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**Controversial Abortion Drama “*KEELY AND DU*”
Presented by College of the Canyons Theatre Department**

SANTA CLARITA – The College of the Canyons Theatre Department is taking on a powerful and controversial project as it prepares for its production of “Keely and Du” in late November. It is the second production of the 2009 – 2010 College of the Canyons theatre season and will be presented in the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center’s Black Box Theatre.

The premise of the play is poignant. Keely, a pregnant rape victim, is kidnapped outside an abortion clinic and held prisoner. She wakes up chained to a bed. She discovers from a visitor, Du, that she has been kidnapped by a radical pro-life group intent on forcing Keely to have her baby. And so the play and the conversation begins.

The production, written by Jane Martin and directed by Susan Hinshaw, will offer performances at 8 p.m. Wednesday, November 18 through Saturday, November 21 and a 2 p.m. Sunday, November 22 matinee performance is also scheduled.

Pro-life. Pro-choice. “Keely and Du” presents the abortion issue in a balanced fashion. Who is accountable, God or man? What man or woman can be accountable for a human life? What is the extent of individual freedom? What is a rape victim's right? These are among the infinitely troubling questions provoked by the drama.

The play received its professional debut at the Actors Theatre of Louisville and went on to receive a Pulitzer Prize nomination and the American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award in 1993. Jane Martin first came to national attention for “Talking With,” a collection of monologues premiering at the Actors Theatre of Louisville in 1981. Martin’s other works include “Vital Signs,” “What Mama Don’t Know,” “Cementville,” “Criminal Hearts” and “Middle-Aged White Guys.”

Very little else is known about Martin, and no interviews or photographs of the playwright have ever been published. Many believe that Jane Martin is a pseudonym for Jon Jory, former Artistic Director of the Actors Theatre of Louisville and frequent director of Martin’s plays, although Jory has repeatedly denied this.

COC theatre professor and professional actress, Susan Hinshaw, directs “Keely and Du.” Hinshaw directed last season’s production of “A Doll’s House” and is

the former chair of the COC theatre program.

The cast consists of seven COC students, many of them newcomers to the theatre program at COC.

"The play isn't solely about abortion," said Paul Wickline, producer and department chair. "It is about two individuals who manage to connect on a deeply personal level, despite their distinct philosophical differences. The interaction between these two characters as they wrestle with deeply held and distinctly different beliefs," stressed Wickline, "is exciting to watch. The ending will surprise everyone, and no one."

Hinshaw believes audiences will be captivated by the performances. "The roles require layers and levels of character that are not often found in roles for young people," said Hinshaw. "Students have strong, passionate opinions about this subject. I enjoy theatre that asks questions," said Hinshaw, "and this one does just that."

The production contains mature subject matter and adult language. Due to the nature of this production, there will be no late seating. Patrons are urged to arrive at the theatre at least fifteen minutes before curtain.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and can be purchased through the PAC box office by visiting the COC website or calling 661-362-5304.