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## 2nd LGBT Symposium Press Release

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Contact: Gary Burkholder  
Chair, Symposium Subcommittee  
URI-HRL-Coddington Hall  
19 Butterfield Road  
Kingston, Rhode Island 02881  
401-874-7792  
email: byu101@uriacc.uri.edu

Press Release: IMMEDIATE  
Date: March 9, 1996

### **URI Hosts Symposium on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Issues**

On April 10-12, 1996, the University of Rhode Island will host the Second Annual Symposium on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Issues. The event is sponsored by the Committee to Eliminate Homophobia and Heterosexism and cosponsored by a number of organizations across the campus. The symposium will be held at the University of Rhode Island Galanti Lounge (located in the Library).

The theme of the conference is "Diversity In Our Communities", and it will feature speakers presenting topics such as race and sexual orientation, discourses on homophobia, spirituality, coming out, and marriage/commitment. Presenters include representatives from academia (both faculty and students from URI as well as from other schools around the country) and from the Rhode Island gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. The diversity in presenters and presentations represents our aim to find commonalties between the academic and the non-academic gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

On Thursday at 3:15 pm, a roundtable discussion is planned that includes representatives from academic and community activist organizations. The focus will be on organizing, activism, and the issues that have been and will be important to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

Barbara Smith, special fellow to the Schomburg Center at the New York Public Library, will be the keynote speaker. Ms. Smith will speak on her current research into the history of African-American gays and lesbians. Her presentation will be at 7:30pm, Thursday, April 11, in Edward's Auditorium. In addition to the keynote address, two other programs are being offered.

On Tuesday, April 9, at 7:00 pm (location TBA), Ms. Ada Gay Griffin will present her film, "A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde", an epic portrait of the award-winning Black, lesbian, poet, mother and warrior, Audre Lord. The film, which has won numerous awards, explores her life in the context of her connection to the Civil Rights movement, the Women's movement, and the struggle for Lesbian and Gay rights. Ms. Griffin's presentation is sponsored by the History, English, and Women's Studies Departments at URI.

On Wednesday, April 10, at 7:30 pm in White Hall auditorium, Ron Ehmke will perform his comic monologue, "Not for Profit: a personal history of peripheral art, 1972-92". His appearance is part of the Humanities Center Series, "Crises in Public Funding for the Arts and Humanities". Ron's performance examines personal, political, and artistic concerns in the last decade of the 20th century. This particular installment, one part of a projected trilogy entitled "The Dark Times", "takes a long, hard look at the art of making a living-and living to make art."

The symposium promises to be a unique combination of education, activism and fun. Schedules for presentations will be made available in late March. All events are free and open to the public. We welcome your presence and your participation.

*Directions: Route 95 south to the Route 4 split. Follow Route 4 to Route 1. At the first stop light on Route 1, turn right (this is route 138 West). Follow 138 to the University of Rhode Island. Turn right on Upper College Road. You can obtain a visitor parking pass at the information kiosk that will be on your right as you come into campus. The Galanti Lounge is in the library; Edward's Auditorium is on Upper College Road; White Hall is across from the Chafee Building on Flagg Road.*