the scare of food shortage has been numerically assessed, the government has determined an exact population number that can be supported by the current country. Procreation can only occur after a birth authorization has been purchased and following the receipt of a death certificate. In short, in order for one to be born, one must first die. Death certificates can be issued for a terminally ill person, but if that person does not die as planned, than a birth cannot occur.

Pop Con, short for Population Control, is the government agency responsible for ensuring the enforcement and regulation of such laws. In the event of unauthorized births/beings or UnBees, they are tasked with tracking down and terminating the unlawful child. Any child that manages to go undetected past their 2nd birthday is henceforth referred to as a "slip" and is deemed a national security threat.

Pop Con is heralded for their ability to terminate unauthorized births before a slip occurs. However, one boy finds himself hidden and protected long past his 2nd birthday. Being raised by a father and a woman who cares for him he finds himself wondering why he cannot be outside with other children as he gets older.

This child without a name in his youth starts to figure out that things aren't right in his life when events lead to his father injecting his eyes to change his identity as he becomes instead Benson and is sent to swim in hopes of survival sent off to a futuristic St Louis. Benson is left alone and outside of society, having no true knowledge of what is going on. Many questions and theories lead him to suspect that he may in fact be a slip.

In this book we get to know many exhilarating characters to conclude the head of Pop Con, Michael Kelly: a man who must make ruthless determinations, while in constant battle with his conscious. Harrison Kelly, his son who finds hatred in his father for missing so much of his life due to work. Lucy a street savvy friend and romantic interest of Benson's who fights to protect her little brother.

Janice, the wife of Michael Kelly, who went from eccentric to mental break and now lives in a mental institution; constantly hallucinating about things that may or may not have been. Domino Destovan is the sadist you love to hate; his evil endeavors grow throughout the book as well as his thirst for death and acknowledgment.

The first part of the book is told in First Person POV from a young nameless boy and his views in the world. News headlines and blurbs are interjected to keep the reader alert of the state of affairs in the country. Then the book moves on to a more third person POV after the nameless boy becomes Benson. In the initial naming of Benson, I had a little trouble keeping track of the fast paced character change in the story, but once the narratives became more detailed, it was easy to go back to the flow of the book.

Overall I give Slip 5/5 Stars. David Estes can create a world like no other, and his ability to bring it to life is commendable. With a slightly rocky character transition, this levels out enough to not detract from the story. By the time you get over the transition from unnamed boy to Benson, it is practically impossible to step

away from as the action is fast paced. It very readily flows into a desire to want to know MORE about what happens next. Although this is a young adult novel, it is definitely on the mature end of the spectrum as there are some themes that may be sensitive to include sexual and physical violence. If you are interested in dystopian, young adult, population control, futuristic, sci-fi, fiction, action, etc., then this book is definitely worth a read.

*I received a copy of this book for free in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Dannii Elle says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review from NetGalley. Thank you to the author, David Estes, and the publisher, Createspace, for this opportunity.

This is the first instalment in a science fiction trilogy, set in the dystopian, fictional future of our own world. Rising sea levels and diminished resources means the human species is under threat of extinction. The only way to save the entire human race is to sacrifice a few. The ruthless government organisation, known as Pop Con, have theorised that for our species to continue to thrive our numbers must be capped. For one to be born, another must die. Any born outside of this algorithm are labelled as illegal 'Slips', and all these slips must be neutralised.

The entire story is gathered from multiple perspectives and resources. Differing ages, demographics and 'sides' in this war on birth are given a voice, and together they work together to pull the story together as a cohesive whole. Public newsletters and articles, and comments in reference to these, make up the rest of the reader's knowledge.

The story behind this novel was a fascinating one, and what drew me in from the synopsis. For me, however, little happened to propel the plot forward apart from what evidence the reader initially gathers in the first third of the story. This was quite an action-dominated story, which was dually exciting and dull, for someone who prefers more character-focused narratives. Not a bad book, by any means, and with an intriguing concept behind it, but this was just not the book for me.

David Estes says

SLIP is FINALLY out! I know a lot of you have been waiting months for this release, which was originally planned for June, but better late than never, right? Plus, the extra time allowed me to finish the sequel, GRIP, which I decided to release on the same day as SLIP!

"Someone must die before another is born..." That's the tagline for the series and it alludes to the fact that SLIP is a world of population control, where an "Ideal Population" is set by scientists and then "population neutrality" is maintained, meaning that someone can only be born if someone else dies. Creepy huh? But what if an illegal child is born and somehow manages to slip through the cracks? What lengths would the government go to to hunt him down? SLIP explores the value of family and friendship in an action-packed scifi dystopian thriller.

Thanks for all you support and I hope you all enjoy the read!

Get SLIP for Kindle HERE: <http://www.amazon.com/Slip-Trilogy-Bo...>

Get SLIP in Amazon Paperback here: <http://www.amazon.com/Slip-The-Trilog...>

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

<http://melissa413reads alot.blogspot.c...>

This book is rough. It's filled with evil people... well mostly. This form of government only allows you to have kids if you have a Death Match to someone that is dying or getting ready to die, only then can you have a child to replace this person. If a child is born without one of these then the child and/or the parents are killed. This is all in the sake of saving food etc. If the child lives undetected past 2 years-old they are considered a Slip. Before that they are called UnBees - Unauthorized Beings!

How could they just kill babies and kids and people? Well, it is the government. Do they make sense? It's called the Controversial Population Control Decree and the people that work for them are called the Department of Population Control or Pop Con for short. They are the ones that go out and do the killing!

Michael Kelly works for this company. He eventually becomes the boss man. He doesn't want to work there but he has his reasons for doing this..... I wonder....

One of the main characters is named Benson Mack and he has a best friend named Check, they are thieves that are called Pickers. Every time they said that all I could think about is the show American Pickers, but I digress! There are some others in their group but these are the main two.

There is another guy in the book named Harrison Kelly and he is the son of Michael and Janice Kelly. I'm not going to go into all of that because I would have to give out too many spoilers!

There is an evil arsed part human, mostly cyborg dude that was brought onto the team at Pop Con. He had turned in his dad and sister when he was younger because he didn't like his sister was a slip and his dad gave her all of the attention. **THEY WERE KILLED** He then went into the military and got all messed up, that is how he became cyborg man thing! And he is evil incarnate! This is his idea of fun.

Four hundred and sixty four dead babies in the first day have changed everything.

And he enjoyed it, literally enjoyed it. I would like these babies to come back to life and be all over him like this: SEE BELOW!

I'm thinking that would show his sorry arse!

I think this book was good, but so sad. I can't even image how the other books are going to begin or end. This is a very good concept of a book, but only if I can read all about some bad arse revenge in the other books :) I be loving some revenge!

Lola says

I received a copy in exchange for an honest review

I am a big fan of David Estes his books and the blurb of this book sounded really good and I couldn't wait to read it. I was lucky enough to receive a copy for review. Slip is a book about a dystopia society where someone has to die before a new one can be born and what happens when someone's Slip through that system.

The story is was really carries the most weight in this book. This book is plot-driven and it was the story that wanted to keep me reading. I read this book in a few days as I just wanted to keep reading and there where all these multiple point of views and I kept wondering how it was all connected, trying to make sense of it all. And then seeing them connecting later on in the story was awesome, it suddenly all came together. There are some great plot twists and revelations and I liked those scenes where everything suddenly started to make sense and get connected.

The first part of this story was a bit slow and confusing, later on I realized just how important that first part was, but when you read that part it just doesn't make sense. And I couldn't get a grip on the world or the character, I also felt a bit distanced from it all due to the way it was written. Luckily that all changes in the second part, the third person persective felt a lot more natural and things where starting to make sense, there was still a lot of mystery, but I could get a grip on the world and the characters. And the fist part suddenly makes sense when reading more.

While the story is what kept me reading, Slip also has a lot of interesting characters. It was a bit difficult to connect to them at first, as these characters live a hard live and they aren't the most likeble characters especially at first. When I got to know them better I did started to like them. Harrison was one of my favourite characters, he doesn't seem that interesting at first, but some events later on in the story made me really like him. Michael Kelly was by far the most interesting character in this book, he's in such a difficult position and I actually understood his descision and what he did. While it might not have been the best choice, he did what he thought was best and I could actually see the logic in what he did. Benson and his friends are nice characters as well, although I would've liked to get to know them better, but I am hoping that might happen in the next books in this series. There was a small bit of romance, but it wasn't that important, more a side plot. I did like how it was incorporated in the story, without getting too much weight, although sometimes it still felt a bit off considering all what was going on around them. I did think the romance was sweet and I would like to see it develop a bit more in the second book.

I liked the world building, although I myself think such a population controlling law would never get accepted. Such a system just doesn't work and people would rebel against if the government even would try to establish it. If you do accept that it's there and think form there on, most of the world building makes sense, but the way this world came to be just felt a bit off to me. I did like that there are some technological advancements that make it feel more real and futuristic, like the hoverboards and holo ads. It was a fun

addition to the otherwise sad and dark world building. There are also some newspaper articles at the end of some chapter which add to the world building as well and I really liked how these helped build the world and give an idea of what the world was like.

To conclude: I really enjoyed Slip. The story kept me reading and I just had to know what would happen next and how everything was connected. The first part of the story was a bit confusing and I felt a bit detached from the story, but that changed in the second part. This book is filled with interesting characters, although it was a bit hard to like them at first. The world building was done well and I liked the technological advancements like the holo ads. All in all a great start of a new series and I can't wait for the sequel Grip!

Kristy Jewel says

I received this book in exchange for an honest review. Honestly, anytime David Estes is willing to give me a book to read I'm going to have to jump at it. David is quickly becoming one of my favorite Young Adult Dystopian authors.

Slip is a great book with some extremely well written characters. I found myself engrossed in this novel and I really enjoyed the personality of all of the characters. It was nice to see so many different personality types in a book.

The main plot of the book is very different. It really made me realize how much I have missed unique Dystopian books. The idea behind this novel is interesting and it really makes you think. I loved the forgiveness elements in the story.

I definitely want to continue the series and may even purchase them on Amazon even though I'm strictly a Barnes and Noble girl. This is another book that I would love to put as a staff rec but unfortunately it's not available to order from the bookstore that I work at.

Michael Long says

In Slip, ice has melted and oceans have risen. In what was once the United States, only half the land remains and resources are scarce. A strict program is in place that mandates that a new person may only be born when someone else dies (called a death match). Unauthorized births are dealt with as soon as possible, and those exceeding age 2 are called "slips" and hunted down with high priority. In the midst of this is Benson, a slip who initially has no name, no friends, and spends his days in a secret house only seeing his mother and father. But the day eventually comes when he must set out on his own, or face death at the hands of his own society.

This is a story about what happens when society is faced with resource shortages and deems to try to control the population. To what extent will government go to control the population, and what happens to the value of human life? This is an excellent and fascinating exploration of the idea of population control, and what it means for the human spirit. And how one government can decide who lives and dies (a twin born last, a prisoner, a person with a coma, etc.). And how a government can decide that being born without permission is a crime punishable by instant execution while murderers, etc. get a fair trial.

The book is also ultimately about a single family, and what lengths they will go to save it. And what living in lies will do to such a family. You could even say that this is Benson's and Michael's story. Just what would a father do to protect his child? And how would that child cope growing up without everything that a normal child would take for granted?

All of the Kelly family were really well done and quite likeable. They all go through some difficult things and react in their own unique way. I also immensely enjoyed Benson's love interest and the romance part of the story. It was great seeing the two of them fleeing for their lives, bonding, and generally finding a kindred spirit.

I really like my antagonists to be nuanced, have a hint of humanity, and make me question which side they are on, and who is right. But here, one government thug was a literal psychopath and the other was very one-dimensional, making them both very unrelatable. There were however some intriguing rebels at the end who show a lot of potential.

Overall this was a really immersive, enjoyable story with a great idea and well-developed main characters. The plot moved along as smooth as ice, and it explored some neat themes. I really enjoyed it and think it is well worth a read for all fans of dystopia. I am greatly looking forward to the next book in the series.

I think this is more for an older YA audience. There is a lot of exploration of death, mental illness, psychopaths, sexual abuse, and more. However, clean language.

Note: I received an advance copy for free in exchange for an honest review.

Sarah says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Estes has proven he can really change things up as a writer. I've read a few of his other books and I was intrigued with how different this one was. Mostly male perspective. Third person. And a gnarly plot, different than any of his others. Oh, and I think that the writing here is some of his best yet. It's always neat to see how writers evolve.

Here's just a few of those great lines from the story. There were so many I stopped highlighting.

"Maybe you'll never be the same because of what happened to you, but maybe you're not supposed to be. Maybe you're better for having survived it.

"Trust should be natural, not forced. Do not give away your trust so easily."

"The world has no edge, Son. It's an eternal round, with good and evil in equal measure. It's a delicate balance where even the slightest acts can change everything."

Okay, so as I've mentioned, the plot is a bit gritty, but good. I like the idea of dystopian centered around population control. The world building is really well done. The characters, well they are mostly really great. I did have some moments where I wanted to chunk my phone at the ground. Just some really hard moments and tough time relating to some characters. Also, something that I should bring attention to is the graphic

nature of this novel. It was hard to read at times and I felt maybe crossed a line of YA. That's every author's right and there's no hard rules on it, but there were some things that kind of got to me. I will say that I'm a bit of a wimp. I think I would have preferred the reference to events, rather than witnessing them.

The pacing of this novel is really well done. I loved the chapter breaks that kept it moving fast.

Oh and the cover. I'm prone to cover love. I'll admit it. This is probably my favorite cover of any of Estes' books. So compelling.

And I love the names of the characters. That's a silly thing to love, but anyone who has tried to name a few dozen fictitious people will realize it's not easy business and a lot of thought goes into it. Really great names that are unique and easy to remember. Nothing generic. And I'm not just saying that because my maiden name is Luce. Okay, maybe a little bit.

Anyway, I would recommend this book to anyone who loves dystopian and sci-fi. Really fast read.

Hionia says

It's so sad that this book is not as known as The Hunger Games or Divergent... Because THIS BOOK deserves much more praise and a much bigger audience... This book deserves all the stars imaginable...

This book will certainly make you think. The author explores the difficult stage of life in a society so different from ours. You will realize, yet again, that you should be thankful for living in a world like ours, where moral values still coexist with the human race. This book did not make me dread the future, it made me think about ways that humanity could avoid future being dreadful.

This book will make you feel. You will be amazed, surprised, engrossed, concerned, anxious, inspired, excited, hopeful, determined, rebellious, upset, skeptical, doubtful, unsure, suspicious, tearful and utterly thrilled in overall. In this book there is no black and white as far as feelings are concerned...

Everything about this book is wonderful... The writing makes you crave the next page (and lose sleep as well), the characters are a beautiful company (most of them at least), the suspense of the plot and the

unexpected twists will have you on the ~~edge of your seat~~ floor, the world is so unimaginable yet so realistic and the list goes on... I really do not think a reader needs more than that.

As you may have already guessed, I highly suggest you pick this book up because you won't regret it.

🔊 A copy of this book was provided to me by the author in exchange for an honest review. Thank you for writing this book as well as giving me a chance to read it!

Chris Dietzel says

Note: I received a complimentary copy in exchange for an honest review.

Slip has an extremely intriguing premise: a dystopian world where strict population control is enforced via brutal means. Rather than take a satirical approach to the idea (2BRO2B by Vonnegut) or a sociological approach to it (Huxley's Brave New World), Estes takes the approach of a young adult quest. It has a well-crafted world, the full spectrum of characters, and a lot of action.

Two things in particular stood out for me when I read this. First, the fictional advertisements, which I loved. At the end of many sections there are advertisements in the same vein as if Big Brother were trying to sell you on an idea after chapters of 1984. They helped with the world-building and authenticity of the story. The second thing was the pace of the story telling. Estes does a terrific job of leading you on an adventure that is always taking twists and turns and never leaves you bored.

My only drawbacks were the development of some of the characters and the "now the real adventure begins" type of ending. I got the sense sometimes that characters were filling roles rather than having genuine motivations, and that made it difficult for me to connect with some of them. I also found myself hoping the ending would be different. I knew going into it that Slip was part of a trilogy but I felt like the stop was artificial, a way of saying "now the real story starts." Even so, these are two minor complaints.

I would fully recommend this to anyone who enjoys YA dystopian as well as anyone who enjoys action-packed quests. If that's you, you won't be disappointed.

Daniel says

3.5 stars.

*****WARNING- THIS BOOK MAY CONTAIN POSSIBLE TRIGGERS FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE.*****

Plot- 7.5/10

Characters- 8/10

Writing- 8.5/10

World Building- 8/10

TOTAL- 7.9/10

Review- Slip was the 9th David Estes book that I have read, and while it may not have been my favourite, I still enjoyed it. One thing I can say with certainty is that Slip is the most thought-provoking book that Estes has written yet. The novel stayed in my head long after I finished reading it.

Slip is set in a scary dystopian America where the population is controlled by equalizing the death rate and the birth rate. Prospective parents must get a Death Match and wait for him/her to die before giving birth to a child. Unauthorized children, called UnBees, or Slips, when older, are hunted down and killed, as well as their parents. Our lead character, Benson is a Slip who's in a bit of a predicament, because his father just happens to be the head of the department of population control (PopCon).

The plot in this book is a bit all over the place. It starts with Benson when he is a child, detailing how he grew up as a Slip in his household with his parents. I found that while this was interesting, it lasted for too long- the scenes reinforced the same points multiple times (Benson is a young Slip who doesn't know what's going on), so much so that I found myself slowly getting detached from the story. Then, we immediately skipped to Benson at 16 years old, which left quite a gap where we didn't get any information. I think the book could have benefited from a shorter introduction, and possibly some chapters giving us background of Benson's life between the ages of 8 and 16.

Once the plot got going though, it really got going. It took me forever to really get hooked into the story, but at some point just about halfway through, it finally grabbed me. Estes then went back to his roots from the Dweller series and provided a lot of suspense, engrossing action scenes, and surprising twists that I admittedly did not see coming. The latter half was plotted brilliantly, so I am indeed quite happy that I decided to persevere and push through the slow beginning. Patience is a virtue.

Much like with the story line, it took me ages to really start relating to the characters. I didn't really care for Benson as a kid. The only thing I ever learned about him through the entire first section was that he was a Slip who had no idea what was up and wanted to swim well to impress his father. But again, somewhere near the halfway mark, I began to warm up to him. In YA male characters, I tend to really love guy characters who strike the perfect balance between strength and sensitivity. In the latter half, Benson was the pillar of strength as he went through grueling ordeals and suffered through tremendous losses. But especially in scenes with Luce (a friend of Benson's), the author exposed his emotional and sensitive side. Benson had moments where he got embarrassed, and humiliated, and he had scenes where he was essentially brought back down to Earth and presented as just another genuine teenage boy. Here is one such scene.

"He pulls at one of the sleeves of his t-shirt, stretching the material until it starts to tear.

"Let me guess, you're picturing your shirt as the cyborg's face?" Luce says.

"Something like that," Benson says, although really he was hoping he'd be strong enough to rip off a strip so he wouldn't look like a pathetic wimp. Thankfully, the material tears away easily. It's not a perfect strip, but it'll do.

"Show off those guns," Luce says, gesturing to his now-exposed bicep.

"Benson wonders whether his face will stay warm for the rest of his life, however short that may be. Trying

to hide his embarrassment, he goes to work wiping away the dried blood around the wound and on her cheek."

Those moments, however innocuous they may seem, do wonders to help me feel something for a character. And luckily enough I was able to become more attached to Benson in the end.

Luce, while she's not a particularly stand-out character herself, serves two purposes. One is to serve as Benson's other half, thus aiding in his character development, and another is to bring up a dark theme that David tries to incorporate into his book. Luce is a girl who has been sexually abused in the past, and she retells those moments to Benson. I personally found this very moving, BUT there is the possibility that this could act as a trigger for real-life victims of sexual abuse. Now, each person will react to Luce's story in different ways, but I do feel an obligation as a reviewer to notify you all of the mature content that is presented in the book.

Harrison Kelly was probably one of my least favourite characters in the book for one reason. He was flawless. Nothing makes a character more gripping than a fatal flaw. And Harrison Kelly doesn't really have one. He's the perfect guy- good looks, good morals, good athleticism, highly intelligent, highly popular, etc. He's got it all. So it was a bit hard to relate to a perfect character. Hopefully in the next installment his character becomes a bit more gripping.

Michael Kelly, Benson's father, was a very compelling character. What are you supposed to do when you are the head of the PopCon department and your kid is a Slip? He constantly found himself surrounded by problems, and I really felt pity for him and his life. I thought he was a great addition to the story and also added a unique perspective from the government.

The most controversial character in this book would have to be the Destroyer. He works for the government and is highly aggressive- he is a ruthless young adult who is skilled in taking down Slips and UnBees and serves as one of the main antagonists in the book. But the most important thing about his character is his psychopathic sexual behaviour. The Destroyer looks at women like toys that he can play with, and whenever he gets angry at them, he physically takes advantage of them against their own will and abuses them until he is satisfied. While not overly graphic, these scenes are rather appalling. I understood that these scenes were used by the author as a hate tool against the Destroyer, and in that way, this strategy worked. But I can't say how other people, especially victims of sexual abuse, will be ok with it.

These scenes, while not extremely graphic, are, in my opinion, shocking enough that some victims of sexual abuse might be affected in a negative way. There is no warning about or mention of rape scenes in the description of the book or at the beginning. Unfortunately there is no book rating system like there is for movies, and especially since not too many people have read Slip, readers do not have a way to find out that there are possible triggers in this book except through these reviews. Hopefully potential readers will have a chance to read these reviews first so that they are aware of the content in this book. The last thing I would want is for an abuse victim to go into Slip thinking it's just a dystopian book and be blind-sided and hurt by some select scenes in this book.

The world building was really dark, and the writing did a good job of reflecting that. Typically the one complaint I've had about David's writing was that it was a little too peppy and happy. Here, he does a great job of keeping the tone dark and suspenseful. The world building was pretty good. I do have some questions though- how did the government determine that the ideal population was 504 million? It seems like an impossible task given the amount of resources you'd have to account for. How did the public accept the idea of killing unauthorized children that quickly? Why isn't an option to abort if a child is accidental mentioned?

Wouldn't that cut down the number of UnBees? Anyway, I hope some more secrets about the world building are exposed in Grip. I also noted some similarities between Slip and Unwind by Neal Shusterman- both feature a dystopian America where kids are persecuted regularly. As well, the political propaganda spread throughout the book is a clear homage to Shusterman and his Unwind series, as he does the same thing in that series.

Overall, Slip was a really thought provoking novel that, while it took a long time to get into, stayed in my head even when I wasn't read it. I do again caution that there is material in Slip that is not for everyone, and I sincerely hope that no readers are thrown off guard and are affected by it in a negative way. I hope to read the next installment soon.

Hayley says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

Actual rating 4.5

My biggest complaint while reading this book was that I didn't have enough free time to read it as fast as I wanted.

This is my second book by David Estes and yet again he has not disappointed. One of my peeves with dystopian (especially YA dystopian) is that the world building is usually quite thin or it gets thrown away midbook for the expected romance plot to take the lead. Not so with this book. Everything from the slang, the food, the dog walkers, to the education system all stayed true to the futuristic setting. There was no mistaking that we were in a more technologically advanced society yet you could easily imagine how our current society could evolve into the one in the book. It's because of the strong worldbuilding that the plot felt so believable.

It's the future and all our fears of global warming have come to pass. A huge percent of the world has been swallowed up by the rising sea levels and the only way for the remaining population to have a chance of survival is to maintain a strict, ideal population number. Or so they say. In comes Population Control (Pop Con), who terminate any children born outside the legal means as well as anyone helping them survive. Children under the age of two are called "UnBees" (unauthorized beings) and over the age of two "Slips".

In comes our main character who is a Slip himself although he doesn't know it. His father, the head of PopCon himself is doing all he can to keep the government from finding him while continuing to stain his hands with the blood of other children.

This book asked a lot of hard questions.

Is it okay to value the life of some over the lives of others? Is something automatically right because it's legal?

PopCon is ruthless in finding and killing the UnBees and the Slips who threaten the safety of the country. This book deals with a lot of heavy subjects and doesn't skirt the details of things like murder and sexual violence so it may not be suited for certain readers particularly anyone who may be triggered by such content. Estes doesn't skirt the hard truths in this book and you truly feel a sense of horror and danger while

reading.

There's quite a lot of character POV's to keep but with but they all added to the story and helped to weave the complex plot together. All the characters all felt like real people and there was none of the typical YA character pitfalls that I've come to expect and I think I can continue to count on this author to avoid them altogether. A couple characters I wish we had more of an insight into other characters (such as Michael Kelly and Harrison Kelly) as well as more page time for Benson's friends (who are great characters) but this isn't too large of a complaint.

I have to say that the first part of this book feels quite disjointed but that's largely due to its narrator. It's told mostly from the perspective of a young Benson who doesn't know anything about the world, who is or the truth of his living situation. We can feel him struggle to piece everything together and that makes the story feel confused. Once you get further into the book though, we learn along with Benson how crucial the events of the beginning are and how they serve to push the plot forward.

At the heart of this book is a story about a broken family trying. Everyone's falling apart in some way as their family falls apart (whether they realize it or not). It's heartbreaking watching everyone struggle to keep everything together with what little knowledge they have and while trying their best to do what is "right".

I'd also like to give the author a pat on the back for giving a solid (albeit not perfect) depiction of mental illness. The fact that we were given a look inside the character's head and that she was not reduced to a prop for the hero's tragic backstory was a good move. The illness is never romanticised or demonised either which I think is important.

I don't want to say much about the plot but I remember at one point I actually had to stop for a moment and breathe because my heart started beating so fast in relation to what was happening in the book! This is a world where there is real corruption, real fear and real death.

Highly recommended! I can't wait to read the next one.

Jenny says

What happens when the government has the authority to choose who can have children? What happens to the value of human life?

Welcome to the future United States of America, now called RUSA (Reorganized United States of America). Rising sea levels have shrunk down our land mass, and there is now a finite number of resources for its citizens. The government solves this problem by controlling the population. To get pregnant (legally), each couple receives what's called a "Death Match", and when that aging or sick person dies, they are allowed to procreate.

To enforce this law, a new government agency called Population Control (Pop Con) was created to round up any UnBees (unregistered children under the age of 2) and Slips (unregistered children over the age of 2) and their parents and terminate them.

While this book is about a futuristic society that values population and government control as its priority, it's also mainly a story about a torn apart family.

Michael Kelly is the head of Pop Con. He and his wife have a secret: their son, Benson is actually a Slip. He's been raised separate from his legal brother, Harrison, and neither boy knows about the other. Michael does everything he can to protect Benson, but he knows time is running out. Before long, he must send Benson out on his own or risk him getting caught and killed.

The first part of the book is mainly told from 5 to 8 year old Benson's POV. It does jump around a little to include two other children's POV who become very important to the story: Harrison and Domino Destovan. This part of the book leaves you more questions than answers, but it also provides a much needed understanding of Michael Kelly. I also love how well we get into Benson's head. His descriptions are right in line with a little boy who doesn't understand his world, but trying so hard to make sense of things. Then we jump ahead eight years later, and the story really takes off!

This story was an amazing read! I read it straight through in one day. I was totally sucked in from beginning to end!

Things I loved about Slip:

--**Benson and Lucy.** The main love interests in this story are so cute together, but also very real and relatable, too. I can't wait to read more about their budding relationship in the next book!

--**Check, Rod, and Gonzo.** Benson's best friends and gang for survival, along with Lucy and her younger brother. These three characters were loyal friends, but also a much needed comic relief at times.

--**Janice.** What can I say about Benson and Harrison's eccentric (okay, crazy) mother? I loved her! She provided quite a bit of comic relief, but at the same time, it was a kind of sad feeling, watching her struggle through their family's situation. It really brought to life some of the horrors of this kind of society.

--**The Ads and new articles that ended each chapter.** These usually related directly to what was currently going on in the story, and were filled with irony and sarcastic dark humor. Some examples:

Ready to start a family? Apply for an instant Death Match today!
Simply speak "Yeah Baby" into your holo-screen to get started. Do pregnancy the right way, the legal way.

Now available, reserve a Death Match up to ten years in advance! Simply speak „early Death Match? into your holo-screen, and prepare for your future.

This advertisement paid for by U-Bank, where it's YOU that matters.

--**The World Building.** The futuristic technology is awesome, and completely believable. This whole future is easy to believe as being our own. Chilling.

--**The Writing Itself.** Really beautiful writing. It paints a picture and makes the story come alive. One quote I especially loved:

"...her lips like an artist's brush on canvas as they caress his own."

--**The Terminology** The words "Life" and "Death" are used quite a bit. "Death Match" is the legal procedure for procreating, while "Lifecard" is what you use to pay with (like a debit card). All the terminology made sense, while poking fun at itself at the same time.

--**Well fleshed out characters.** With so many characters, this was pulled off really well. Mostly. I'll explain more below.

--**The Pacing.** This was a very INTENSE read. There was always something going on, with not much time to breathe. A real page-turner!

--**The Twist.** Totally did not see it coming. I'm betting you won't either!

--**The Feels.** This book was constantly bringing out some kind of reaction in me, whether it was heart pounding suspense, laughter, chills, and tears. A very emotional read, something that's hard to pull off in a sci-fi dystopian!

The only thing that I found lacking was the character development of two very important characters: Michael Kelly and Harrison Kelly. It was really hard to like Harrison, although I wanted to! Its easier to like Benson in the story, because he's the one who got shafted, and at times you almost feel like telling Harrison, "Oh, grow up!" But that isn't fair, as he's almost completely in the dark to what's really going on. Michael Kelly was just plain elusive at times. I was glad we get a view of him from Benson in the beginning of the book, which really helped that along. I'm hoping we get more in the sequel.

This did not affect the enjoyment of the read at all for me, though. And I can understand the choices the author made, as too much character development on such complex characters may have bogged things down and slowed down the pacing quite a bit. And I really like the pacing the way it is!

Slip is a complete full novel, but there is plenty of story left for its sequel. I can't wait to read it! The very last scene in this book gave me major goosebumps and chills! This was a 5 star read for me, and anyone who is into dystopians and sci-fi thrillers will love this one!

One last quote to leave you with:

"This life is too hard," he (Benson) says.

Harrison would normally laugh at a comment like that, but he can't manage it because of everything they've been through in the last day and a half. "And made harder because of all the damn idiots running around with guns," he says.

****A few BookTube friends and I also did a spoiler-free video review/chat on Slip! You can watch it [HERE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc2pi...):**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc2pi...>

Jeann (Happy Indulgence) says

This review appears on Happy Indulgence Books. Check it out for more reviews!

I have read and loved every single book by David Estes, so when an ARC came up for his newest dystopian, I jumped at the chance to read it.

Slip is a futuristic dystopian where the government uses extreme measures of population control due to the limited livable land left on Earth, and couples who want children need to apply for it. They will receive a

"death match" - someone who is likely to die in the near future, freeing up room for a new person. Those who don't abide by the system become criminals and get killed, and if they evade the government long enough, they become Slips.

Slip explores a relatively simple concept of population control, but thoroughly explores it through the fear and loss of one's family and survival. The stakes are high for Michael Kelly, the head of Population Control (or Pop Con) who is hiding his illegitimate child and Slip, Benson, and helps him to escape and start a new life. As they hope that no one discovers Benson, and Benson finds out more about his hidden past, they will struggle through tough decisions, attempting to hide and wrought the system and survive in a stringent and terrifying authoritarian world controlled by technology.

The world building was done really well as the concept of Slips and the iron fist of Pop Con is expanded through news articles and public commentary between chapters. Through these articles, you see how the government influences public opinion on what they report on, and how free speech is dampened and people are eliminated for stepping out of line. The futuristic technology used for surveillance and control was fascinating, from the black market wares to change a person's identity through their retinas, to the holo-ads which would tailor your ads based on your preferences and moods.

I did however, have trouble connecting with the characters where their motivations and actions didn't quite add up and they were highly complex. You've got Benson, the relatively innocent main character who is criminalised simply for being born. He's pretty much left to fend for himself in any way he can, and he pick pockets to survive. The whole time is conflicted with his past and whether he should tell his friends about it, instead of finding out who he really is. Benson seemed rather linear to me, even though he's a relatively complicated character. He does fall in love with the fiery Lucy, who has as many secrets in the past as he does. This is the first time David Estes has used a male lead and I personally think his female characters are well rounded and strong, while the male ones were convoluted.

Michael Kelly was also quite a complex, confusing character. He's the head of Pop Con, an organisation that does terrible things to control the population and keep them in line. We're meant to feel sympathetic for this man, as he regrets his actions yet feels he has no choice if he wants to protect his son. The only evil thing we see him do is issue a kill order for a Slip, and the rest he is protecting, saving, and feeling guilty for his actions. We know that he'll be making these types of decisions in the organisation every day, and I had many questions. How does he continue to torture himself everyday if he's actually a good man? Is a man behind many deaths to protect one innocent still justified? It was disappointing to see that his influence didn't end up helping much anyway.

Slip is a mature YA as there are some fairly evil sinister characters and dark scenes. The rogue 2nd in command Corrigan and his half robot soldier The Destroyer, are both twisted, evil villains that you will really hate. While Corrigan is basically a sadistic one-sided character, The Destroyer is a really disturbing, sexual predator and murderer who is a classic psychopath. The book features some pretty dark and disturbing scenes and thoughts from his perspective.

Slip explores a unique concept of controlling a population in a futuristic world, with some highly complex characters and great world building. This is the first time David Estes has written in third person perspective between multiple characters, as well as the first time he's narrated with male leads. While I found it hard to connect to some of them, I still really enjoyed the unique characters and motivations, especially the insane Janice. Lovers of dystopians will enjoy this unique concept and I look forward to seeing it expanded more in the next book.

Karen's Library says

I received an ARC from the author in exchange for an honest review.

When I found out that David Estes was writing a new book series, this time a futuristic sci-fi dystopian, I was thrilled as the genre is my favorite and Estes is a superb story teller.

Estes, as usual, has written another amazing tale! This new series is set in a future St. Louis. Because of global catastrophe, the land masses have shrunk and there is only enough room in the Reorganized United States of America for a limited population. Births are regulated and unauthorized humans over the age of two are called Slips. The penalty of illegal Slips and their parents is death.

This chilling future is told from the point of view of a family torn apart. Estes has masterfully weaved together another exciting story full of twists and turns that I never saw coming, as usual for this author. There is happiness, sorrow, pain, laughter, love and evil all interwoven together to give the reader one heck of a ride!

I can't wait to continue on this journey with Estes and see where his imagination takes us next. This is my favorite of all of Estes' books to date!!
