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***Purity of Heart and Strength of Will:* The Role of Female Teachers in the Modern Sports Movement**

The first struggle between the sexes in modern, middle-class Denmark was in the fight for women's education in the last decades of the nineteenth century. One of the first vocational training courses to which women were admitted was teachers' training. The focus of this paper is the role and significance of female teachers in the emergence of the modern Danish sports movement.

Late nineteenth-century educational reforms prepared a group of women with a belief in their own significance for their fellow human beings. Their educational project was in line with the "modern project" spirit of the time, and linked a philosophy of "purity, discipline and industriousness" to a special focus on "Purity of heart and strength of will." This focus was apparent in the different attitudes of female teachers to women's physical education, gymnastics, and sport, and in their belief that the female body had to be disciplined in different ways than male body. Most often, scholars have focused on the emancipatory significance of female teachers' role in the development of women's sport. But some of these teachers were among the most restrictive with regards to women's participation in competitive sport. This paper examines these complexities by considering the following questions: What contribution did female teachers make to the modern sports movement? Who were they? What were their views of women? How did they use their power and professional success to influence women's opportunities in physical education, gymnastics, and sport? And, what were their attitudes on the issue of sexual equality?

The study attempts to contribute to our understanding of the significance of women's sport in the broader processes of modernization/civilization and 'sportification'. It is based on primary archival sources from Denmark, but also makes comparisons with developments in other countries.