perspective on life

By Emily Hessenberger
Entertainment Editor

Creighton's Fine and Performing Arts Department has a lot to be proud of in its production of Doin' Chickens.

The actors and actresses gave great performances, the set was incredible and the lighting set the mood perfectly.

The play's author, Brian Kokensparger, describes the characters as being natural or unnatural parts of the Appalachian landscape, which he calls a dangerous and poisonous place.

The character of the mother is played by Ann Schulke, a senior majoring in theater. The mother, confined to a wheelchair, constantly nagging the children and her husband about getting things done or what they have done wrong. She must deal with the monotony of her day-to-day life on the farm in her wheelchair.

She is especially hard on the daughter. In the mother's eyes, the daughter doesn't do anything right. The mother always reminds the daughter to do this or not to do that.

The mother constantly tells the daughter not to do two things. One is to stop itching the poison ivy on her hands, because otherwise her hands will scar and she will never find a boy. The other thing she tells her is to stop talking about the dream barn.

Even though the mother comes across as being harsh and domineering, her concern and love for her daughter still comes through at the end of the play.

The role of the mother is powerful and Schulke gives the audience a great, powerful performance.

The role of the father is played by Jerry Horning. This role is not nearly as dominating as the role of the mother. Indeed, it is the opposite; he is more passive and simplistic.

Kokensparger said that the father is not conscious of the danger around him and escapes through his simplicity.

The father, when talking to the mother about the children, says to just leave them alone; they are only children and they are not doing anything wrong.

white chicken is extra special and will bring good luck to the family and to the farm. She also dreams of a "dream barn" that to her is a safe place away from everyone. These dreams lead to her downfall.

The girl realizes in the end that holding onto her dreams will make them impossible to achieve.

Schulte does a remarkable job in the role of the daughter. The role is difficult because of the changes that the character goes through in the course of the play.

The boy, played by local high school student Andy Rennells, is much like his sister.

The boy is just as innocent and optimistic as his sister. He goes along with what she tells him and he trusts her completely. He also tries to protect her from the dangerous landscape that contains not only animals, but humans as well.

The boy and girl share a promise that is not revealed until the end of the play. The promise they share shows how close they are as brother and sister and keeps the audience interested in what is going to happen between these two throughout the play.

The character of Freddie, played by Bill Thomas, starts out as unnatural, turns into a beast-like state and stays like that throughout the play, Kokensparger said. He is quiet, but in the end he turns into someone the audience does not expect.

Thomas' role as Freddie is interesting. It must have been hard to play the types of scenes he has to do. Freddie is a unique character.

The character Nick is played by Mike Schneider. Nick is described by Kokensparger as being dangerous like a fox. Nick is very much like a fox; he is quick and cunning. Nick has a strange and eerie look about him, while Freddie has more of a gentle look.

Schneider does a great job by playing Nick as being quick-thinking and fox-like.

The stage and lighting, which were designed by Bill Van Deest, were incredibly realistic and added to the reality and suspense of the play. The farmstead and the spring looked true to life.

Rebecca Schulke, as the girl, and Jerry Horning, as the father, rehearse a scene from Creighton's Fine and Performing Arts production of Doin' Chickens. The play runs through Oct. 9-11. Curtain is 8 p.m. and Saturday performances Sunday's performance will p.m.

Reservations are available at Creighton's Fine and Performing Arts Department, 280-2509.