

Raj Anand responds to Globe & Mail opinion piece on the 2020 anti-racism movement

July 21, 2020

Raj Anand, WeirFoulds Partner and former chief commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, sent a letter to the *Globe & Mail* in response to the July 11, 2020 opinion piece by Marcus Gee, titled "[These Revolutionary Times Have A Downside](#)".

The letter is copied below and was [published](#) by the *Globe & Mail* on July 18, 2020:

[Mr. Gee's opinion piece misses the point in lamenting the frustration that minorities experience when the existence and impact of racism continues to be the subject of debate. Leave aside virulent acts of hatred for the moment.]

Racism, in its most common forms, means systems, policies and attitudes that create unfair disadvantages for people because of the colour of their skin. Cognitive studies of the brain and the way we think have demonstrated that every one of us – white, Black, brown – has unconscious biases based on our upbringings.

Science has proven that this affects the way we make decisions about hiring and promotion, entitlement to government or other benefits and arrests, charges and sentences in criminal cases. It also affects the way our “fast brain” reacts when we hear a particular accent or see a person of a particular race in the course of daily activities. It is a reality in Canada, where racialized people have lived these experiences since they were born or arrived in this country.

Progress begins with the recognition and elimination of these everyday human reactions, so that life is more fair and equal for all of us. Frustration, fear and suspicion of motives arise when people are unable to reach this starting point.

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