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**Elaine B. Safer** (M.A., Ph.D., Case Western Reserve Univ.), is author of "Mocking the Age: The Later Novels of Philip Roth," State Univ. of New York Press, 2006; co-editor with Ben Siegel, *Saul Bellow As Comic Writer*; Vol. 19. no.1. (2003): special Issue *Saul Bellow Journal*; *The Contemporary American Comic Epic: The Novels of Barth, Pynchon, Gaddis, and Kesey*. Wayne State UP, 1988; co-editor with Thomas Erskine, *John Milton: L'Allegro and Il Penseroso* (1970). She has published articles in such journals as *Studies in American Jewish Literature*, *Studies in the Novel*, *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* *Studies in American Fiction*, *Saul Bellow Journal*, *Melus: Society for the Study of MultiEthnic Literature of the US*, *Milton Studies*; her essays also appear in collections such as *Philip Roth: Modern Critical Views*, Ed. Harold Bloom, *The Columbia Companion to the Twentieth-Century American Short Story*, Ed. Blanche H. Gelfant., and *American Literary Dimensions*. Her next book will be "The Comic Imagination in Contemporary Jewish American Fiction: The Work of Steve Stern, Allegra Goodman, Ann Roiphe, and Thane Rosenbaum."

Awards include NEH Summer Stipend (1983); Fulbright to France (1990); Univ. of Delaware Excellence in Teaching Award (1993); Fellow in the Center For Advanced Studies (1997-98); Distinguished Professor at Lyon III, France (1990; winter sessions 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995). She has presented papers at MLA, Amer. Lit. Association, International Society for Humor Studies, as well as the Sorbonne, Universite of Lyon, Universite Orleans, University of Valencia. She offers courses in Modern and Postmodern American Literature, Twentieth-Century American Novel, Critical Studies in the Novel, and the poetry and prose of John Milton.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

#### **MALS 626 (core course): STUDIES IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE**

This MALS seminar will examine narrative and thematic concerns in American fiction written after WW II and also before WW II. The fiction will be explored against a background of cultural, philosophical, and literary trends. We shall read about and discuss such concerns as the continuity in American literature between modern and postmodern works; myth and myth making for experimentation and innovation; multicultural emphasis on minority groups: Black, Jew, Catholic, Women; irony; satire; the absurd. Texts include fiction by F. Scott Fitzgerald (*The*

*Great Gatsby*), William Faulkner (*Light in August*), Joseph Heller (*Catch-22*), Toni Morrison (*Song of Solomon*), Philip Roth (*Plot Against America*). Course requirements: four response papers (2 pages); oral reports based on two 8-10 page papers; class discussion.