

als, Prop. 38 Fails Test of Priorities

their children to private schools, if they felt public schools were not meeting their children's needs. The proposition is designed to make private schools an affordable option for all families, particularly those that are stuck in low-performing schools.

The school board passed a resolution last month expressing their opposition to the proposition on the basis that it lacked regulation of private schools that would receive taxpayer money.

Board members also expressed concern over the anticipated loss of money that would hurt public schools.

"The amount of money lost to

private education would cripple our public schools," said Jack McLaughlin, superintendent of the Berkeley Unified School District. "We hold a core value that students should go to school together."

Boardmember Ted Schultz also said public schools need to be the state's priority.

"(It is) a terrible initiative," he said. "It is poorly written and it takes public money and puts it in private institutions."

The City Council's resolution, which was passed last month, echoed the school board's worries. In addition, it cited concerns that Proposi-

tion 38 would "fragment local communities."

"It's not just a school issue, or a parent issue — it's also a city issue," said Mayor Shirley Dean. "(The council) cannot direct curriculum, but we can help to ensure an atmosphere and an expectation of excellence in our schools. And we can help to ensure the money they need."

Dean also expressed her concern that the private schools would not be regulated as aggressively as public schools and that teachers in private schools would not be required to

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Noted Feminist Speaks at 'Out' Rally



PHOTO/SEAN BOYD

FEMINIST ACTIVIST Gloria Steinem speaks at the National Coming Out Day rally on Sproul Plaza. Steinem urged listeners to vote Gore.

Steinem waxes pro-choice, Gore

By ERIN GALLAGHER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Advocating pro-choice views, Gloria Steinem, well-known feminist and president of Voters for Choice, spoke on campus yesterday at the National Coming Out Day rally.

Women's rights, as expected, form the core of Steinem's politics. Steinem said women have made advances in getting pay comparable to men's, but society still overlooks a woman's role in the home. Women have two jobs, one in the business world and one in the home, she said.

Voters for Choice was founded 11 years ago by the board of directors for Ms. magazine and Planned Parenthood. The political action committee was

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founded to advocate for a woman's right to reproductive freedom and candidates who support this right.

In an interview before the rally, Steinem commented on the upcoming presidential and senatorial elections.

Women need to get credit for the work they do domestically, she said. A large part of a woman's role at home is the career of bringing up children, and the politics of keeping abortion legal has an impact on this, Steinem said.

"What we need is the right to organize and influence," she said at the rally. "That will be supported by Gore."

Voters for Choice supports Gore based on his stance on reproductive freedom, as well as his actions regarding the environment, civil rights, affirmative action and hate crimes.

The organization evaluates the candidates it supports by examining their stance and political record focusing on a woman's right to choose.

Steinem said that in the 1960s, women had to be a widow of a politician if they wanted to be involved in the political process. In the past 30 years, however, women have made great strides as independent figures in politics.

"We have come a fair distance, but I think there is still a double standard," she said. "Women candidates are given less money and less support."

Hillary Clinton's fight for the New York Senate seat is important for sometimes overlooked reasons, Steinem said. Clinton is a cross-over candidate — she gained eight years of experience in the White House as a spouse, and those years would be very relevant to serving in the Senate,

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she said.

Steinem called the press "even-handedly negative" in their coverage of the presidential candidates and that the two candidates are perceived to be very alike. On the contrary, she said, there are many fundamental human rights that have been strengthened in the recent past and will continue to be strengthened if Gore is elected president.

The power of the president to elect Supreme Court justices is one of the most important reasons why Steinem supports Gore. The new president will be able to elect between two and three justices to serve for life and have direct impact on the reproductive rights of women. In the case of justices appointed by Bush, a woman's right to a legal abortion could be in jeopardy, Steinem said.

The freedom for a woman to choose whether or not to have an abortion is "fundamental to the health and well-being" of women, she said.

"Too often, sexuality is only OK and morally acceptable when it results in reproduction," she said. "We need to separate our sexuality from reproduction. Please use your vote. Voting is not the most you can do, but it is the least that you can do."