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*\* At the time of the publishing of this article, Jenner still wanted to be referred to as Bruce.*



Media in the US have been flooded with thousands of articles on Bruce Jenner's transition. He wants to be referred to as 'he' for now. The media spectacle reached its peak with Jenner's two-hour interview which attracted over [17 million viewers](#) and numerous social media posts expressing admiration for his 'brave and heroic' public stance

[The Huffington Post](#) described his coming out as 'a breakthrough in our culture'.

But how Jenner's coming out will affect [trans\\*](#) communities, especially the way media portray them? Will his public exposure in the setting of celebrity reality shows' help the cause of transgender people without slipping into a danger of being commercialised and capitalised on?

Jenner was an athlete who set a world record in the decathlon at the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal. He also appeared in several movies, series and TV shows including recently, the reality show of his ex wife's family "[Keeping Up with the Kardashians](#)".

According to the mainstream media outlets, Jenner seems to be the new spokesperson for the transgender community, not least due to the planned eight-part documentary series that will give insight into Jenner's transition. [Daily Mail](#) reports that the series 'will document Bruce's intimate story and the cameras will follow him as he seeks a new life as a woman.' The article further quotes [TMZ](#), claiming that 'the goal of the 8-part series is to educate people and provide hope and inspiration for those going through the challenges Bruce has faced.'

If there is one thing that the trans\* community does not need more of, it is more sensationalising media attention. [In an earlier article on transgender British MP candidate Emily Brothers](#), MDI has explored the highly problematic dynamic of exposing transgender individuals to intense public scrutiny, thereby exoticising and publicly consuming their bodies. A TV documentary on Jenner's transition will reify this social practice and once again subject trans\* bodies to public access and exploit trans\* experiences for high TV ratings.

While there are thousands of articles to be found on Jenner's transition and the [Kardashians' reaction](#) to it, [the murder of trans woman Vanessa Santillan](#) in London does not attract nearly as much attention. Similarly, transgender inmates' [fight for medical care across the U.S.](#) seems to be swept under the rug, attracting little to no media attention at all. Instead, the public is fed with images of the [Louboutin stilettos that Khloe Kardashian bought for Jenner](#) and Jenner's ['long-sleeved black-and-white dress, with a slit from the knee to the hem'](#).

This emphasis is reflective of what the mainstream media landscape prioritises regarding reporting on the trans\* community. The transition of a privileged, white trans\* person seems to be more appealing than the harsh reality of marginalised trans\* individuals.

In an article on [Fusion.net](#), the author conducts interviews with two trans\* activists of colour on the 'media circus' around Jenner. The author considers the media attention on Jenner to be 'a magical fantasy based on a very wealthy, able-bodied, American, and white experience that isn't the case for many of us who struggle for survival and justice as transgender people of color.' One of the founders of [Trans Women of Color Collective](#) Katrina Goodlett further notes: 'Bruce's story is based on privilege. Despite Bruce's internal truth seeking, [Jenner] will have access to health care, housing, jobs etc.'

To hype Jenner's public transition as the end of transphobia and the radical beginning of a more inclusive society is like arguing that racism has ended with the election of the first Black president of the United States Barack Obama. It just doesn't work that way. In fact, this line of argument has quite the opposite effect: It becomes even more difficult for marginalised people to articulate injustice and discrimination, as the mainstream public discourse assumes that we now live in an open, egalitarian society that is free of any discrimination, thereby even further silencing critical voices.