Are you responsible for what you see? Sometimes? Never? Always? How do you decide? Why do works of art so often represent suffering? Does art allow us to witness suffering without having to take responsibility for that suffering? What happens when we witness real suffering as though it were art? In this course we will consider crucial texts on spectatorship from Plato to the present, and think about how various thinkers and artists have approached these and other questions. Across a wide range of philosophical and literary texts, we will look at how the problem of looking from a distance has informed thinking about aesthetics, ethics, and politics. Throughout our discussions of these readings, we will ask what it means that thinkers insist that looking has power: power to produce various emotions from desire to sympathy, or power to produce social bonds and even political change. These thinkers will, in turn, challenge us to think about the function of images in our current culture of mediated images.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Please use these editions, which are available at the NYU Book Center:

Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (Grove: 080214439X)
Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Penguin: 0143105922)
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES
LECTURES

SEPTEMBER

7th  Introduction
9th  Plato, Republic, Book 1
14th  Republic, Books 2 and 3
16th  Republic, Book 4 and 5
21st  Republic, Books 6 and 7
23rd  Republic, Book 8
24th  First Paper Due: 1-2 pages
28th  Republic, Books 9 and 10
30th  Ovid, Metamorphoses, Book I

OCTOBER

5th  Metamorphoses, Books II and III
7th  Metamorphoses, Book VI
12th  Metamorphoses, Book X
14th  Shakespeare, King Lear, scenes 1 through 7 (pages 99-177)
15th  Second Paper Due: 2-3 pages
19th  King Lear, scenes 8 through 10 (144-185)
21st  King Lear, scenes 11 through 19 (186-229)
26th  King Lear, scenes 20 through 24 (229-275)
28th  MIDTERM (in class)
NOVEMBER

2nd  Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts* (pages 3-75)

4th  Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts* (75-137)

9th  Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (pages to be announced)

11th Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (pages to be announced)

16th Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (pages to be announced)

18th Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (31-76)

19th  **Third Paper Due: 4-5 pages**

23rd  Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (76-98)

30th  Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (99-151 and 17-27 [“Attempt at Self-Criticism”])

DECEMBER

2nd  Hitchcock, *Rear Window*

7th  Beckett, *Endgame* (to end)

9th  Beckett, *Endgame* (reread)

14th  Jacques Rancière, “The Emancipated Spectator” (Blackboard)

15th  **Fourth Paper Due: 4-5 pages**

**EXAM:** Tuesday, December 21st, 10:00-11:50 a.m.
DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Sections meet on Fridays as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>028</td>
<td>08:00am - 09:15am</td>
<td>25W4 C-12</td>
<td>Nicholas Matlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029</td>
<td>09:30am - 10:45am</td>
<td>TISC LC5</td>
<td>Nicholas Matlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>030</td>
<td>11:00am - 12:15pm</td>
<td>25W4 C-18</td>
<td>Sarah Ostendorf</td>
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<tr>
<td>031</td>
<td>12:30pm - 01:45pm</td>
<td>TISC LC6</td>
<td>Sarah Ostendorf</td>
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<tr>
<td>032</td>
<td>02:00pm - 03:15pm</td>
<td>25W4 C-10</td>
<td>Randall Sessler</td>
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<tr>
<td>033</td>
<td>03:30pm - 04:45pm</td>
<td>25W4 C-12</td>
<td>Randall Sessler</td>
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<tr>
<td>034</td>
<td>09:30am - 10:45am</td>
<td>TISC LC6</td>
<td>Ross Knecht</td>
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<tr>
<td>035</td>
<td>11:00am - 12:15pm</td>
<td>25W4 C-19</td>
<td>Ross Knecht</td>
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REQUIREMENTS

Reading. You must complete all reading by the dates listed on the syllabus. Lectures and recitation alike rely on your having read the assigned pages with attention and care. Such care includes making note of passages you have questions about or do not understand. We reserve the right to quiz you on the material.

Participation. Participation includes alert attendance at lectures and engaged participation in discussion sections. You may miss two recitation meetings without penalty, but your recitation leader will expect you to explain in advance why you are unable to attend. More than two absences in recitation will result in a lower grade.

Written Work. In addition to a midterm and final, four papers are required. Deadlines and page lengths are in the syllabus above. We will provide questions, and there will be discussion of writing in lecture and recitation. You should hand in work on time.

You must also contribute to your section’s Blackboard discussion at least once a week, except during those weeks when a writing assignment is due.

And please note: Laptops in lecture halls are for taking notes. You may not use laptops in sections.