

## ABSTRACT

Rising into Artistry and Personhood:  
Trinidad and Tobago Women's Literature 1900-1990

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This dissertation examines the women's creative writing of Trinidad and Tobago for the period 1900-1990 in light of the newly emerging school of Caribbean Feminist Criticism. The approach to the substantial body of literature under study has been an exploratory, developmental one, with the purpose of tracing the growth of the women's literary movement, identifying and analysing the nature of the writers' literary consciousness in general, but with specific reference to their perceptions and presentations of femininity. The contention throughout has been that women's literary consciousness is an evolutionary one; its progressive unfolding is indicative of the changes in the writers' inner perceptions of themselves as Caribbean women and their broader world view. The evolution of the writers' feminist awareness has taken its distinctive character and shape from the cultural, ethnic, political, economic and social circumstances that define the diverse experiences of being woman. The study concludes that a correlation exists between the developing aesthetic patterns of artistry and the search for individual autonomy or personhood, and that a feminist/humanist agenda has evolved that has a broader political commitment to the liberation of Caribbean/New World peoples.