

Raj Anand discusses unconscious bias with the Toronto Star

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WeirFoulds partner Raj Anand discusses unconscious bias in the article “A frustrating refrain: ‘You don’t look like a lawyer’” published in the February 19, 2019 edition of the *Toronto Star*.

In the article, several lawyers discuss the issue of unconscious bias that they face in the practice of law.

According to Raj, who co-chaired the law society’s Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees Working Group, the issue of unconscious bias, and people assuming who are lawyers and who aren’t, was something heard “loud and clear” during his group’s study.

“I think it’s part of a culture change,” he said. “One would hope that both court offices and judges would clearly recognize that we’re dealing with a changing demographic, and more than half of students graduating from law school are women, and something like 25 to 30 per cent are racialized in Ontario. That obviously plays a role in who appears in court.”

Raj told the *Toronto Star* that education and greater awareness for the judiciary and court staff could be helpful – something that his group recommended be done for lawyers.

According to the Law Society of Ontario, which regulates the legal profession in the province, about 43 per cent of lawyers are women. And the final report released in 2016 from the law society’s Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees Working Group noted that the proportion of racialized lawyers in Ontario had doubled between 2001 and 2014, from 9 per cent to 18 per cent.

[Please click here to read the full article by Jacques Gallant.](#)