As sociologists we often reflect on the fundamentally paradoxical nature of social life, ever changing yet somehow remaining recognizably familiar. The 2006-2007 academic year brought a number of changes to the Sociology Department. Since the last issue of Collective Memory we have welcomed new faculty members and registered a record number of undergraduate sociology majors. We added innovative new courses to the curriculum and were enriched by the presence of international scholars from as far away as Germany and Cameroon. In addition, Steve Kroll-Smith made the decision to re-direct his energies toward teaching and his research into the continuing disaster spawned by Hurricane Katrina. We are grateful to him for his years of service as Department Head and eagerly anticipate the results of that important work.

Assuming the Headship of this extraordinary collective has made me especially conscious of the challenges and excitement associated with transition as well as the comfort and security of stability. UNCG is growing by leaps and bounds. This creates opportunities but also dilemmas, as we strive to keep up with growing numbers of students and rapidly changing technology, while maintaining the high standards of scholarship and sense of community that have always prevailed on the Third Floor of Graham Building.

As I made the physical move from one end of the building to the other, I uncovered in my files an issue of The Alumni News from the spring of 1974, nearly a decade before I arrived on campus. Intrigued, I opened it to discover an article by two former (and greatly loved) members of the Sociology faculty, E. M. “Bud” Rallings and David Pratto. The article reported the results of their survey of all students who had graduated with a degree in Sociology since the introduction of the major in 1918-1919. The respondents represented more than a half century (1921-1972) of sociology graduates!

Thirty-five years have passed since those data were collected. How much has changed! Yet there is continuity as well. The average annual salary of new graduates in the early 1970s was only $5,632.00; however, the “problems” they described would doubtless be familiar to more recent alumni: “physical exhaustion, emotional stress, and scheduling of time between family and job.” The conflicting demands on our time have certainly not lessened over the last century. Fortunately, sociology graduates head off into the world equipped with finely honed sociological imaginations, making it easier to distinguish between their “personal troubles” and “public issues.”

Although I have been at UNCG for more than twenty years, my move into the Department Office has provided me with a new vantage point from which to observe our shared terrain. Above all, it has intensified my appreciation of this dedicated and hard-working community of sociologists. It has been a year full of noteworthy accomplishments—by students, faculty, and staff alike. This issue of Collective Memory provides us with an opportunity to share some of the highlights with you.

We hope that the newsletter will encourage you to stay in touch with us. The history of sociology at UNCG is now almost 90 years long; however, our memories are only collective to the extent that we construct them together. If you participated in that survey in the early 1970s, this is the perfect moment to let us know where your sociological imagination has led you since the Nixon years. Those of you who are too young to remember that endeavor now have the chance to speak for more recent generations of graduates. How has your sociological training influenced your life? What would you like to know about the Department?

To facilitate our conversations with each other, we now have a dedicated e-mail address: Collective_Memory@uncg.edu. Please write! Fall Fest 2007 will afford us a special opportunity to meet face to face. Mark your calendars for the Sociology Department Reception on Friday, September 28, 2007 from 5-7pm in the Alexander Room of Elliot University Center. In addition to the familiar faces of the faculty, you will have an opportunity to meet representatives of the next generation of alumni. Members of the Sociology Club will be on hand to share news of their efforts and, hopefully, to begin to build social networks for the future. We hope you will be able to join us.

Congratulations!
Phi Beta Kappa initiates Joshua Aaron Apple (major in History - HS teaching, minor in sociology) and Natassaja Chowthi (dual major in Media Studies and Sociology).
Finally, the faculty recognized all five students who were chosen to receive the 2004 Alex McIntosh Graduate Paper Competition for contributions to research on food and culture. At the Hill College near Asheville, NC. Her areas of specialty include social psychology and culture, with a focus on cultural aspects of food and eating. In 2005, she published "In the Absence of Food: A Case of Rhymic Loss and Spoken Identity for Patients with PEG Feeding Tubes" in Food, Culture, and Society based on data collected for her MA thesis at UNC. Under the direction of Dr. Julie Browne, this paper won the 2005 Alex McIntosh Graduate Paper Competition for research on food and culture. At the luncheon, the students spoke about their work and faculty advisor Ken Allan. Given the Sociology Department's tradition of recognizing the achievements of its students and faculty, the event was well attended, with faculty, students, and staff all in attendance.

Sociology Club is Reinvigorated

The UNCG Sociology Club was re-established in August of 2007 with a grand re-opening and membership drive led by President Jennifer Horton and faculty advisor Ken Allan. Given the Sociology Department’s tradition of recognizing the achievements of its students and faculty, the event was well attended, with faculty, students, and staff all in attendance.

Focus on Faculty

Stephan J. Sils

Two death row exonerations gave guest lectures in the fall of 2007. Professor Sabrina Westervelt launched a new course entitled “Miscarriages of Justice” in the Spring of 2007, the first of its kind in an undergraduate program in N.C. The development and implementation of the course was supported by an Advancement of Teaching and Learning Grant for returning to the U.S. She learned to read about the plight of Filipino laborers in the Kashmir valley of the English weekly ‘News Times’. This led to traveling in the Punjab and the Punjab and was surprised by the diversity in treatment between those from within Western powers and the workers from developing countries. The Filipinos factory workers and domestic workers were subjected to discrimination, mistreatment, and gendered violence, and were paid a fraction of the salary of local workers.

The course examines the causes and consequences of the wrongful conviction of the innocent within the American criminal justice system. The course provides Westervelt with an opportunity to integrate her current research interests with teaching. For the past several years, she and her colleague Kimberly COOK (UNCW) have been engaged in a study of the post-release experiences of death row exonerates, having completed indepth personal interviews with 18 death row exonerates from around the country. Westervelt and COOK primarily are interested in the obstacles exonerates face, the coping strategies they use to negotiate post-exoneration, and the factors that relate to their ability to adjust post-release. The course incorporates audio-taped interviews with exonerates from this research in addition to classroom lectures. The course builds on the research of Westervelt and COOK, who have provided a compelling account of the experiences of exonerated and non-exonerated death row inmates.

The course will also be offered as a Winter Term Session, with the goal of involving UNCG students in the project. The course will be offered as a Winter Term Session, with the goal of involving UNCG students in the project. The course builds on the research of Westervelt and COOK, who have provided a compelling account of the experiences of exonerated and non-exonerated death row inmates.

Students Who Helped

Two students – Katrina Matangi (left) and Sealed Brian (right) – present the Honors Luncheon. The University honors this spring: Katrina Matangi was named a Student Trustee and received an award for community service. Sealed Brian is a senior and has been a leader in the UNCG Sociology Club, serving as President this year. Sealed Brian was named a Student Trustee and received an award for community service. Sealed Brian is a senior and has been a leader in the UNCG Sociology Club, serving as President this year. Sealed Brian is a senior and has been a leader in the UNCG Sociology Club, serving as President this year. Sealed Brian is a senior and has been a leader in the UNCG Sociology Club, serving as President this year.
The True Story of the First Death Row Inmate Exonerated by DNA

On April 12, 2007 Kirk Bloodsworth discussed his harrowing experience with the criminal justice system and his struggles to survive after his exoneration. Bloodsworth also will sign copies of his book Bloodsworth: The True Story of One Man’s Triumph Over Injustice (with Tim Junkin). The public is welcome.

The Feminization of Migration in Africa:
Nigerian Women in Cameroon

Dr. Fonjong is the author of Transforming Rural Space through Non-governmental Efforts in Northwestern Cameroon and The Challenges of Non-governmental Organizations in Anglophone Cameroon. His research interests include environment and community management of natural resources, development issues in agrarian society, globalization and female migration in Africa, the role of NGOs in Africa, poverty and the alleviation of poverty in Africa, program planning and project design.

Immigration Policy and Family Reorganization:
Experiences of Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants

Dr. Menjivar’s research focuses on the effects of large scale social structures and social change on the lives of individuals who live in hostile and violent environments. Her research shows that such adverse contexts stem from various forms of exclusion—legal, social, economic—and from institutional, symbolic, and political violence. Specifically her research focuses on two areas: first, the effects of legal, social and economic exclusion on various spheres of social life, including social networks, family, gender relations, religious participation, and transnational ties, among Central American immigrants in the United States; and, second, the militarization of the U.S. border and its effects. Dr. Menjivar is the author of Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America and co-editor of When States Kill: Latin America, the US and Technologies of Terror.
Faculty Briefs

Gwen Hunnicutt spent the last academic year on a project that investigated fatal versus non-fatal outcomes among children in high risk environments in North Carolina. She is currently writing a grant proposal seeking federal funding to continue this study at the regional level.

Steve Kroll-Smith published *Volatile Places: Communities and Environmental Controversies* (Sage Press) with Valerie Gunter. He was awarded a faculty research grant to begin a comparative study of the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco and the 2005 flooding of New Orleans. His paper on first-responders to Hurricane Katrina was accepted by the *Journal of Public Management and Social Policy*. Kroll-Smith and department heads from Anthropology and Communication are currently preparing a professional certificate program, formerly titled: "Community Preparedness and Extreme Events." He continues to edit *Sociological Inquiry*.

Rebecca Adams has been serving as a member-at-large on the Council of the American Sociological Association and was an Advisory Editor on George Ritzer's recently published *Encyclopedia of Sociology* (Blackwell). She recently published an article in *Personal Relationships* entitled "Gender-of-Author Differences in Study Design of Older Adult Friendship Surveys" with several of our alumnae: Jenny Berggren, MA; Lindsey Docherty, BA; Kara Ruffin, BA; Cynthia Pfaff Wright, MA.

Bill Markham's new book on nature protection in eight European countries and the U.S., coedited with a colleague in the Netherlands, will be out soon. Bill wrote the chapter on Germany and coauthored the opening and concluding chapters. Bill travelled to Germany in October to present a paper at the German Sociological Association meetings. He coauthored the paper with Dr. Christine Hannemann, a Berlin sociologist who was a Visiting Scholar at UNCG last summer. Bill also wrote a successful proposal for money from the West African Research Association to bring a Cameroonian professor to UNCG for the last six weeks of the Spring 2007 Semester. Bill will be a Visiting Scholar at his University in Cameroon for two weeks in May.

Alumni News

Joe Quinn (MA '07) has been accepted into the PhD program at Florida State University.

Kelly Lucey (B.A. 2000 in Sociology and German, MS in Technical Communication from NC State) is currently residing in Richland, Washington. She is working for Bechtel National, Inc. on the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant Project as a Business Analyst for the Employee Concerns Program. Bechtel is designing, building and commissioning a complex of treatment plants to convert dangerous waste into stable glass.

Keeping in Touch
We’d love to hear from you. Keep us up-to-date or request your newsletter via E-mail at: Collective_Memories@UNCG.edu.