This course is an introductory exploration of some representations of women in the great dramatic operas of the Italian and French 19th Century tradition (also known as the venerable War Horses of the opera repertoire). This survey is a labour of love for a wonderful musical form that is filled with passion, drama and spectacle. It is also an act of resistance against the limited lot within which operatic women must struggle for power and transcendence. Whether she is the fragile and diseased Mimi, the dangerous Carmen or the mad Lucia, death closes her struggle for health, power or love. This closure is conveyed in the music but also in the words of the libretto. As a hybrid form, opera benefits from a study that considers both the text and the music. Therefore, we will read the libretti as well as watch performances of the operas. In all cases but one, these will be on video, but students will also have an opportunity to attend a live production of *La Traviata* during the semester.

**Works to be studied:**
- *La Bohème*
- *Carmen*
- *Lucia di Lammermoor*
- *Aida*
- *Rigoletto*
- *Turandot*

**Required reading:**
Custom courseware package available at the bookstore.

**Course requirements:**
Short review of the performance of *La Traviata* 20%
Term paper (3,000 - 3,750 words) 60%
Class participation 20%

**NOTE:** Writing style, grammar and format will be considered in determining the grade. Plagiarized essays will receive a failing grade and may result in course failure.