ISSUES IN REVIEWS

or: Why some Septembers get really stressful

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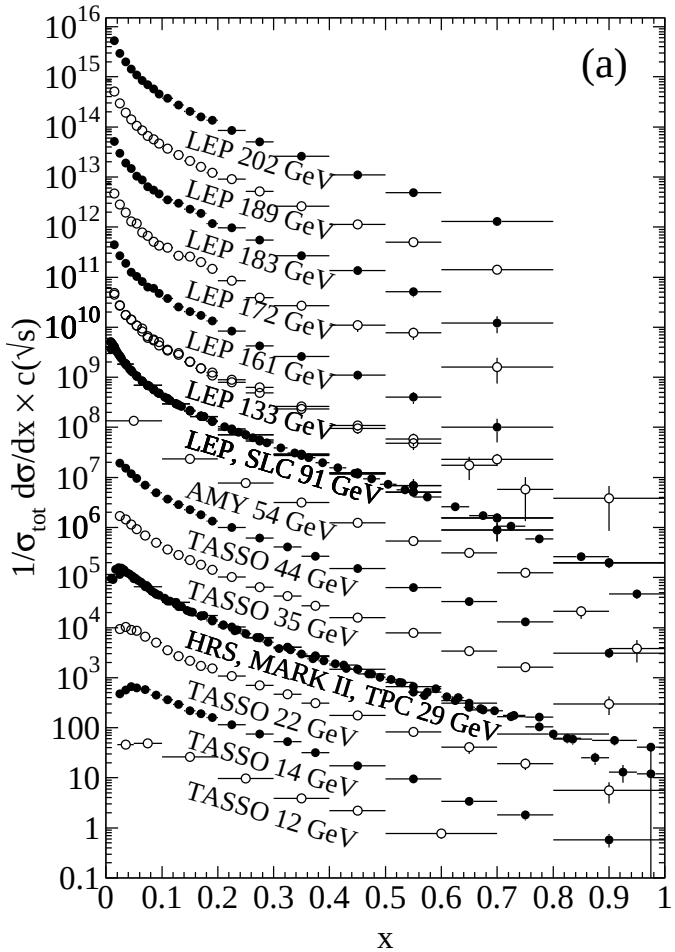

In the first place, many contributors are really great:

- They are on time
  $\Longrightarrow$ The reviewers have lots of time and are prompt
- The contribution is in proper TEX—either new (if the review is new) or from our file (if it is a revision)
- The figures are vector postscript and are of publication quality
- They know the difference between GeV and Gev and GeV, and between $p_\perp$, P_t, p_T, $P_\perp$
  $\Longrightarrow$ in particular, these symbols are not used interchangeably in the same review
- The length is appropriate, and consistent with our original request
- Less than 20% of the review space is taken up by references
- References are up to date, rather than *e.g.*, `physics/9904388` in a 2004 review

First, there is OUR problem of identifying the author(s) who write well and pedagogically, are real experts in the field, and will provide the appropriate file(s) on time

But there are oft-repeated problems with the authors and referees:

- Invited person(s) are flattered to be asked to write for RPP, and readily agree. After that they never answer mail
  $\Longrightarrow$ we catch on long after it is too late to invite somebody else
- "When is your REAL deadline?"
  $\Longrightarrow$ The overseer and Piotr are in deep doo-doo
- This is such an important subject (to me and therefore to everybody else) that my Review (which turns out to be 53 pages long and has 274 references) cannot be shortened
- Review is two months late and has already become an Excedrin sink: with a week to go we need to get it refereed. Then we are sent a first draft
  - Related problem: We spend days massaging their mss, then they send us a revised one. Repeatedly
- "I just posted it on the `lanl.arXiv.org` e-Print archive"
- Author makes cosmetic fixed and patches on updates for several editions

An immediate result of all this is that RPP04 is 1109 pages long

So what can we do?

— If I had any idea, I would have done it long ago and would only have two slides for this talk

And there would be a nice plot on the title slide

And, if I had any sense,
I would end this talk now