

## KAMLOOPS **THIS WEEK**

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### Where women go, world follows

By **MELISSA LAMPMAN** Staff reporter

Women's rights will lead the future of human rights issues.

If we can get those right, then the rest will follow, said lawyer and former judge Bill

**Sundhu** at a Philosopher's Cafe Tuesday night.

It was one of a series of cafes sponsored by the Kamloops branch of the Council of Canadians at the Smorgasbord Deli.

**Sundhu**, one of two dozen lawyers worldwide accepted into the prestigious human-rights law program at Oxford University, eloquently spoke about defining and defending human rights since the inception of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 60 years ago — and where the world might be headed looking into the future.

One of the most important issues that has "enriched and deepened the debate" is the attention being given to women's rights because it's not only that these problems — like education, poverty and illness — "adversely affect half the world's population, they affect everyone," he said.

Shining the spotlight on women's issues lead to the UN Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women treaty — which has had more ratifications than to any other human rights treaty.

He said people must understand the social and economic conditions that characterize women's conditions around the world. Violations of these rights usually happen to those who have little economic, social and political power — and often those people are women and girls.

Changing women's issues creates changes in social, economic and political life, since those rights are all still interdependent. Around the world, changes need to be made in women's rights, civil issues, political rights and economic and social rights, **Sundhu** said.

"And the problems are enormous and systemic."

Along with women's rights, there have been a number of other rights that have come to the forefront during the last 60 years — and they all deserve equal attention, he said.

"There is a consensus that all rights are indivisible, inter-related and interdependent — there's not an ascendancy of rights. The general thrust of the



MELISSA LAMPMAN/KTW

**Bruce Campbell (left) of the Kamloops branch of the Council of Canadians listens as lawyer Bill Sundhu discusses human rights worldwide to a packed audience at a Philosopher's Cafe Tuesday night. Campbell was moderator for the event, which was sponsored by his branch.**

rights movement is that all rights are inter-related, there is no primacy of a core group of rights, all of them stand on equal footing.”  
He said this equality of rights is key as we look to the future of human rights and how it will evolve.

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