



The University of
the West Indies
Institute for Gender and
Development Studies



CARIBBEAN REVIEW OF GENDER STUDIES

A Journal of Caribbean Perspectives on Gender and Feminism

Issue 6 – 2012

The Depths of Rose, ‘A Wind that Rose’: A Woman called Feroza Rose Mohammed

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Abstract

First they came for the communists, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a communist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me (Pastor Martin Niemöller [1892–1984], as quoted in Mohammed 2009).

“Speak Out” against injustices is the doctrine that guides Feroza Rose Mohammed, a woman many know simply as Rose. It is this belief that brought her the glare of publicity and created a storm of controversy in October 2007, when she protested on Eid day against the placing of wooden barriers to separate men and women at the TML mosque. The words of Muhammad Ali (1942-), “service to others is the rent you pay here for your room on earth”, underpin the philosophy of Rose as wife, mother and citizen. Guided by the dictates of her faith, Islam, and the admonitions of the *Qur'an*—“You are the best people ever raised for the good of mankind because you have been raised to serve others; you enjoin what is good and forbid evil and believe in Allah.” (3:111)—she firmly believes in the promotion of good which would lead to the improved welfare of Trinidadian society. If one is to be defined by labels, Rose would want the following ascribed to her: Muslim, Trinidadian, passionate, simple, humble, service-oriented, empathetic and tolerant. Most of all, Rose embodies the elusive spirit of the transformative leader.