

Going to Trinidad

author: Martin J. Smith, Marci Bowers MD - afterword

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Synopsis

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For more than four decades, between 1969 and 2010, the remote former mining town of Trinidad, Colorado, was the unlikely crossroads for approximately 6,000 medical pilgrims who came looking for relief from the pain of gender dysphoria. The surgical skill and nonjudgmental compassion of surgeons Stanley Biber and his transgender protégé Marci Bowers not only made the phrase "going to Trinidad" a euphemism for gender confirmation surgery in the worldwide transgender community, but also turned the small outpost near the New Mexico border into what the *New York Times* once called "the sex-change capital of the world".

Award-winning writer Martin J. Smith spent two years researching not only the stories of Trinidad, Biber, and Bowers, but also tracking the lives of many transgender men and women who sought their services. The result is *Going to Trinidad*, which focuses on the complicated pre- and post-surgery lives of two Biber patients - Claudine Griggs and Walt Heyer - who experienced very different outcomes. Through them, Smith takes listeners deep into the often mystifying world of gender, genitalia, and sexuality, and chronicles a fascinating segment of the human species that's often misunderstood by those for whom gender remains a mostly binary male-or-female equation.

Reader's comments

comment 1: Emily Carter

Going to Trinidad by Martin J. Smith, with an afterword by Marci Bowers MD, is an insightful exploration of the nuanced and often complex world of gender reassignment surgery. This book delves into the transformative journeys of individuals who seek to align their physical identities with their true selves, centering on the small town of Trinidad, Colorado, known as the 'Sex Change Capital of the World.' Smith's narrative is both compassionate and informative, seamlessly weaving personal stories with broader discussions on gender identity, societal perceptions, and medical advancements. He brings to light the challenges and triumphs faced by those undergoing gender transition, as well as the dedication of the medical professionals involved. The afterword by Dr. Bowers, a renowned gender surgeon, adds a layer of authenticity and expertise, enriching the reader's understanding of the medical and emotional facets of gender reassignment. Going to Trinidad is a compelling read that encourages empathy and understanding, making it an essential addition to conversations about gender and identity. Smith's balanced approach offers a respectful and enlightening perspective, making this book a valuable resource for anyone seeking to deepen their knowledge of transgender experiences.

â€” Emily Carter (2026-05-30 16:49:48)