A History of the Critical lens

“It is the responsibility of the writer to expose our many grievous faults and failures and to hold up to the light our

dark and dangerous dreams, for the purpose of improvement.” — John Steinbeck (January 2001)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

All literature shows us the power of emotion. It is emotion, not reason, that motivates characters in literature.

— paraphrased from an interview with Duff Brenna

(January 2003)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“Good people … are good because they’ve come to wisdom through failure.” —William Saroyan

(Regents: June 2003)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“I like flawed characters because somewhere in them I see more of the truth.”

— Nicolas Cage, as quoted in

“His Truth is Out There”

from *Los Angeles Times,*

November 12, 2000

(Regents: August 2005)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“For what does it mean to be a hero? It requires you to be prepared to deal with forces larger than yourself.” —Norman Mailer

*The Spooky Art*, 2003

(June 2007)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“You must take life the way it comes at you and make the best of it.” —Yann Martel

*Life of Pi*, 2001

(August 2007)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“Greatness lies not in being strong, but in the right using of

strength….” —Henry Ward Beecher *Life Thoughts,* 1858

(January 2008)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“…it is the human lot to try and fail...” —David Mamet

“Attention Must Be Paid”

*The New York Times*, February 13, 2005

(June 2008)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“The real hero is always a hero by mistake…” —Umberto Eco

*Travels in Hyperreality,* 1986

(August 2008)

Interpretation:

Thesis:

“Fear always springs from ignorance.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson

*An Oration Delivered Before the Phi Beta Kappa Society,*

*at Cambridge, August 31, 1837*

(January 2009)

Interpretation:

Thesis: