On mischief night, the psychology club transformed the basement of Dooling Hall into a uniquely macabre setting.

Taking over the DeSales Haunted House this year from the natural science department, students added a dark psychological spin. Instead of the typical horrific venue with vampires and ghouls, club members decorated three rooms to depict famous and controversial situations from the world of psychology.

In one room, they replicated Stanley Milgram’s 1961 obedience study, in which authority figures guided participants into progressively shocking a “student” (an accomplice) whenever he responded incorrectly to their questions. The psychology club added a shocking twist by placing a student behind a curtain who screamed whenever a visitor to the room flipped a switch.

Students also gave a wickedly good dramatization of a 19th-century lunatic asylum, as well as recreating Zimbardo’s famous Stanford prison experiment (coincidentally set up in a university basement).

For the first time since the haunted house began three years ago, it turned a profit. Club Vice President Maggie Marshall said, “I was wowed by the turnout for the event and was especially impressed by the way the psych club came together to make it both educational and frighteningly exciting.”

Dr. Boyce Jubilan, a club advisor, agreed. He was “pleasantly surprised that the students were able to integrate learning and fun in this exceptionally run event.”

The club plans to continue this event annually. With one success under their belt, they’ll start now to make it even more disturbing next year.
DeSales Mock Trial Team Prepares Complex Cases

In February 2009, after months of preparation, the DeSales University Mock Trial team traveled to Yale University for an intercollegiate competition. At the competition—which included teams from Harvard, the University of Connecticut and other northeastern schools—the DeSales team was responsible for preparing all aspects of a mock civil trial. In this role, they portrayed witnesses and lawyers on both sides in a lawsuit against news agency “BIN” for broadcasting an incorrect story about a famous politician.

In preparation for the 2009 event, students on the Mock Trial team took a class, LG 425, Mock Trial about a famous politician. To address this interest, Dr. Katherine Ramsland, chair of the department’s crime scene and forensics, taught them the trial advocacy skills they needed for the rigorous competition.

This year’s event will take place in February at Princeton University. The team is preparing a case concerning the murder of a famous movie director. In the case, students will adopt a number of roles, including movie stars, forensic scientists, and police investigators.

In preparation for this year’s competition, the team “scrimmaged” against local colleges and universities at Lafayette College.

“These competitions are an excellent opportunity for students interested in pursuing a career in law, policing, or even acting.”

DeSales Brings Forensics to High School Students

Thanks to the popularity of C.S.I. television programs, high school students are very interested in forensics. To address this interest, Dr. Katherine Ramsland, chair of the social science department, packed up the department’s crime scene and took it on the road.

On September 7, 2009, at Cumberland Valley High School in Mechanicsburg, Pa., Ramsland joined a local detective, coroner, and district attorney to present a forensic demonstration for students and members of the community. Sponsored by the Mystery Bookshop, the three-hour event drew nearly 100 people.

For the demonstration, Ramsland set up the crime scene in the gymnasium, complete with calculated clues and red herrings. Then each official described his or her part in the investigation and pointed out the significance of the clues for reconstructing the incident and generating a suspect profile.

Given the demonstration’s success, Ramsland hopes to develop a similar program for local high schools. Now prospective students who stop by Tucker House on the DeSales University campus can have a go at conducting their own crime scene investigation.

Social Science Faculty Publications

In the summer of 2009, Dr. Amy Saborsky collaborated on an article regarding pediatric anxiety and physical symptoms with colleagues from NYU and Mt. Sinai, Carrie Mania Watten, Laura Regigada, Paige Fisher and Keith Benkov. The article is entitled: “CBT for anxiety and somatic complaints in pediatric medical settings: An open pilot study,” and was published in Volume 16 of The Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings. Saborsky currently is working with the same colleagues on a second article involving pediatric anxiety and physical symptoms.


Dr. Katherine Ramsland has completed her 36th book, The Forensic Psychology of Criminal Minds, which will be out in February 2010 from Berkeley. She is also working on a book about psychologists who have had privileged access to extreme offenders, a true crime story about a female Italian serial killer, and a “goth” piece about Jack the Ripper for an anthology.

Jennifer L. Moore’s article, “Bringing Batson Back to Life: An Analysis of Synder v. Lombardi,” has been accepted for publication by the Criminal Law Bulletin and should be out in the spring 2010. She has also received a book contract with Prentice Hall for a criminology textbook with John Worrall.

Dr. Andrew Essig, associate professor of political science

Dr. Katherine Ramsland, associate professor of psychology

Dr. Katherine Ramsland, associate professor of psychology

Dr. Richard Noll has a book on the history of schizophrenia in America for Harvard Press. The title is Kraepelin’s Disease: The Rise and Fall of Dementia Praecox in America.

Dr. Patrick McGraw has published an article with Jennifer Moore: “Pursuing the Panderer: An Analysis of U.S. v. Williams.” The article was published in the Journal of Child Sexual Abuse.

Dr. Hugh McLennan has an article in progress: “Relating Counselor Rapport to Therapeutic Engagement in a Prison-Based Drug Treatment.”

In August 2009, Dr. Boyce Jubilan’s most recent article was released. This text, edited with Dawn Albertson, is a collection of biopsychology articles designed to provide individuals with the most recent and up-to-date research from respected magazines, journals, and newspapers.

Dr. Jennifer L. Moore, associate professor of psychology

Dr. Boyce Jubilan, associate professor of psychology

Dr. Richard Noll, associate professor of psychology

Dr. Patrick McGraw, assistant professor of criminal justice