Assignment #2

1) READ "Federer as Religious Experience" by David Foster Wallace. Wallace (1962-2008) was a popular and influential novelist and essayist. Notes:
   o This essay on Federer was written in 2006. While Federer's style of play is essentially the same today, he is not as dominant a player as he was then.
   o You'll notice that this essay has a lot of footnotes—a characteristic of Wallace's style. DO read them—they are not insignificant.

   FOR CLASS DISCUSSION: What does Wallace mean by comparing watching Federer play to a "religious experience"? What are some of the ideas in his essay that you find interesting? Why? What do you think of Wallace's descriptions of tennis being played—can you see it? Does the language seem too technical to you? Why do you think Wallace wrote this piece?

2) WRITE: Our reading and class discussion thus far should be eliciting some memories or thoughts about your own experiences as a player and/or as a fan. Write 2 vivid ¶ s about 1 experience that you think would be fun to try to capture in words. Limit what you write to one event as a player (anything from playing catch with your dad to your first long-distance run to a high-stakes game) or one experience watching/reacting to a favorite player in any sport. Make these ¶ s descriptive, the way Updike and Wallace make their essays descriptive.

   HINT: Writing descriptively doesn't mean "pile on the adjectives and adverbs"; it means choosing verbs—action words—that deliver specific images; using specific rather than general nouns; and finding fresh images, metaphors, similes to convey the effect or feeling of what you have experienced.

Format for homework

Homework should be typed, double spaced. Upper left hand:

Your name
HW#2
Date
[Don't forget to change the date and number!]

Title [centered]

Text starts here …

21W.015 Writing and Rhetoric: Writing about Sports
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