

## First Paper Assignment—JRN589, Spring 2024

Write a paper of six (6) to eight (8) pages in which you answer the following question:

**Instructions:** This paper is worth 20 percent of your grade. Papers should be word processed and *double spaced*. **They are due by 11:59 p.m., Sunday, March 10 via Blackboard. Please do not email me the papers – submit them via through Blackboard.** This is an individual assignment that should be originally yours.

I prefer you use APA style, but I'm not a stickler so long as you a.) CITE SOURCES and b.) include a list of references in a *consistent manner*.

This paper should cover the readings and discussions pertaining to the readings of Fulcher, Ehrenreich, Kendall, Jhally, Bellamy and Vande Berg & Trujillo, as well as presentations and the documentary "Inequality for All." (NOTE: READ [THE GRADING RUBRIC](#) before you start writing -- I tell you how to get an A. I can promise you will not do well on this assignment if you revert to unoriginal, SportsCenter/sports talk radio-type banter, lack original thought, or leave it to the devices of ChatGPT.)

**Topic:** Jhally, Bellamy, Ehrenreich and Kendall are concerned with questions of *power* in the relationships between sports, media, corporations and consumers/audiences. Fulcher's analysis of capitalism, as well as Bellamy's and Vande Berg & Trujillo's analyses of the sports media helped to define and analyze those relationships.

During the 2023 National Football League season, fans – as they always are in the brutal game – were faced with the images of gruesome injuries. As the saying goes, though, "next man up," and men like Zach Wilson, Jake Browning and Aidan O'Connell were forced to step up. But, when Minnesota Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins – much like Dallas Cowboys QB Dak Prescott in 2020 -- suffered a gruesome injury and, as he was carted off the field in tears, the genius of football trucked "onward," as it was described in [this 2020 New York Times piece](#) – which, of course, also brought up issues surrounding COVID. In 2024, like in 2020, fans went about experience watching the game, listening to Nantz and Romo, drinking beer, playing fantasy, betting, attending games and rooting.

As we know, though, it's not just "the genius of football" that allows this; it is also 1.) the division of labor, 2.) the capitalist means of production and 3.) the sports media complex.

Describe how these mechanisms are at play in the "next man up" mantra. Who are the winners and the losers? What are the power dynamics? What would Marx make of the scene of Cousins being carted off – even as his contract and status of his job are debated? Offer specific examples.

I will be reading and evaluating the soundness and thoroughness of your case, the reflection of your knowledge of capitalism and the sports media complex, as well as your writing prowess (clarity, sentence structure, punctuation and grammar. Hint: PROOFREAD your work.)