Unexpected Changes

When I purchased *Expecting Adam* on Sunday night, I never dreamed that I would actually finish it by today, but I could not put it down (I read half of it the first night). Before Martha Beck even knows for certain she is pregnant, and her new baby has Down syndrome, she begins to notice changes in herself. Martha and her husband John are both in the doctorate program at Harvard, and already have a young daughter, and the pregnancy is looked down up by most of their colleagues, most people encouraging abortion when the baby is diagnosed with Down syndrome.

The book, for me, brought up questions of medical ethics after I realized the changes Adam brought to their lives. They were both accustomed to constant laboring over their studies, and Adam made them both realize what is really important in life, loving and caring for the people most important to you. Because abortion is so common, especially among babies with birth defects, many people ignore the benefits of continuing pregnancies. Just because the technologies are available, does not mean that they should be utilized, something that is commonly forgotten with the abundance of technology which surrounds us. I personally am very pro-choice, and this is the first argument that has ever swayed my beliefs towards the benefits of keeping children, especially ones with known birth defects.

It also tied into the course as I learned about the amniocentesis procedure she has done to test for birth defects in her baby, which we talked about in class today. Also I learned to factor in medical faults, such as when the first blood tests she received for
identifying defects showed problems, the actual possibility she might have a problem when compared to the false positive results of the procedure.

I was really moved by the changes Adam brought to their lives, and it broadened my perspective on abortion and children with Down syndrome, and it made me realize that often times things happen for a reason. If Martha had aborted Adam their lives would have taken a very different course, but somehow she sensed she needed him in their lives. He brought them new challenges which they never expected even after the challenges at Harvard, and taught them more about life than three degrees from Harvard ever could.