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James Allsop

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Daniel Reynolds and George Williams

In Australia, the Bar has long prided itself on its meritocracy. At the heart of the idea is the proposition that, regardless of gender, race or background, anyone should be able to succeed at the Bar provided that their work is of a high enough standard. This article presents a statistical analysis of appearances by barristers before the High Court of Australia to show that this ideal is not being realised. The data shows that female barristers are systematically under-briefed for matters before the nation’s highest court, and that even when women are briefed, they are disproportionately less likely to be given a speaking part. 483

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