An important and very often neglected research ‘exercise’ is to analyze who says what (if anything and especially anything *substantive*) about a particular publication. This activity has multiple benefits: (a) it helps to minimize “wheel reinventions;” (b) it can very quickly bring one up to date in a particular area of research; (c) it identifies the high-impact publications; (d) it very often (but not always!?) shows that the high-impact publications are also the very important ones.

In our field, this is accomplished by using the Scientific Citation Index (see Web of Science in E-resources at PSU library), published by the Institute of Scientific Information, Philadelphia, PA (Eugene Garfield, Director Emeritus).

Your assignment is to study the citations of the paper(s) we select for discussion. Analyze the impact of each paper (i.e., how many citations does it have, year by year). For comparison, check the “Citation Classics” column in *Current Contents*. (As an example, a paper by Prof. Philip L. Walker Jr. and coworkers - *Adv. Catal.*, Vol. 11, p. 133 - with 450 citations in 40 years (and now?), is a Citation Classic.) Also, and more important, analyze whether anyone says anything substantive about the paper (e.g., makes comparisons, supports or challenges findings or theories, etc.). How many of the citing papers adhere to the (too frequent?) practice of *casually* mentioning the cited paper *only* in the Introduction? How many of the citing papers do not *really* say (i.e., do not paraphrase correctly) what the cited papers say?

This is of course an ‘open-ended’ assignment, similar to but much more focused and arguably more reliable than a google search. The analysis should be easy if you are already using it in your research. If you are not, it is an excellent exercise that I highly recommend you routinely use in your research both in Graduate School and when you “get out into the real world.”