Gender, Matter, Materialisms in French and Francophone Contexts
French 540: Studies in French Literature and Philosophy

Natania Meeker
Thursday, 2-4:50 PM, THH 219
Section 34325R

In this course we will examine interactions between theories of gender and theories of matter in literary and philosophical contexts, beginning with the eighteenth century and proceeding toward the present day. We will start with the Enlightenment as a kind of crucible period in which various materialisms took a particular interest in questions of gender and theorists of gender were invested in rethinking materiality. The course will move forward into the contemporary period to examine debates in feminist, queer, and trans studies around the role of matter and materialisms in understanding and experiencing gender. Throughout, we will pose the question: what kinds of media allow us to reconfigure, restart, or reactivate our experience of materiality in its relationship to gender? What is the role of art, literature, and film in enhancing, expanding, and/or enriching theories of gender and materiality? What is at stake in the “realization” of matter (and gender) in aesthetic contexts? Authors, theorists, and artists we will explore will include: Marion Bataillard, Anne Berger, Émilie du Châtelet, Christine Delphy, Denis Diderot, Elsa Dorlin, Françoise de Graffigny, Luce Irigaray, Lucretius, Paul Preciado, and others.

While the course will be taught in French, students from all disciplines are welcome. Students who are not on the French track III (CSLC) may choose to participate in discussions in English with permission from the instructor. Please contact Natania Meeker (nmeeker@usc.edu) with any questions or for more information.