1106-46-413   **Ronald G. Douglas*** (`rgd@tamu.edu`), TAMU-3368, College Station, TX 77843. *Maps similar to essentially normal ones.* Preliminary report.

Almost fifty years ago, P. Rosenthal and the author characterized operators similar to normal ones in terms of the Gelfand transform on its double commutant. This result also extends to commuting n-tuples. In this talk we discuss attempts to extend the reesult to essential normality. This circle of ideas is related to the BDF theory and homomorphisms into the Calkin algebra. (Received August 27, 2014)