

Many Acts still hold varying interpretations



— their ability (or inability) to conceive — has been a point of contention in the law for years. The Supreme Court proclaimed abortion to be a fundamental right in 1973, and despite two decades of assault by subsequent decisions, Roe v. Wade still stands as the law of the land.

The status of women in society today is a far cry from where it was in the last century, when an 1845 Alabama statute allowed a man to strike his wife, so long as the stick was no thicker than his thumb.

Although women were granted the right to vote by the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920, a similar constitutional amendment to grant equal rights for women failed to muster approval from the requisite two-thirds of the states by the time of its expiration in 1982.

The most distinctive difference between men and women

Under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, gender discrimination in employment is illegal. Interpretation of the act by the Supreme Court is, however, anything but clear. In a 1989 case, the court fragmented in a case brought by a woman denied partnership in a brokerage firm. The court ruled that once gender was shown to be a factor in employment discrimination, the employer had the burden of showing that it was not. Just what amounted to evidence of discrimination was left unclear.

However, if gender goes to a

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Chancellor's Commission gauges climate for women on campus, works for gender equity, safety



Robin Trimarchi/DN

Claudia Price-Decker is an administrative technician in the department of psychology and chairperson of the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women.

By **Shelley Biggs**
Staff Reporter

Women at UNL have friends in high places — they just don't know it.

For 20 years, the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women has worked to improve conditions for women at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln through research and planning designed specifically with women in mind.

Claudia Price-Decker, chairwoman of the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women, said the commission had made considerable strides in the last three years.

"Our mission has evolved," she said. "We deal specifically with gender issues such as equity and safety."

Price-Decker said the commission was originally founded in 1973 and designed to advise the chancellor on issues concerning women.

Since then, Price-Decker said the commission had been working primarily in the area of equity, dealing with the comparisons of the salary levels between men and women at the university.

"We make recommendations to the Chancellor to help close salary gaps between men and women in faculty and managerial professions."

The ongoing goal of the commission at this point, Price-Decker said, is to have the salaries of men and women in the faculty and managerial professions monitored on a yearly basis as opposed to every once in a while.

Price-Decker said the commission worked on a broader scale in reference to women's issues rather than focusing on one cause. The commission works closely with university offices like the Affirmative Action and Diversity Office and the Women's Center.

"We try not to take on one

person's cause," she said. "But we do try to help them by sending them in the right direction."

By working closely with campus organizations and also through open forums on campus, Price-Decker said the commission was able to gauge the climate on campus. This, she said, was important in order to make the correct recommendations to the Chancellor.

With the addition of UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier to the administration in the last year, Price-Decker said the commission's work has become more satisfying because the concerns and views of the commission are important to Spanier.

"The focus has shifted a great deal with Graham Spanier. We are really excited about working with him," Price-Decker said. "Last year we saw tremendous strides toward what we were trying to do."

Contributions in 1992 lead to a better world

I subscribe to the basic fundamental principle that women should have political, economic and social rights equal to those of men.

I guess that makes me a feminist. According to one fellow staff member at the Daily Nebraskan, that makes me a "femi-Nazi."

But then again, he worships Rush Limbaugh.

I have a problem with the catch-

phrase, stereotype, sexist-slur, "femi-Nazi."

First of all, it makes no sense: It's a complete oxymoron. A feminist seeks equality — political, social, and economic — at the exclusion of none. Nazism is a by-product of facism — excluding people on an aggressive, militaristic, nationalis-

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