During the filming of a documentary, Jacques Derrida was asked “What philosopher would be your mother?” At first, he laughs, but then Derrida answers what is to him a very serious and important question.

Derrida replies that no philosopher could be his mother because of the masculine nature of the history of philosophy. Rather, a female philosopher is only possible after the deconstruction of that philosophy – which is the task that he is working on. Thus, his daughter or granddaughter could be a philosopher but not his mother. The female philosopher only takes the stage after man-philosopher – so long in monologue with himself – suddenly hears the voice of ‘the other.’

For Derrida the question of the masculine/feminine is one of presence/absence. It is a (meta-) physical question answered quantitatively.

For Irigaray, however, the question is more than (other than?) metaphysical and quantitative. It is epistemological and qualitative. Woman is not (meta-)physically the quantitative absence of what is present in man. Rather, woman is epistemologically a qualitatively different perceptual landscape. Man and woman are not only (meta-) physically relationally ‘other,’ they are also epistemologically different.
Underscoring her overall philosophy is the very pointed and purposeful absence of her own biography in almost all of her writings and interviews. The proper question then is not “Who is Irigaray?” but “How does Irigaray know?”

Luce Irigaray is one of the 20th/21st centuries’ leading thinkers in feminism and philosophy. According to Irigaray herself, her work can be divided into three phases. The first phase represents a critique of Western male subjectivity. The second phase explores the possibilities for establishing a female subjectivity. The third phase represents her turn to politics and social justice where she situates the two subjectivities within a philosophical and ethical relationship of one subject to another.

Much of her writing is a critique of the history of philosophy and its traditional exclusion of women and the feminine. Irigaray alleges that women have been traditionally objectified as passive matter/nature. She challenges women and men to create a 'sexed' culture open to an active female subjectivity. As it stands, according to Irigaray, Western culture lacks true sexual difference. In response to this diagnosis, Irigaray offers her own prescription: Mimesis, strategic essentialism, utopian ideals, and employing novel language.

Here is a large and representative collection of her writings, spanning a career of work and arranged chronologically (spanning six decades!), in very-good to near-fine first edition state—many signed and/or inscribed (including one with a 6-page handwritten letter)—providing a glimpse of the elusive Irigaray. What we find there is not ‘who’ is Irigaray, but perhaps some insight into ‘how’ Irigaray knows.

*Books priced individually; price of entire collection is negotiable.

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   An early article by Irigaray in which she begins to explore the notion of sexual difference and language, ideas she later develops in Speculum of the Other Woman, her doctoral dissertation (1974) and later works. Also with an article by Lacan.

   CONDITION: Very good to near fine in printed wrappers.

   $80


   An early article by Luce Irigaray exploring the nature of schizophrenia.

   CONDITION: Very good in printed wrappers. Light edge wear.

   $60


   An early article by Luce Irigaray in an issue of L'Arc dedicated to the ideas of Sigmund Freud.

   CONDITION: Very good in printed wrappers. Light edge wear.

   $60


   An early paper by Luce Irigaray (co-authored with Jean Dubois) in which she explores the relationship between linguistics and psychoanalysis. *The book itself contains 12 papers. Includes: Some Aspects of the Relation between Theory and Method; Method and Theory in the Perspective of Antropological Linguistics; Method, Theory and Phenomenology; Methodological Principles: Behavioral Tests in Linguistics; The Method of Universal Grammar; One Instance of Prague School Methodology: Functional Analysis of Utterance and Text; Basic Principles of the Comparative Method; Theoretical Approaches: Theory-Building in the Descriptive Approach; Hierarchy in Language; A Structural View of Sociolinguistics; Experimental Method in Psycholinguistics; Linguistic Method in Ethnography.*

   CONDITION: Very good+ in blue cloth covered boards with mylar protected dust jacket. Jacket shows light edge wear, but very good as well. Small name stamped to upper corner of front endpaper. Scarce.

   $80

First edition of Luce Irigaray’s first doctoral dissertation (and first published work) in Linguistics. Part of the Approaches to Semiotics series edited by Thomas A. Sebeok, Indiana University (number 24).

Heavily influenced by Lacan, Irigaray explores the pathology of language and “investigates the linguistic collapse suffered by those with senile dementia. Her focus was on the kinds of subjectivity that can exist for those whose language ceases to be a transparently expressive medium. She concluded that the dementia sufferer was disabled from speaking for himself, and was forced to repeat pre-existing language structures: the demented figure was denied a place from which to speak by the process of his disease, and ended by ‘being spoken’ by a language over which he had no control, which did not reflect any conscious intention, and which therefore undermined the very notion of subjectivity itself” (Robbins, Ruth, Literary Feminisms, p. 146).

CONDITION: A near fine copy in publisher’s red cloth with printed dust jacket. Scarce.

6. “*L’υστρα de Platon*” (*Plato’s Hysteria*), pp. 31-59 in Digraphe 1, editions galilee, 1974. Small quarto, *First printing.*

An early article by Luce Irigaray, a critical re-reading of Plato’s allegory of the cave. This essay was later that same year incorporated as the last chapter in *Speculum of the Other Woman*.

CONDITION: Very good in printed wrappers. Light edge wear.


An early article by Luce Irigaray in an issue of L’Arc dedicated to the ideas of Jacques Lacan. Other articles by Lacan, Catherine Clement and others.

CONDITION: Very good in printed wrappers. Light edge wear.


First edition of Luce Irigaray’s doctoral dissertation, a complex engagement with the history of philosophy and psychoanalytic theory. In this, her first major work, she outlines her massive project of a philosophy of sexual difference and makes
her first major contribution to feminist theory. Irigaray argues that Western thought is grounded in the paternal and masculine, and explicitly estranged from the maternal and the feminine. In order to find a way forward, Irigaray undertakes a psychoanalysis of western philosophers and thinkers – especially Freud and Plato – seeking to liberate the ‘repressed’ of western culture.

CONDITION: A very good+ copy in publisher’s printed wrap.


An early article by Luce Irigaray.

CONDITION: Good+ in printed wrappers. Light edge wear, some wrinkling to wrappers.


An early article by Luce Irigaray on the subordination of women in language. Later reprinted in Ce sexe qui n’en est pas un (This Sex Which Is Not One).

CONDITION: Very good+ in printed wrappers.


An early article by Luce Irigaray (and Catherine Clement) on the subordination of women in culture and language.

CONDITION: Very good+ in printed wrappers with light edge wear.


With a dated 3-line inscription and Irigaray’s signature on the half title page.

Irigaray’s best known work in which she questions the assumption that female sexuality is dependent upon male sexuality and, therefore, secondary. Irigaray posits that the dominant, Freudian phallo-centric model privileges a sexuality based on sight and the visibility of the male sexual organ. The hidden remains marginal.

CONDITION: Some mild edge-wear to wraps. A very good copy of one of Irigaray’s most important titles.

Irigaray’s best known work in which she questions the assumption that female sexuality is dependent upon male sexuality and, therefore, secondary. Irigaray posits that the dominant, Freudian phallo-centric model privileges a sexuality based on sight and the visibility of the male sexual organ. The hidden remains marginal.

**CONDITION:** Some mild edge-wear to wraps. A very good copy of one of Irigaray’s most important titles.


First edition of a work by Irigaray in which she personifies water and pursues a dialogue with the 19th century philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche. Jacques Derrida is strategically engaged on the elision of femininity. This is the first of Irigaray’s incomplete tetralogy.

**CONDITION:** Some mild edge-wear to wrappers with very light bumping to heel of spine. A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps.


*Passions* represents the second of Irigaray’s incomplete tetralogy (following *Amante Marine Nietzsche* and preceding *Oubli Air Heidegger*). *Passions* is a hymn to erotic love, “played out in an archaic conceptual landscape where male and female participate in the redefinition of the world” (Burke in Hunter’s *Seduction and Theory* [1989], p. 232).

**CONDITION:** Small unobtrusive original price sticker affixed to rear corner, else a near fine copy of a rare work.

$150

Irigaray personifies air and pursues an imaginary dialogue with 20th century philosopher Martin Heidegger. *L’oubli* represents the third and final of Irigaray’s incomplete tetralogy.

**CONDITION:** A very good, bright copy in publisher’s printed wraps with previous owner’s name to front free end-paper in blue ink. A rare work.


$800

With a dated full-page inscription and Irigaray’ signature on the front-free endpaper with a 6-page handwritten letter folded and loosely inserted.

Irigaray’s mimetic engagement with Plato, Aristotle, Desartes, Spinoza, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas on the question of ethics. Here Irigaray also elaborates her own vision for ethical relationships.

**CONDITION:** A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps.


$200

Irigaray’s mimetic engagement with Plato, Aristotle, Desartes, Spinoza, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas on the question of ethics. Here Irigaray also elaborates her own vision for ethical relationships.

**CONDITION:** A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps with previous owner’s bookplate to front free end-paper.


$50

An article by Luce Irigaray in which she explores the role of art in creating beauty via a psychoanalytic reading of Unica Zurn.

**CONDITION:** Very good+ in printed orange wrappers with original printed band. Original small price sticker to rear of band.

$150

Beginning with a study of both the mentally ill and normal subjects, Irigaray then goes on to examine how the discourse of scholars, poets, and philosophers are marked by their bodies. Speaking, whether by a scholar, poet or a philosopher, is never free from the way the body experiences.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps with some light spotting and a minor bump to the lower front wrap.


$150

A collection of papers presented at conferences, interviews and smaller publications representing the political turn in her writing. Irigaray examines and attempts to expose the need for social justice in regards to the place of women in society.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps with an additional, protective glassine wrap.


$40

An article by Luce Irigaray continuing her exploration of memory, gender, and sexual difference.

CONDITION: Good+ in illustrated wrappers with light soiling. Sun-faded spine with title re-written in ink.


$60

Irigaray’s and others discuss men and women in conversation and language. Do men and women speak the same language? Here, men and women answer questions like this as an exploration of men and women in conversation.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps Small price-sticker to rear wrapper with some loss. Else very good.

$100

In this scarce first printing (first published in Italian), Irigaray explores the need and possibility for difference. Life and identity are not monolithic; Being is multiple, and, as such, true living requires careful attention to and space for internal and external difference. Identity is both created and discovered in difference.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s orange wraps with illustrated dust wrapper. Name in ink to first flyleaf. Else very good+ copy of a scarce first printing of one of Irigaray’s important later works.


$350

The first French translation of *Essere Due*, first published in Italian in 1994. Irigaray explores the need and possibility for difference. Life and identity are not monolithic; Being is multiple, and, as such, true living requires careful attention to and space for internal and external difference. Identity is both created and discovered in difference.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps SIGNED & INSCRIBED on half-title.


$300

Irigaray’s focus on breath in this book is a natural outgrowth of the attention that she has given in previous books to the elements—air (*L'Oubli de L'Air Chez Martin Heidegger*), water (*Amante Marine de Frédéric Nietzsche*), and fire (*Passions élémentaires*). Here, Irigaray returns to fundamental human experiences—breathing and the fact of sexual difference—to rethink questions of race, ethnicity, and globalization.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps. Former owner’s name to front free end paper. Else very good. SIGNED & INSCRIBED on half-title.

The first English translation of *Essere Due*, first published in Italian in 1994. Irigaray explores the need and possibility for difference. Life and identity are not monolithic; Being is multiple, and, as such, true living requires careful attention to and space for internal and external difference. Identity is both created and discovered in difference.

CONDITION: A very good copy in publisher’s printed wraps Sun fading to spine with some wrinkling to front cover fore edge. Else very good. SIGNED & INSCRIBED on half-title.


In this recent book, Irigaray goes back to themes from her early work. Here, she deconstructs the origins of Western culture, looking at lost stories that precede the traditional story of “male in exile” seeking to dominate and control the world around him. Irigaray seeks to restore and recover the maternal in all of us.

CONDITION: Very good or better in printed wraps.