

Miller suggests study strategy

by Dr. Issac H. Miller, Jr.
President of the College

To the Bennett Student:

In all probability you kept a very busy and hectic schedule at home this past summer, what with television, movies, unlimited dating and sleeping late. All of that will need to change if you are to have success in college.

Study, regular attendance in class and laboratory sessions, recreation, religion, cultural activities and sleep are all necessary elements of the college scene. You must find the proportion and balance in which each of these fits into your learning style if you are to be a successful student. We do not expect you to accomplish this overnight, but get started early.

You will need to put these activities in the proper order in your plans and give each a sufficient time. In short, you will need to construct or devise your own personal strategy for college survival and success. Your teachers will suggest some ideas for your survival kit. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Work very diligently, seven days a week the first six weeks and from then on, work during the week. Save your weekends for church, Lyceum programs and seminars.
2. Join the NAACP, YWCA and other groups providing wholesome associations.
3. Do not register for an over-

load of courses until you have carefully analyzed your learning style and learning capacity.

4. Concentrate on learning well, not fuzzily and fragmentally. The grade points will follow, and remember grade point averages do count when you are looking for a job or seeking admission to graduate school.
5. Keep your own very accurate record of your progress and know every semester where you stand with respect to satisfactory completion of course requirements. The Records Office and Academic Support Office will keep you reminded, but it is your

responsibility to know.

6. Keep up with your financial obligations. You will be managing your own finances before you know it, so, there is no time like the present to learn how it is done.
7. Do not be afraid to ask for help from your teachers if

you need it. That is why they are here. Try to analyze your own problems first so that you can tell them specifically how they can help best.

8. Do not attempt to study with a sleepy mind or a fatigued one. Sleep when you should (See Page 6)

Dance company Shows heritage

by Jennifer Jones

Lively, "entertaining," "fantastic," "exciting," and "culturally enriching"—all these "raves" describe the feats of the Chuck Davis Dance Company during its two-day visit last month.

The climax of the troupe's stay was the Sept. 17 African-style concert featuring audience participation. Agugu, the spirit of God working through ancestors, was summoned; and the celebrants were asked to do certain steps that are complementary to the ritual of the ancestors. One of the most noteworthy aspects of the brilliant concert was the ecstatic involvement of the audience.

Davis, in a post-concert interview, recalled his motivation for founding the company, which has toured successfully across Africa, Europe and America. "In 1958," he said, "I wearied one day of watching Tarzan on the screen, and realizing that the image being perpetuated was extremely negative in terms of us Black people . . . I gathered a group of artists whose thinking was about the same idea as mine, and we formed the Chuck Davis Dance Company—a perpetuation of communication, a love of dance as an art form, and particularly the Black dance cultures and preservation of its cultures."

The movements in every performance have cultural significance, according to Davis. The company works "within whichever culture the ballet was taken from and which gave it the inspiration. The movements are indigenous to the culture. If it (the dance) is a choreographed piece, it is a blend of the different movements from different cultures across the continent."

Davis lavished praise on the nucleus of his company—Roslyn Davis, Lisa Dockery, Anita Lambert, Chiqui Santiago, Abdel Salaam, Tony Williams, Kwe Yao Anaafopanko, Jalal Sherriff and Phillip Williamson. "I would like to give thanks to my artists; for unless you have the artists to implement (a program), it is nothing," Davis said.

The company's work began Sept. 16 with a workshop conducted by Davis in Goode Gymnasium. During the hour and a half of instruction, a group of 31 performed rigorous calisthenics and then did African steps. Davis taught the aggregation a dance from the Kakilambé Festival. Kakilambé is the god of the harvest in West Africa. The deity is asexual because Africans believe that God is a spiritual entity. Kakilambé, who comes every seven years, judges the success of the harvest. If he/she rises from the earth, this appearance means that there will be a rich harvest.

Lisa Wise, a member of the Greensboro community, precisely summarized the impact of the CDDC visit: "This cultural preparation offered a glimpse of African life that is rare to witness in the South. On many levels, it (the concert) was an educational and uplifting experience—rhythm, participatory culture, dance, song, spirituality, earth. It demonstrated the wholeness of African cultural aestheticness, the oneness of humankind, nature, spirit, earth, past, present and future, particularly emphasizing ancestral continuity."

Many viewers felt Bennett College has a duty as a Black institution to offer more educational events pertaining to Black heritage.

Christian beliefs ruin Tribe in Achebe novel

by Pauline Nzeribe

"Things Fall Apart," Chinua Achebe's first and most famous novel, combines a tragic portrait of Okonkwo, a very strong-willed village leader, with a detailed study of the Ibos, an ethnic group situated in eastern Nigeria.

The narrative, which has the compactness and power of Greek tragedy, is set in Umuofia, a clan-district composed of nine villages, at the start of this century. Umuofia is feared by neighboring clans because of great and fearless leaders like Okonkwo, who has proved his worth in wrestling, battles, and agricultural production and has been rewarded by villagers and the gods.

Okonkwo is a self-made man—both a master and a victim of the patriarchal system and the cult of virility. He has a large barn stocked with yams, three wives, eight children, two titles of distinction and lofty membership in the hierarchy of Umuofia.

He is a hard and, at times, vain man. Early in the novel, he is appointed as the guardian for Ikemefuna, a young boy given as a peace offering to Umuofia because a member of a neighboring clan has killed a village daughter. The boy awakens Okonkwo's pride, respect and even love. But when the oracle of Umuofia decrees that Ikemefuna must die, Okonkwo, whom the boy now calls "father," cuts him down with a machete. Okonkwo is afraid of being called a coward.

Okonkwo's fear of failure and worship of power have grown out of his contempt for his father, who was more interested in music and palm wine than he was in the sowing of crops. Therefore Okonkwo didn't have patience with unsuccessful men. One of his strongest fears is that Nwoye, his natural son, has inherited his grandfather's weakness.

Okonkwo is a quick-tempered man of action, and he rules his house with an iron hand. He makes the mistake of beating one of his wives during the sacred week of rest and harmony—an act for which he is fined. Later, he has to take his family into exile because he has inadvertently murdered a clansman during the funeral of Umuofia's oldest man.

This crisis creates the climax of the novel. During Okonkwo's seven-year absence from Umuofia, Christians slowly but surely infiltrate the village, make chaos of the ancient religion and turn clansman against clansman. The newcomers bring a court sys-

tem to the village to pacify what they term "primitive tribes" as well as a district commissioner.

Okonkwo's reaction to the change is the most crucial moment in the novel, for "things have fallen apart."

Achebe has taken his title from one of this century's most prophetic poems, William Butler Yeats' "The Second Coming," a work stressing that spiritual aimlessness and political chaos are the 'order' of our time.

Achebe, an Ibo, was born in 1930 at Ogidi, Anambra State, Nigeria. After taking a university degree, he wrote "Things Fall Apart" while he was working for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. The novel was first published in England in 1958 and is now available in a Fawcett paperback. Achebe's other novels, including "No Longer at Ease" and "A Man of the People," have also received critical acclaim and an international audience. The most significant modern Nigerian novelist, Achebe has taught at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

"Things Fall Apart" is a stunning achievement because of Achebe's sensitive portrayal of Okonkwo as well as the other characters in Umuofia. He has skillfully woven irony into his plot and has used to the fullest degree all the idioms, proverbs, tales and sayings for which the Ibos are known.

The novel is filled with every-day drama and an undertone which stresses that we are not completely in charge of our destiny. The tale is told in such a fascinating and objective way that it becomes a powerful and moving chronology of the Ibo cultural system just before the slow invasion of the white missionaries.

I recommend this book for entertainment and also as a storehouse of information about the customs that were a way of life in a hierarchical-intermittent political system as exemplified by Umuofia before the incursion of Christianity. Achebe's sequel, "No Longer at Ease," serves as a basis for comparison between the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods in Nigeria.

On Nov. 2, in a Bennett faculty meeting, James Baldwin will present a video-taped conversation with Chinua Achebe. Baldwin and two colleagues from Bowling Green State University will then discuss the dialogue and answer questions from a faculty panel.

COLLEGE POETRY REVIEW

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Trustee Emma Smith served as the guest speaker at the Miss Bennett Coronation. On her right sits the new queen, Terri Phillips. Smith stressed the importance of overcoming hard realities in the pursuit of our dreams.