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History 204

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Bright Lights Big Cities

The coma baby in the novel is a metaphor for the values and attitudes of the yuppie generation of the 1980’s. It was as if the mother’s life was insignificant as long as the baby survived. Like when Mclnerny has the dream about the coma baby in which the baby doesn’t want to be born because it has everything it needs inside the womb and if it is born it would have to fend for itself. Americans, during the last part of the twentieth century were obsessed with themselves and their success. However, that success only came on the backs of their parents and grandparents. Young Americans had been coddled and listened to like no other generation before. And although they considered themselves self sufficient and successful, they continued to rely on the safety net provided by their parents.

I liked the book. At first it seemed a little confusing but when I got used to it I began to enjoy it because it was an interesting read and I felt that I was able to know and understand the characters in the story. I also felt that it was very realistic. I have family members who can relate to the main character’s experiences better than I can. However, I have had many conversations with my parents, who were in their twenties during the eighties and they know individuals who lived the same kind of life as the main character. At the end of the novel, it becomes clear that he has turned a corner and has the power to heal himself and change his life. I have known people who have not found the strength to “learn everything all over again,” as he does. The novel offers everyone who suffers emotionally, the possibility for change.