

Speakers debate same-sex marriage in UC

Despite different beliefs, debaters encourage students to respect each others' views

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Staff Writer

On Monday night two speakers, with different views on same-sex marriage, urged students to be open to other people's opinions.

Maggie Gallagher, a national spokesperson against same-sex marriage, said, "If we are going to change a historical social institution, then we need to be pretty confident that the debate takes in as many views as possible before any conclusions are formed."

Gallagher, Institute for Marriage and Public Policy president, was joined on stage by John Corvino, Wayne State University philosophy professor and pro-same-sex marriage activist.

Both speakers enforced the idea that people should be respectful of each argument presented in the same-sex marriage debate.

"Serious public issues require civil public debate," Corvino said.

They spoke in front of more than 150 students and members of the public in the UC auditorium in a debate organized by the Issues Committee.

Corvino was first to present his views, announcing that he had five main points that outlined his argument.

"Giving same sex marriage to gay people does not take it away from straight people," Corvino said.

He added that marriage should be seen as a beautiful part of human experience. It bonds people together through a wonderful union that should be able to be experienced by everyone, including gay people.

This union also brings with it legal rights such as insurance, residency and the laws surrounding separation.

Corvino then noted that marriage is good for society, creating security and safety in communities as well as in households.

"Happy, stable couples make happy, stable neighborhoods," Corvino said.

He also noted that this stability provides children with security as well as rights.

His final argument stemmed from the idea that giving marriage to same-sex couples would have an adverse effect on other



Tara Sripunvoraskul • The Daily Beacon

Maggie Gallagher and John Corvino speak during a Gay Marriage debate in the UC auditorium on Oct.10. The debate's goal was to increase student awareness on the subject and to encourage students to be open to other opinions.

social issues.

Corvino presented the view that same-sex marriage should not affect what the church or straight couples do, lend strength to the argument presented by polygamists or take children away from heterosexual couples.

"Same-sex marriage does not take children away from loving heterosexual couples who want them," Corvino said.

Gallagher started her half of the debate by asking audience members to raise their hands to show whether they were anti- or pro-same-sex marriage.

Only five people raised their hand in support of the anti-same-sex argument.

Gallagher explained that she acknowl-

edged the existence of homosexuality and that gays should be respected and should not fear society.

"I think about people as citizens, neighbors and my friends," Gallagher said.

She went on to explain that marriage is a virtually universal human system that has a cross-cultural shape representing the union of husband and wife.

Gallagher argued that the sanctity of that union is threatened when the definition of marriage is changed.

This union produces rights and responsibilities mainly towards children that create cultural and public norms.

"If we want to discourage divorce, adultery and the protection of children we need

to know what marriage is," Gallagher said.

Gallagher explained that there are not many human universals and sociologically there is a reason behind this.

"Males and females produce babies; this is a necessary requirement for human existence," Gallagher said. "Therefore these babies ought to have a mother and a father."

Gallagher argued that the sanctity of marriage protects this union and without this mothers and fathers will be more likely to neglect their duty to the child.

"When the government changes the definition of marriage, then the definition will change for everyone in society," Gallagher said.

Gallagher finished her talk by explaining that if the definition of marriage is changed then the view that marriage is designed to allow males and females to have children will no longer be the historical model that is followed.

"Each of us has the right to live as we choose, but none of us have the right to redefine marriage," Gallagher said.

After the speakers presented their views they discussed the role of same-sex marriage affecting adoptions.

The audience was then given the opportunity to ask each speaker questions.

These involved topics such as state involvement in the issue, taxation being spent on anti-same-sex religious groups as well as the traditional Western view of marriage.

"I thought it was really accessible to all people," Lisa Dicker, sophomore in political science and Issues Committee member, said. "The only thing I was unhappy with was the disproportional audience representation. I thought it would have been better if we had drawn more people who only supported heterosexual marriage."

Trevor Gregory, sophomore in chemistry, asked the speakers about state representation.

"They brought up some good points," Gregory said. "I don't really agree with her that gay people shouldn't be allowed to get married, and I can see her point about adoption, but I feel it's unfair on gay people as well."