Advances in Ergonomy

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Every conference organizer feels the need to commemorate the event to which he has devoted so much effort by publishing the proceedings. On occasion, the result is an outstanding success – an example which comes to mind is the proceedings of the conference on the Marathon published as volume 301 of the Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences in 1977. More commonly, however, published conference proceedings are a failure, and there are several reasons for this. Keynote papers or reviews by the invited speakers are almost invariably and inevitably identical to reviews published elsewhere. The abstracts of oral communications or poster sessions offer the opportunity to introduce preliminary, or inconclusive results and to speculate in a way that would not be considered acceptable by most journals and their referees. Much of the information that appears in abstract form in conference proceedings never appears as a full paper, and so would be lost to the scientific community.

This volume fails on the first count. We are not told the date of the conference (the Sixth International Seminar on Ergonomy), but the publication date is 1991, and the most recent date that I could find in the reference lists is 1989, so I suspect that otherwise remain unpublished. Keynote speakers often take the opportunity to introduce preliminary, or inconclusive results and to speculate in a way that would not be considered acceptable by most journals and their referees. Much of the information that appears in abstract form in conference proceedings never appears as a full paper, and so would be lost to the scientific community.


