

Featured in The Globe and Mail: Frank Walwyn's reflections on his own success as Black Lives Matter protests swept the world last year

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Frank Walwyn, Partner at WeirFoulds LLP was featured in *The Globe and Mail's* article of January 4, 2021 titled, "Are the Walwyns change leaders or exceptions in the legal world?", by Sean Fine.

In the article, siblings Frank and Donna Walwyn discuss the anomaly of their own success in the legal field, and on the leadership that they believe is needed to bring about widespread change.

After reflecting on last year's protests for racial quality they have come to believe that the exceptions of their success don't change the world.

The article goes on to speculate if there is a formula by which other talented Black individuals and others from racialized communities can be recognized, supported and developed on Bay Street.

Frank explains that some of the elements of such a formula can be found in his own experience at WeirFoulds: "It is so important to be given access to client meetings where you learn how clients interact in business transactions, interact with their professional advisers... It's unquantifiable how important that is. I was also given access to files that paid, that allowed you to learn about business, and get billable hours in, which in a Bay Street firm is critical to your value to the firm."

Frank continues, "There's so much going on in the world right now about this George Floyd situation, the 'I can't breathe' situation... Well, I can tell you, figuratively, on Bay Street, that happens every single day with associates in law firms. When I get calls from associates who are struggling, the figurative expression is 'I can't breathe.' And they can't breathe because they're not getting access to the types of files, to the experiences that would allow them to succeed, to breathe, to survive. Donna added that "a response to a systemic problem has to be systematic, intentional, prolonged."

And that is the stated goal at WeirFoulds. Last month, WeirFoulds published a statement on its website acknowledging that it is guilty of systemic discrimination and setting out a structure for addressing it. [Click here](#) to read the full statement.

Managing Partner Wayne Egan commented, "I think the change in approach and mindset is massive." One sign is that the firm has taken on four new equity partners, three of them racialized lawyers. Another sign is that it is trying to jettison the idea of "fit," which Wayne and Raj Anand (Partner at WeirFoulds and Co-Chair of the firm's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee) say leads to hiring people who look like those who do the hiring.

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