

# ARTS & animation II



## Drawing On Tradition

By Garrett H. Omata  
Arts Writer

It took the whole of 1985 for DC Comics to do what must be the most daring event in comic book history — the total renovation of an entire universe. In reaction to the confusion and idiocy that the "multiverse" concept — the idea that there were an infinite number of different universes on different dimensional planes — caused since its creation in the sixties, Marv Wolfman and George Perez, the most popular writer-artist team in comics, along with just about every other editor and freelancer in the business, created the *Crisis On Infinite Earths*.

Their goal was almost as simple as it was impossible; to streamline the DC Universe by getting rid of all the "alternate realities" and introducing a whole new Earth, a combination of them all. And supposedly they wanted to do this while still retaining all of their characters, or at least the ones they didn't plan to kill off while the series was in progress.

It was ambitious. It was dangerous. Not many fans were interested in super-hero slaughter, and many voiced their concerns. So during the next twelve months readers waited and read, and they were not disappointed. *Crisis* became probably the biggest seller of the year, also winning the best series titles from both the Eagle and Kirby comic industry awards. But, now it's a year later, the dust has settled and we can look at the results of this project with discretion and objectivity.

There is no doubt that the biggest change precipitated by the *Crisis* was the "facelift" given to Superman. That

seeming immortal character that has survived in bigger but ultimately worn-out forms for the last fifty years was given a new break. He now had the opportunity to return to his stature as the most popular character in long underwear. And to assure his success, DC procured John Byrne, certainly the most popular artist in comics — though not necessarily the most talented.

As a result, Byrne was given almost full creative control, and proceeded to chop away at Clark Kent's long complicated life. He did, in fact, turn the Man of Steel around. But, unfortunately, around doesn't always mean improved. The package is truly beautifully wrapped, complete with a vibrant, GQ-ish Clark Kent, and a feisty, sexy Lois Lane. But the stories still lacked energy, lacked depth, and most importantly of all, lacked creativity.

But the big problem with the "streamlined" Superman is the fact that his history, the rich mythos that surrounded him, is gone. There is no more Superboy (the adventures of young Superman), no more Krypto the super-dog, no more Phantom Zone, and most importantly, no more Supergirl.

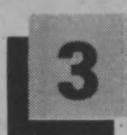
One of the truly special highlights of the *Crisis* series was an episode entitled, "Beyond the Silent Night," which swept the Favorite Story category in the CBG Fan Awards. In this story, Supergirl battled the forces of total evil one last time to save the universes and died at the hands of her foe. Certainly her death and burial were one of the greatest memorials ever done for a comic book character, and presently probably one of the best examples of Superman's character. Now, in the "new" universe, this event never happened, because Supergirl never existed. The impact of her death and its very

significance seemed all in vain. Not a very good tribute to one of the oldest heroines in comics (I have a pet theory that they wasted her because her movie was a bomb. But then, who am I to say?).

But that was only the tip of the iceberg. To further strip away the excess fat from the newly crowded universe, the Justice Society of America, the forerunners to all the great heroes of today, were spirited off to mystical Valhalla, in order to fight an eternal battle against evil. They too, will never be seen again. It should be simple to see that DC took the easy way out of dealing with a bunch of geriatric heroes. Instead, they should have realized that the idea of old guys in tights could present some very interesting plot possibilities. But I think that after the *Crisis*, killing old characters became a bit too easy for them.

DC had no problem filling the gap that all these dead heroes left. Having purchased the entire super-hero line from the defunct company Charlton Comics, DC started three new comics that starred these refugee heroes. The Blue Beetle, the Question, and Captain Atom all received the attention and promise of glory they could never have had in the third-rate company. And for what it's worth, Captain Atom and The Question both look promising in their new, startlingly different magazines. The Blue Beetle, on the other hand, is little different from the gazillions of other masked vigilante books in the market. His potential has been drowned in the cardboard plots and characterizations that are the causes for drastic changes in the comic book medium.

(Continued on page 2A)



▲ Jaylin'

■ Moliere

● Ad

▲ The Man,

■ Garth

● Add

▲ The Myth, the

■ Harry

● Sorry, Robin

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Arts Writers: Brett will be in the office Th. 10-2, Fri. 1-4, and M. after 12. Let's talk at each other.

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**Livin', Laughin', Lovin', Leno**

"You talked to Jay Leno and you didn't take notes!!!!"

Jay Leno is a comedian. That guy on the Doritos commercial who looks like Elvis, sort of. He's hosted Johnny Carson and he and Dave Letterman are like this (two fingers on top of one another). Jay Leno is an extremely funny guy, you might have seen his special on Showtime or caught him on Merv or maybe seen him at a Club in the USA somewhere. Wherever you know him from, be sure that there's much more to come as far as Jay is concerned. Where there's a will, there's a way, so to speak.

Yes, I talked to Jay and I didn't take notes. It was a bright Thursday morning in the scenic editorials office and Jay was in Las Vegas. I can't tell you what hotel he was staying in, but I can tell you his room number: 572. He's not there any more anyway, so it doesn't matter really. So, I kept thinking to myself I should ask Jay to speak up because I know deep in my soul that this here cheap tape recorder isn't going to work.

No, that mechanical wonder didn't tape a word worth repeating about my man Jay, except maybe an "Oh I guess, yes," and "Well, yeah, I, uh." Jay was in high form that morn and we rapped about a cheap hotel in Cincinnati which he said was the worst place he had ever stayed by far. There were old men in the room next door coughing and you could hear their sick lung expellations from his room. Jay let out some great coughs at this point and it was wild.

Then he explained more about this giant room with a toilet in the middle that just blew his mind. The TV cost a dollar.

"It was strange," he said reflectively.

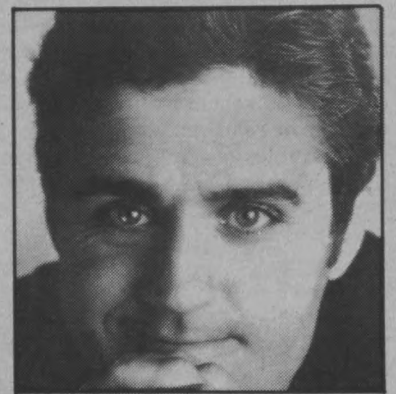
Jay's going to be at the Arlington on January 31st and he's looking forward to this gig because it's a nice drive up from L.A. and that's where he lives in the Hollywood

Hills with his wife, many motorcycles and an old Buick. Spending upwards of 300 days on the road last year, Jay has not tired of the routine yet. He actually enjoys the grueling nights at various Motel 6's around the nation. Oh, it's a joke. Although Jay does pay for all his own expenses, he can afford better than Motel 6. And why not when he makes \$15,000 a show, not bad for a guy who used to be a Rolls Royce mechanic, and much worse than that.

When success is tingling all around your fingers and toes, there's only one thing to do, and Leno's done it — become a regular on Dave Letterman. He especially enjoys doing Dave's show because of the natural rapport the two of them share. Without much need for preparation, Jay simply has a seat in the guest chair and something wonderful happens between he and Dave, they just be, without all the pretensions and expectations of those conventional talk shows. "I just get out there and have fun."

In the beginning there was Jay. And he opened for just about anyone, in strip joints in front of desperate men who don't know what's going on and don't even care, for rock stars who don't give a shit about some comedian, and for the illustrious likes of Tom Jones and Perry Como about which he explained "of course, there were ladies with blue hair in the front row.... When you're opening for someone else you're always dealing with their audience."

Jay enjoys being the headliner these days and his wit and uncanny sense of humor has certainly paid off. The blue-haired ladies have disappeared from his audience, his biggest appeal being college-aged students. Recently Leno played to a sold out audience at the famed Carnegie Hall. JAY LENO PLAYS CARNEGIE HALL! Is this ideal, I asked? "It's just a room with a high ceiling, I mean it's just an



Jay Leno at the Arlington, Jan. 31.

auditorium," he said fondly, adding, "the sound system is terrible."

What's he like, really? Well, the true Jay is probably (I'm speculating here) a lot like his material: exceptional, never predictable, and actually quite clever without being sarcastic — a little animal, yet quietly seductive, or something like that. Without delving into the hell's fury of politics, religion, racism, and women's issues, Leno makes you laugh. He focuses on ordinary things like 7-11, and the effect is genuine amusement. His appeal is wide-ranged, his material is new. You don't know the punch line, yet you do, and that's the absolute genius about his work.

Leno's future is zooming along. He'll be appearing on Carson soon, will continue to tour, and there's talk of his own comedy series on NBC. But acting's not where it's at for Leno right now; the script is too formal and memorization doesn't appeal to him. The comedy clubs and concert halls will continue to take a large proportion of his time. If Leno weren't paid for his antics, then what? "I'd probably do it somewhere else for free." It is unlikely that you'll see Leno's stand up show for free, so get on down to the Arlington January 31st and experience this comedy god.

— Valerie De Lapp

**COMICS**

(Continued from cover)

Superman, the father of the super-hero, has also become the father of "re-interpreted heroes." Captain Marvel has also been "streamlined" — having rid himself of the other members of the Marvel family and the long Marvel history. Bye, bye, Mary Marvel, Captain Marvel Jr., Lieutenant Marvels. Sorry we couldn't afford a funeral.

Even Wonder Woman, that bodacious, bosomy super-heroine idealized by the lousy TV show starring Lynda Carter, has been reborn. Except now she's not so bitchy and not as sanctimonious as she was on TV and in some of her books. Her book is pretty damn good, actually. She has finally been written as the heartfelt, optimistic lover of life she was originally intended to be, and is drawn beautifully by George Perez himself.

Finally, something is going to happen that I assure will bedevil the most faithful readers — explaining how the Legion of Super-Heroes, that 30th century team of super-kids, never knew Superboy and Supergirl, the historical inspiration for their group and important members (they traveled through time). After all, in the new reality, they never existed! So far, everybody in the Legion still remembers them, and this is a post-Crisis book. We'll have to wait and see.

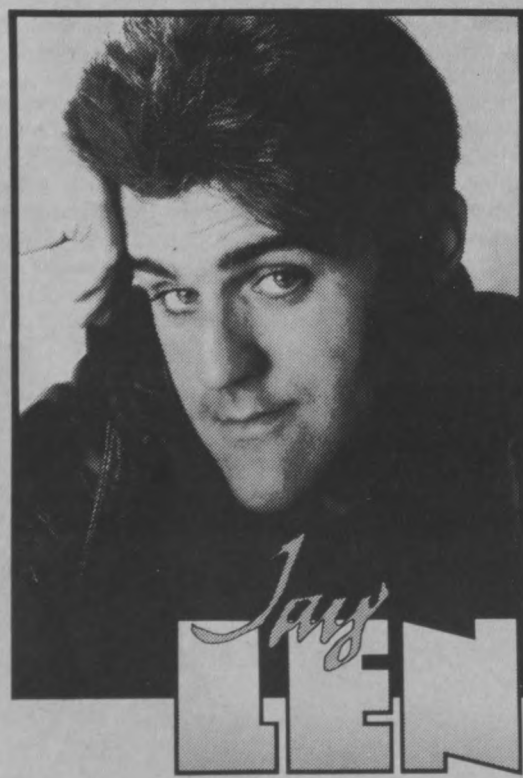
The Legion dilemma is a great illustration of the big headache of this restructured universe. The readers just don't know anything anymore! All of the stories and histories that were written before 1985 (and some much later), are now irrelevant. We can't trust our knowledge of old events, and their impact on the heroes, because some of them might not have happened! In this new time-line, Superman never joined the Justice League of America, though it appears that he still knows all the other super-heroes like they were old school buddies. They have yet to explain the existence of Wonder Girl, the "old" Wonder Woman's

sister, since the new WW never even met the chick, much less saved her life when she was a baby. So the related stories and origins of anybody is now up for grabs, and will introduce yet another thousand contradictions. And all the great, legendary individual stories no longer belong to this place, but to a forgotten, dust-covered past.

In many ways, the Crisis has been a monumental feat in comic books. In other ways, it has been the biggest, most complicated fiasco ever experienced. While attempting to organize a chaotic mess of a Universe, DC has created a whole new mess. The legends we have grown up with, identified with, and enjoyed so many times in so many different ways, are now history. The new age is upon us, and we have been promised that it will be better, stronger, more entertaining. But the faithful have waited, and the improvements don't look as good as the dream led us to believe.

It is now one year after the end of the world. The Bible was right. Chaos reigned, and unfortunately, it still does.

— Garrett H. Omata



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# Two Acts of Entertainment

Imagine yourself in seventeenth century France at the court of Louis XIV. You manage to sneak into the king's private theater where Moliere's drama company is rehearsing a new play that the king ordered to be ready on very short notice. The stage is in the shambles of early production; ropes hang from the ceiling and boxes litter the stage. Dressed in a long satin coat, lace cuffs, velvet breeches and an elaborately curled wig, Moliere (Louis Dula) storms into the theater, orders a trio of practicing musicians off the stage, and calls his actors to rehearsal.

The Ensemble Theater Project's new production, *Two By Moliere*, begins with a flurry of energy that does not relax until the final curtain call. Director Robert Weiss has joined together two short comic pieces by the great French satirist that complement each other perfectly.

The first one-act-play, *The Versailles Impromptu*, is an ideal introduction to Moliere and the seventeenth century theatrical scene. Moliere wrote the play when his patron, Louis XIV, gave him two weeks to have a new comedy written and ready to perform. The skit concerns a troupe of actors trying to cope with this impossible situation.

Many arguments arise between the playwright/director and the actors under the stress caused by the king's order. He begs them to cooperate and they respond with comments like, "Why should we feel sorry for you, you wrote the damn thing."

The play is a response to the criticism of Moliere's rival dramatists like Corneille and Racine. Dula is brilliant as he plays Moliere making fun of the overblown acting style popular during the seventeenth century by imitating the elaborate gestures that were used by rival acting troupes in their stock portrayals of characters like kings and lovers. When Moliere's actors suggest that he treat his critics with the same degree of harshness that they treat him, he declines. "Success is the sweetest revenge."

We see the comic dramatist as a philosopher and *A Versailles Impromptu* reveals his ideas about comedy. "The purpose of comedy is to present character traits and faults common to all people, especially the ones of our time."

The play-within-a-play that the troupe rehearses in *A Versailles Impromptu* satirizes members of the court as the actors wait outside the king's audience chamber. Amy Jackson is brilliant as a "lady of fashion" who minces pigeon-toed across the stage and tries to prevent another lady from raising the heavy black lace veil that covers her face because it will reveal her liberal use of cosmetics.

The ladies complain about a recent Moliere play that exposed the adultery of court women to their husbands. "I wish he would let our innocent husbands alone and not open their eyes to things they're better off not knowing."

Moliere satirizes a different social set in the second one-act-play of the program, *The Affected Young Ladies*. Richard Stretchberry plays a merchant who has brought his daughter Magdalon (Leslie Gangl) and niece Cathos (Amy Jackson) to Paris to marry them off. The cousins drive away their first suitors because they are not romantic enough. The offended young men play a trick on the ladies by dressing up their servants in outrageously "fashionable" clothes and sending them in to woo the ladies.



The women of Moliere's world.

The cousins' ideas about the way lovers should behave come from romantic novels, and they expect their own affairs to progress like the ones they read about. A table on the stage is loaded with these novels. "We want to leisurely create the romance novel of our lives." Between fits of giggling, they describe the requirements of a lover, including things like proper dress and language. Stretchberry responds as the infuriated father, who rants and raves and ends up throwing the novels at the girls.

Mascarille (Louis Dula) satisfies the cousins' expectations of the ideal lover. He arrives in a pink sedan chair, which he orders to be carried into the cousins' sitting room. His flamboyant costume and gestures overpower the stage. He wears a bright pink coat, breeches trimmed with ribbon, long lace garters, and a wig with curls that reach his knees.

Dula makes Mascarille into a thoroughly ridiculous and highly comic character. His affectations are even funnier than those of the ladies. Through Mascarille, Moliere makes fun of people with literary pretensions. "I'm composing a history of the Roman Empire in madrigals." While he speaks to the ladies, an "impromptu" poem seizes him and Dula walks to the other side of the stage to perform it with the same heavy theatrical intonations and elaborate gestures that he uses to satirize Moliere's rivals in the first play.

The cousins respond in unison with echoes of Mascarille's praise of his impromptu's literary merit. Since they share the same affectations, it is sometimes difficult to tell them apart.

Leslie Gangl, who plays Magdalon, is especially funny in her encounters with the servant Marotte (Blanca Jensen). Marotte refuses to understand the affected euphemisms that Magdalon uses for everyday objects. She tells the servant to "array the commodities of conversation" and Jensen responds with a blank look. Out of Mascarille's hearing, Gangl furiously whispers "chairs" at Jensen.

Scenes like these make this pair of witty, satirical plays into a thoroughly enjoyable evening of theater. I do not think I have ever been entertained so well in the Alhecama Theatre.

— Deborah Nestor

**Editor's Note:** *Two By Moliere* will be playing at the Alhecama Theatre (914 Santa Barbara Street) through February 28th. Box Office: 963-0761.

# Garth's Grace from the Bucket



Garth Fagan

As the lights dim in Campbell Hall on Wednesday, January 28th at 8:00 p.m., the audience will savor the uniqueness and diversity of Garth Fagan's Bucket Dance Theatre. Founded in 1970, the company's name used to be, "The Bottom of the Bucket, BUT ... Dance Theatre," and began in Rochester. Fagan's main

goal was to achieve weightlessness and a feeling of raw energy with people who had a natural ability to dance, but no former experience in technique.

"Quick, rubbery, muscular, meditative, fluent and sharp — the Bucket's dancers register sharper changes in dynamics and shape than any other company on the boards," said *The New York Times*. "They are performers committed to energy in its purest state."

There is a mixture of Caribbean, African, and urban influence in Fagan's unparalleled style. This quality American dance company has toured in the United States and abroad, including Europe, Africa, the Near East, Jamaica, and

Bermuda. They have also appeared on public television's *Great Performances*, and in 1986 Fagan and the company were awarded the New York Governor's Arts Award. As the *Denver Post* remarked, "Fagan has taken the human body and thrust it through his dream of what dance could be. His ideas are audacious and humorous. And they work."

There will be a FREE lecture/demonstration on Tuesday, January 27th in Campbell Hall at 4:00 p.m.

— Heather Lash  
**Editor's Note:** Unfortunately, Garth Fagan's Bucket Dance Theatre's Wednesday (28th) performance is sold-out. However, we highly recommend attending the free event on Tuesday in Campbell Hall.



Eleanor, 1951 by Harry Callahan.

Photographer Harry Callahan to speak at the Mary Craig Theatre in the Santa Barbara Museum of Art on Thursday, Jan. 22 (tonight), 7:30. Tickets are \$3 for members, others \$4 and will be available a half hour before the lecture.

Performance Artist Suzanne Lacy to lecture on "Women's Tableaux: Performance Art and Social Change" as the Melba Abrams Memorial Lecturer Tuesday, Jan. 27, 4 p.m. in Girvetz Hall 1004.

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1. LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (PG13) downstairs 5:50, 8:05, 10:10;  
2. STAR TREK IV (PG) upstairs 5:00, 7:30, 10:00  
3. GOLDEN CHILD (PG13) upstairs 5:10, 7:25, 9:40

**FIESTA 4** 916 State St., S.B. 963-0781

1. CRITICAL CONDITION (R) 5:45, 7:45, 9:45  
2. HOOSIERS (PG) 5:30, 8:00, 10:15  
3. BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS (PG13) 7:30  
THREE AMIGOS (PG13) 5:15, 9:45  
4. THE MORNING AFTER (R) 6:00, 8:15, 10:15

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1. THE MISSION (PG) 6:50, 9:30  
2. MOSQUITO COAST (PG) 7:00  
WISDOM (R) 9:30

**GOLETA THEATRE** 320 S. Kellogg Ave., Goleta 683-2265

HOOSIERS (PG) 7:30, 9:45

**CINEMA TWIN** 6050 Hollister Ave., Goleta 967-9447

1. BEDROOM WINDOW (R) 7:30, 9:30  
2. STAR TREK IV (PG) 7:15, 9:15

**FAIRVIEW TWIN** 251 N. Fairview, Goleta 967-0744

1. THE COLOR PURPLE (R) 5:40, 8:30  
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A.S. Program Board Presents

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## REGGAE

Friday, Feb. 6 at Rob Gym will be an evening filled with Reggae. Starting at 7 p.m., one can hear the sounds of BURNING SPEAR, TOOTS and THE MAYTALS, MOJO NYA and COMMON SENSE.

Winston Rodney, the man called Burning Spear, represents the best of Jamaica's rich musical heritage. His new album "People



**Burning Spear**

of the World" is a new and different kind of sound from a man whose voice is instantly recognizable to his fans. This album is rich in rhythmic detail, boasting deep, powerful bass grooves topped by sassy brass lines and lazy, skanking guitar and synthesizer. Winston Rodney is known as one of reggae's most inspirational composers and performers; and his new album addresses the human race and our

need to band together in order to conquer our universal problems.

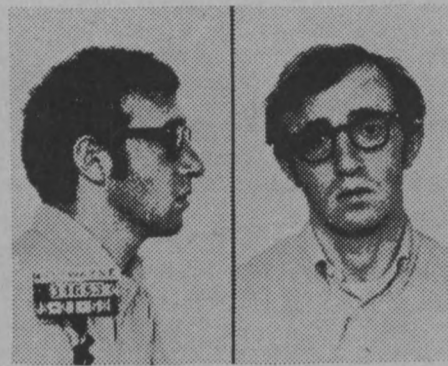
Toots Hibbert, on the other hand, is the quintessential voice of Jamaica; the legend whose career spans every development in Jamaica music, from ska through rock steady, to contemporary reggae. His group's albums include Funky Kingston, Pass the Pipe, Toots Live, and Knock Out; this album is said to show a departure in style for Toots and the Maytals with songs like 'Rockers' and 'Careless Ethiopians.'

This is sure to be the Reggae show of the year, so be at Rob Gym at 7 p.m. Tickets are available at A.S. Ticket office and other usual outlets.



**Toots and the Maytals**

## Take the Money and Run



Tomorrow night is your last chance to see the third movie in our Woody Allen Film Series. Friday, Jan. 23 at 7, 9 and 11 pm in I.V. Theatre, A.S. Program Board presents Woody Allen's TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN. This is your final chance to attend this film series — so don't miss out!

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**NRBQ — Feb. 13**

## Comedy Night

Tuesday night at 8 p.m. in the Pub will be the Second Comedy Night of the quarter. On Jan. 27, Comedy Night will feature Marty Pollic, Bill Kalnenson and a special guest. Come laugh and enjoy this Tuesday night's Comedy Night, and get there early for the best seats. All ages welcome.

**Laurie Anderson**  
**"Home of the Brave"**

Saturday, Feb. 7 Campbell Hall

### A.S. Program Board Committee Meetings

Concert Committee Wed., Jan. 28 6:00 pm ASPB office  
Film/Video Committee Wed., Jan. 28 2:30 pm ASPB office  
ASPB office, 3rd floor UCen

## Jazz Club in the Pub

Come by and relax to the Jazz Club at the Pub on Wednesday, from 5-7 p.m.

## I.V. ALLSTARS



Tonight's Pub Nite features the almost-world-famous I.V. Allstars. Admission is free and Pub Nite is open to all ages, so come early to avoid the long lines, because tonight's Pub Nite promises to be very crowded. Don't miss the band that UCSB is famous for; the one that will put I.V. on the map — Tonight at 8 p.m. in the Pub.

## Wallace Terry — Bloods

Coming to Campbell Hall on February 4 at 4 p.m. will be Wallace Terry, author of *Bloods*.

*Bloods* is a book about twenty black men sent off to Vietnam to protect a country and a system that never protected them. *Bloods* is said to be the best book ever written on the Vietnam War.

On Wed., Feb. 4 Wallace Terry, an ordained minister and powerful speaker will talk about his book and his two years on the battlefield as a war correspondent in Vietnam. Terry is said to relate to a college audience better than any other because the college classroom has been a big part of his life.

Join the thousands of other college students who have heard Terry speak and be at Campbell Hall at 4 p.m. on Feb. 4.

Sponsored by ASPB, English Dept., Black Studies and Religious Studies Depts.



**There's More To College Than Just Going to Class**