



# Democracy and the Rise of Women's Movements in Sub-Saharan Africa

*Kathleen M. Fallon*

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Despite a late and fitful start, democracy in Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe has recently shown promising growth. Kathleen M. Fallon discusses the role of women and women's advocacy groups in furthering the democratic transformation of formerly autocratic states. Using Ghana as a case study, Fallon examines the specific processes women are using to bring about political change. She assesses information gathered from interviews and surveys conducted in Ghana and assays the existing literature to provide a focused look at how women have become involved in the democratization of sub-Saharan nations. The narrative traces the history of democratic institutions in the region -- from the imposition of male-dominated mechanisms by western states to latter-day reforms that reflect the active resurgence of women's political power within many African cultures -- to show how women have made significant recent political gains in Ghana and other emerging democracies. Fallon attributes these advances to a combination of forces, including the decline of the authoritarian state and its attendant state-run women's organizations, newly formed constitutions, and newfound access to good-governance funding.

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