Web page design project

Task
Your task is to write/design a web essay on a topic arising from the readings and discussions we have been considering in the first part of the course. As in a regular essay assignment, your piece should have a point to make (a thesis) and should support it with evidence. The difference is that a web page does not have to follow the usual essay format but can be more creative in the way it presents its case. You should attempt to use the technology to its best advantage. I leave it to you to think how that might best be done, given whatever topic you pick. However, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Do not simply provide a list of links. This is to be a web-enhanced piece of writing. The hyperlinks you include should be for supporting material (either something you are using or evaluating or that provides evidence for some claim you are making.)
- Evaluate the source material. You should have pre-filtered the literature and your page should provide as authoritative material as possible, letting the reader know what is trustworthy and what may not be.
- Do not rely solely on materials that are posted on the web; some of the best information from scientific or scholarly sources may only be found in books or professional journals. These should of course be referenced in a bibliography.
- You should include at least one graphic item on your page. Graphic items should in some way add to the content of the piece and should not just be decorative. However, you should of course consider aesthetics in the placement of graphic material; the page should look professional.
- Pay attention to basics of page design. Include a descriptive title. Check that the layout is readable in a variety of browsers. Include your name and page creation date at the bottom.

Possible topics:
- The Technological Singularity
- The promise and the hopes of biotechnology
- Rational and irrational fears regarding biotechnology
- The definition of life and what difference it makes (scientifically and socially)
- An introductory guide to some genetic disease and the concerns of those with it
- The genetic commonalities between humans and other animals
- The moral and social issues involved in genetic testing
- The hereditarian fallacy
- Nature? Nurture?

Or take some chapter from Ridley and reflect upon the topic and issues he raises there (e.g., language as an instinct; "scientific Calvinism"; genetics and forensics). See me if you want to float some particular idea.

Assessment
This assignment aims to increase your knowledge about the area and to help you develop a useful skill. Your completed project should demonstrate your accomplishment of both. You should thoroughly research whatever topic you pick so that you are in a position to clearly and concisely explain it. Essentially, you should have "pre-digested" the material and put it in a form so that someone reading your page will come away with a good understanding of the answer to the question. The skill you are developing is how to create a web page in html and post it on the
web. 75% of the grade will be based upon the content, 25% on the mechanics and layout of the page.

Length: When printed, it should be approximately equivalent to a 3-4 page paper.

Due: February 25th. The page must have successfully uploaded to your AFS space and you must have sent me an e-mail with the URL before class. You should also turn in a printout of the posted page at the beginning of class. (Leave yourself enough time to do this!)

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