

# SCCC professors continue "Battle of the Sexes" by writing their latest Shakespeare book

By DIANA TUORTO

**NEWTON** -Dr. Francesco Ancona, a professor at Sussex County Community College (SCCC) and Mid-Career Princeton University Fellow, and Dr. Mary Ives Thompson, PTK co-advisor and faculty co-chair, are releasing a book entitled *He Says/She Says Shakespeare* on Sunday, Feb. 24.

*He Says/She Says Shakespeare*, a contemporary approach to the timeless work of the great bard, demonstrates how easily Shakespeare can be interpreted in unique ways by different readers.

When asked what inspired the book, Ancona said, "I

was in my office with Thompson, and we started arguing over our views on Shakespeare. We thought it would make a great idea for a book and course. We cover six plays: *MacBeth*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. The book shows our two completely different perspectives and lets the readers choose for themselves."

Thompson commented, "*He Says/She Says Shakespeare* illustrates that it is possible to engage someone in debate without 'winning' becoming the ultimate goal, especially with Shakespeare's works that display an incredible intimacy with the human condition; disagreement can be productive and an ultimately satisfying end in and of itself. That being said, I do think my positions are far more valid than those of my venerable writing partner."

"Ultimately, it's not easy arguing with women," Ancona quipped.

Ancona has written four other books and has had numerous articles published in the U.S., the U.K. and India. He also co-authored a screenplay and a children's book (with his wife, artist Janet Ancona).

*He Says/She Says Shakespeare* is currently available for pre-order on Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com for \$24 in paperback format. Advance copies are also available at the SCCC bookstore. Ancona and Thompson will teach a Shakespeare evening course together this summer. For more information on the book or the course, Dr. Ancona can be reached at [fancona@sussex.edu](mailto:fancona@sussex.edu).