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# **Social justice for ourselves: getting in and getting on in the legal professions**

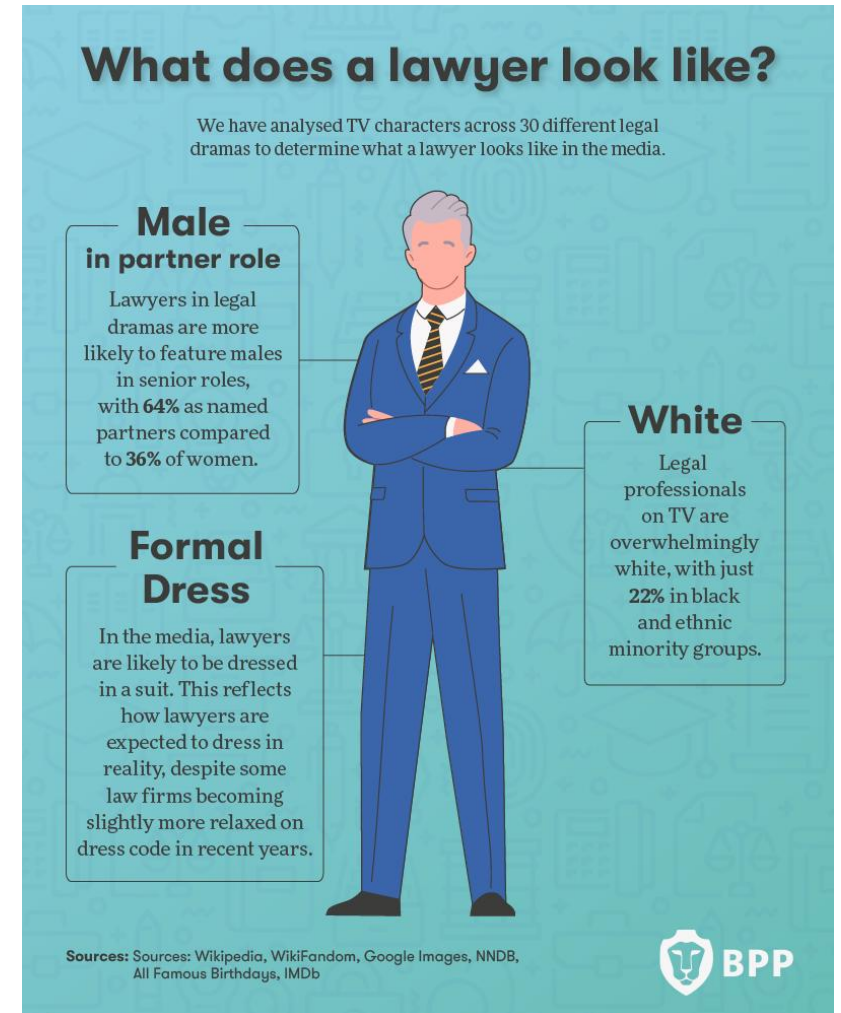
**Jane Ching, Professor of Professional Legal Education**

... 'access to justice' means the equal chance to study and practice law. ... access to justice correlates with access to the profession ... because in a just society there should be no discriminatory barriers, and the legal profession ... should reflect society as it is composed of diverse constituencies and groups.

# Bridging perspectives?



Natalie Braber, 'Most People Still Think Barristers Need to Sound Posh, Our Research Shows – but Accent Discrimination Serves No One' (*The Conversation*, 13 May 2024)  
<<http://theconversation.com/most-people-still-think-barristers-need-to-sound-posh-our-research-shows-but-accent-discrimination-serves-no-one-216032>> accessed 5 December 2025.



Helen Greaney, 'What Does a Lawyer Look Like According to TV? New Study Reveals All' (*Law News*, 21 September 2022)  
<<https://www.lawnews.co.uk/legal-insight/what-does-a-lawyer-look-like-according-to-tv-new-study-reveals-all/>> accessed 5 December 2025.

I think empathy is very important because that builds trust between the client and the barristers themselves. You understand where they're coming from, you understand how they grew up, you understand their situation ...

*A Lawyer Looks Like Me | Ladi Olukoyede's Story* (Directed by BPP Group, 2023) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWR9DoYUhs8>> accessed 5 December 2025.

The reality with stop-and-search is that it disproportionately affects people that look just like me and I felt like I was being entirely missed from the debate, ...

Nottingham Trent University, 'Christian Weaver' (*Nottingham Trent University*, No date) <<https://www.ntu.ac.uk/study-and-courses/courses/our-students-stories/law/christian-weaver>> accessed 5 December 2025.

[I]f we want a more diverse judiciary to result in fairer decision-making for *all* members of the community, to achieve ‘equal justice for all’, the opportunities must be grasped when they do arise. This will require ... positively supporting and encouraging substantive diversity. And it will require the appointment of judges who have the commitment and courage to make a difference.

# Advancing change?



- Redistribution (of opportunities) = distributive/affirmative action
- Getting in and getting on
- Recognition (of difference) = transformative action
- Who do we need to persuade?

Imagine a legal sector where every client feels represented and every employee feels valued.

Patrick Herald, 'Five Reasons Why Diversity and Inclusion Are Important in Law Firms' (*Legal Futures*, 25 July 2024) <<https://www.legalfutures.co.uk/blog/five-reasons-why-diversity-and-inclusion-are-important-in-law-firms>> accessed 5 December 2025

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