GRUBMAN-BLACK
PJB 11-22-10 STEPHEN DAVID

NORTH KINGSTOWN

GRUBMAN-BLACK, STEPHEN DAVID died at home on November 22, 2010 after a courageous battle with cancer. He was the beloved husband of Sheila Black Grubman for 44 years, father of Davi Black Kladakis, grandfather of Angelina and Elijah Dordal. He also leaves many beloved cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Steve was born in Philadelphia, PA on May 15, 1945, the son of Fannie Grubman. He received his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Temple University in Philadelphia and a PhD from SUNY Buffalo. He was Professor of Communicative Disorders, Communication Studies, and Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island. He also served as Director of the URI Speech and Hearing Center, the Graduate Program in Communicative Disorders, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Director of the Women's Studies Program, and Coordinator of the Bachelor of General Studies Program.

A distinguished author, Steve wrote poetry, numerous scholarly articles and the book, "Broken Boys, Mending Men". He served on a number of non-profit boards including NAMI of RI, the RI Rape Crisis Center and the Wiley Center. He was a Trustee of Temple Sinai and Chairperson of the temple's religious school.

A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday at Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Avenue, Cranston. Burial will follow in New Fernwood Cemetery, Kingston. The family will sit shiva at their home after the burial until 7:30 pm and on Thursday, 10-7:30 and Friday, 10-3:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to Temple Sinai or the Stephen Grubman-Black Memorial Fund, c/o URI Foundation, 79 Upper College Road, Kingston, RI 02881.

Arrangements by SHALOM MEMORIAL CHAPEL, Cranston.

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PASSAGES

URI pioneer in women's studies dies

Stephen Grubman-Black was first director of university's program

By TATIANA PINA
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

When she thinks of her friend Stephen Grubman-Black, Winnie Brownell, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Rhode Island, imagines herself years ago. She's a college freshman, entering her Introduction to Women's Studies class — and finding Grubman-Black as the teacher.

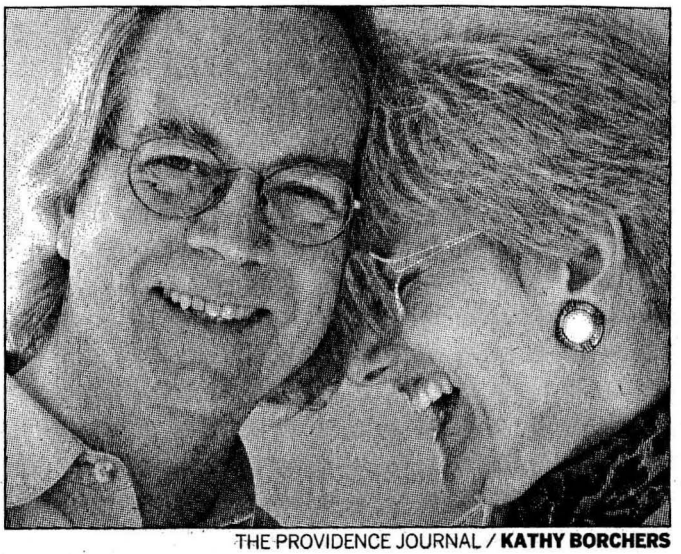
He was a man, but he was also a feminist. And he knew his field quite well.

Grubman-Black, who died at age 65 on Monday after a battle with cancer, served in many roles during his 35 years at URI, among them as a professor and director of the women's studies program.

He was raised by his mother, so he learned at an early age about some of the challenges women — particularly women who are single parents — face, Brownell said.

She met him in graduate school in the 1960s at the State University of New York at Buffalo. "He was a feminist before I knew what a feminist was," Brownell said Tuesday. "He was one of the first men I met who really truly understood the challenges women faces around the world — lack of equity, lack of justice, unequal pay."

He was the first one to step up and serve as director of the women's studies program, in 1972, Brownell said. "It was impressive to the see the goodwill, support and connections made thanks to his leadership." Faculty and students, she said, presented him with an award for his outstanding leadership.



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / **KATHY BORCHERS**

Stephen Grubman-Black and his wife, Sheila Black Grubman, share a laugh at URI in 2003.

Grubman-Black taught Men and Masculinity, an important course for the women's studies program, Brownell said. The class looked at issues of gender that were important at the time, she said, and remain hot topics today.

A special highlight of his career, Brownell said, was the 1992 publication of his book, "Broken Boys, Mending Men," which took him across the country to lecture.

"He always seemed to be ahead of his time," she said.

Among the positions Grubman-Black held at URI were director of the Speech and Hearing Center and the graduate program in communicative disorders, and associate dean of the Graduate School. He served on nonprofit boards, including the National Alliance on Mental Illness of RI, the RI Rape Crisis Center and the Wiley Center.

He was a lover of the arts, and that seemed to be the way he fed his spirit, Brownell said. Karen Stein, professor of English and women's studies at URI, said Grubman-Black made quilts — not blankets, but wall hangings in glorious colors. He liked to play with color, she said.

Born Stephen Grubman, the URI professor who married Sheila Black in 1966 took on a hyphenated name to celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary. Sheila, whose maiden name is now her middle name, stayed Sheila Black Grubman.

Grubman-Black said in a 1999 interview that he made the change "because I was much closer to her family and was very close to my father-in-law. After my father-in-law died, it struck me that I wished there had been a way to perpetuate his name, to honor his memory."

The reaction the couple got from friends, family, colleagues and students was mixed, he said; his mother refused to address him by his new name.

Brownell said she admired the way Grubman-Black and Black Grubman got along and worked together to champion causes. It was impressive, she said, the way they loved and took care of each other.

"What gave him hope was looking at the next generation, seeing his students, his grandchildren," she said. He was the kind of person, she said, who thought all people could make a difference.

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