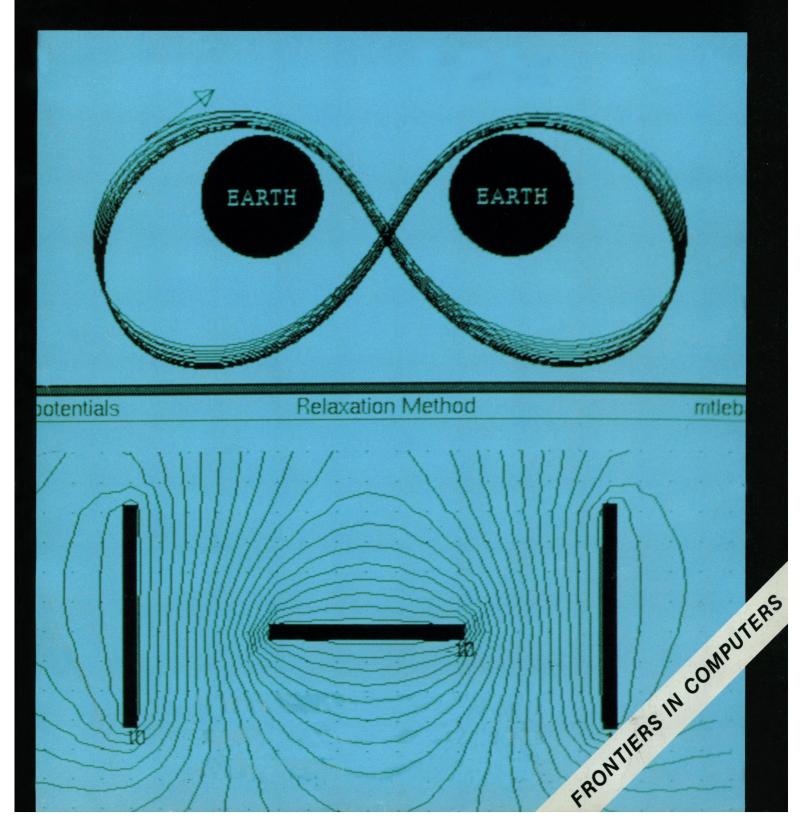
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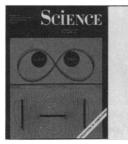


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### Pathology in Parkinsonism

ow parkinsonism develops in humans and experimental animals is becoming clearer (page 987). Parkinsonism is characterized by selective destruction of pigmented cells in one region of the brain, the substantia nigra. Certain illicit drugs produce parkinsonism because they are contaminated with MPTP (methylphenyltetrahydropyridine), a substance that is oxidized in the brain to methylphenylpyridine  $(MPP^+)$ . D'Amato *et al.* found that  $MPP^+$  binds with high affinity to the natural pigment neuromelanin of the substantia nigra and to synthetic melanin. Although the pigmented locus coeruleus region of the brain also contains melanin, MPP+ does not concentrate there; the region is richly supplied with catecholamine (dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine) nerve terminals that take up MPP<sup>+</sup> as it accumulates, leaving little for uptake by pigmented cell bodies in the region. The substantia nigra is not similarly protected because nerve terminals are not plentiful. MPP<sup>+</sup> is instead taken into cells by the dopamine uptake system and becomes available to destroy the cell body through its toxic effects. Environmental toxins, implicated in the etiology of Parkinson's disease, may, like MPTP, accumulate in the brain and damage dopamine neurons.

### **Male-killing bacteria**

Generative to be almost exclusively females to be, almost exclusively, females (page 990). Werren *et al.* isolated the as-yet-unnamed bacterium from infected tissues of *Nasonia vitripennis* wasps and from infected hemolymph of fly pupae on which the wasps breed and feed. Typically a female drills a hole through the fly pupa to deposit her eggs, and the eggs develop into larvae

that feed on the pupa's hemolymph. Next a wasp pupa forms, mature wasps leave the fly pupa, mate, and disperse to reinitiate the cycle by laying eggs on other pupae. Inside pupae, maturing of females (from fertilized eggs) goes on normally, but maturing of males (from unfertilized eggs) is inhibited at the egg stage if the egg is laid by an infected female. This system is of interest for exploring what might be the selective advantage-to either microorganism or host-of sex-ratio distorters (known to exist in many other animals and plants) and for understanding development by (from parthenogenesis unfertilized eggs). In comparable systems involving insect pests, a microorganism of this sort may be genetically modifiable for use in biological control.

### **Visual hyperacuity**

THE brain receives more information than it can use from cells in the eye that detect changes in the positions of visual stimuli (page 999). Shapley and Victor studied nerve impulses of cat retinal ganglion cells in response to a grating pattern that moved back and forth on a screen. The cells detected tiny movements; behavioral studies by others indicate that the brain does not make discriminations as fine as those made by the retinal cells. This fine discrimination is termed hyperacuity and is a consequence of the high signal-to-noise ratio coming from the stimulus. Although hyperacuity has been considered a brain phenomenon, a consequence of processing and integrating information from many sensory cells, some forms of hyperacuity do reside in the retinal cells themselves.

### **Networking networks**

A network of networks is the latest concept for improving computer usage and usefulness among scientists (page 943). By linking supercomputers to each other, to smaller databases, and to users, and by linking users to each other, the maximum benefit from computer and communications technology can be obtained for the maximum number of users. Jennings et al., in one of seven articles in this special computer issue, review the development, management, capabilities, and spread of networks in recent years. Networks have been used to link facilities within institutions and to link those from separate institutions to each other. Now the push is for a network of networks, with gateways providing access to the whole system. Computer use and value would be optimized and the gap closed between scientists who fortuitously are situated at institutions with supercomputers and those currently excluded from the supercomputer community.

### Strontium isotope dating of marine samples

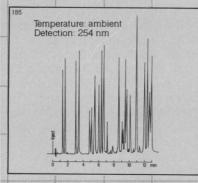
THE ratio of strontium isotopes (<sup>87</sup>Sr/<sup>86</sup>Sr) in fossils of some marine organisms reflects strontium isotope abundances in seawater at the time the organisms were alive (page 979). Strontium enters the water from rivers, from undersea hydrothermal sources, and from submarine recycling of limestone and carbonates. At any period, strontium isotopes are uniform in the sea, because the mixing time of the ocean (1000 years) is much less than the strontium residence time (5 million years). Hess et al. analyzed <sup>87</sup>Sr and <sup>86</sup>Sr abundances in fossil foraminifera from dated cores of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Overall, the strontium ratio increased during the last 100 million years. The high-resolution analyses provided a curve of strontium signatures through time that should help date and correlate marine fossils and sediments more accurately. The ratio rose briefly across the Cretaceous/Tertiary boundary, but this feature is not readily accounted for by the impact of an extraterrestrial object (one explanation for the mass extinctions that took place at the boundary), unless current assessments of the object's size or the extent of its vaporization upon impact are gross underestimates.

### This Week in SCIENCE



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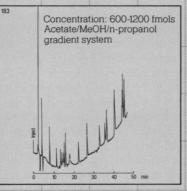


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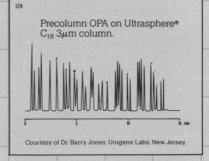
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### Science

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### Computers

n issue of almost any scientific journal shows the impact of computers on the practice of research. The computer has become a required and common tool in many fields. We find applications, for example, in some of the purest mathematics, in particle physics, in organic synthesis, and in molecular biology.

This issue of *Science* focuses on computers. Since it is not desirable, or even possible, to present the whole range of the enterprise of computers and computing, we have chosen to highlight some aspects of computing that are likely to show rapid development and that are likely to have great and immediate impact on a large number of scientists. There are, obviously, a number of other topics that might have been covered; these we hope to look at in individual articles in the future.

The articles in this issue concentrate on three thematic areas: interfaces, languages, and hardware. Each of these overlaps and affects the others. Indeed, a number of the articles address some common problems and issues, although one can see major advances occurring in each field.

We begin with the most personal of the subjects, interfaces, an area related to how we can best take advantage of our computational resources. Jennings et al. address networks and networking. It is networks that will allow communication between remote locations and that will enable us to use expensive resources in an efficient and convenient way. Their planning and implementation require careful thought, since the decisions will affect almost all users. Crecine discusses the development of standardized workstations. With these the scientist will be able to manipulate data and produce manuscripts with a uniform and efficient set of standardized protocols. Programs written in one location will be transportable and will function on someone else's machine. Again, the combination of human and machine interactions as well as the emphasis on uniformity require that decisions be made correctly because the consequences are far-reaching.

Languages are a critical component in the use of computers. (We do not address here the issue of the long-term viability of FORTRAN, or even Ada.) Two major, serious problems present themselves. What kinds of languages are required to get the most out of new computer architecture? What kinds of languages will allow us to solve problems related to the processing of massive amounts of data in problems that by nature are too diffuse or broad to be handled easily or intuitively by an individual or group? Bobrow and Stefik address the question of new languages and programs and an environment in which to produce them. Davis discusses knowledge-based systems and questions of artificial intelligence.

Finally, hardware makes things possible. As we approach some of the limitations on computing speed that are due to such physical constraints as the speed of light, ingenious developments in architecture can provide remarkable benefits. Gabriel discusses one of the most dramatic aspects, massive parallel computing. He points out, also, the language problems inherent in effective use of such constructions. Baskett and Hennessy address the problem of using many microprocessors together in a "small" machine, thereby providing unusual power at the user's desk. Finally, Kuck et al. describe some of the advances to be expected in the area of supercomputers, the frontier of the largest and most expensive calculations.

It is everyone's hope and many people's expectation that all of these advances will further the scientific enterprise and make life more productive and, possibly, more pleasant. We can be certain that with inevitably lower costs and improved computing capability we will see the solution of many scientific problems at an increasingly rapid rate. The future of much of the activity of science is bound up in the development of computers, and all of us will be affected.-JOHN I. BRAUMAN, Department of Chemistry, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305

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I. H. Alfvén, *Cosmic Plasma* (Reidel, Dordrecht, Netherlands, 1981).

#### Human Rights and Credibility

Readers may be led to take the letter of Thomas H. Stix (16 Aug. 1985, p. 600) as speaking for all of us who work for campaigns in defense of the human rights of scientists in other countries. It does not.

"Somehow, some way," writes Stix, "we must get the Soviet leadership to recognize that their continued violation of human rights provides a *moral* basis to the West for the arms race." Moral? Could there be a moral basis for preparing weapons "for a battle that, should it occur, will end human life" (Stix's words)? Furthermore, Stix's promise that Soviet compliance with his human rights conditions will bring U.S. disarmament appears to be unauthorized. Reagan, Weinberger, and Shultz do not make this promise. When they seem to imply it, their sincerity is cast in doubt by their record. If the condition for U.S. disarmament were that Soviet democracy be superior to that in El Salvador and Guatemala, then this country would have disarmed long ago.

All of us working for human rights should understand that to join this struggle with the struggle against the arms race can only undermine both. Putting muscle into the appeal by invoking the American nuclear arsenal, which the Soviet government rightly regards as a grave threat to world survival, would only identify us with the menace and discredit us as independent voices.

> CHANDLER DAVIS Department of Mathematics, University of Toronto, Toronto M5S 1A1, Canada

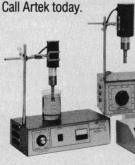
*Erratum*: In the Table of Contents of the issue of 14 February (p. 653), the title of the report on page 731 by R. S. Ostrow *et al.* should have been "Detection of papillomavirus DNA in human semen."

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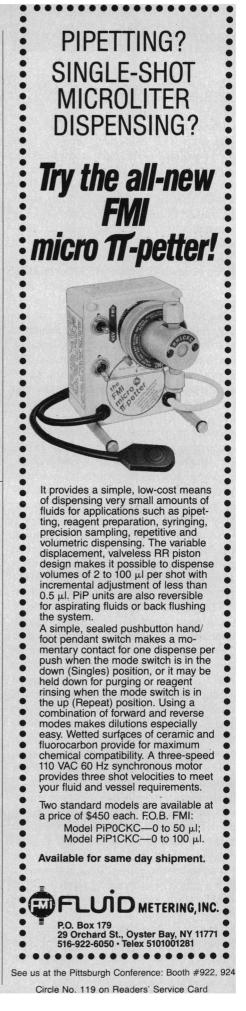






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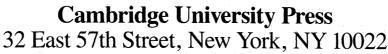
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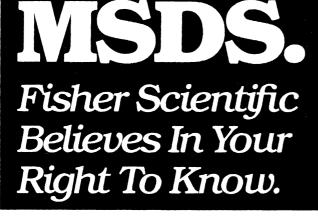
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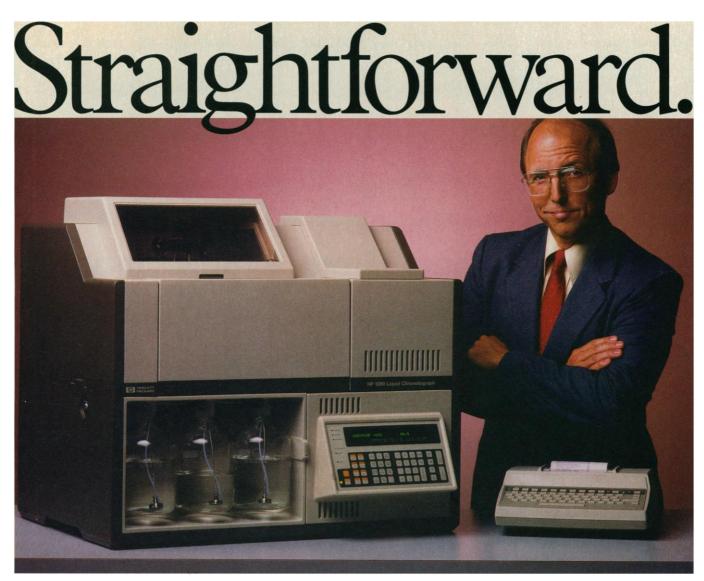
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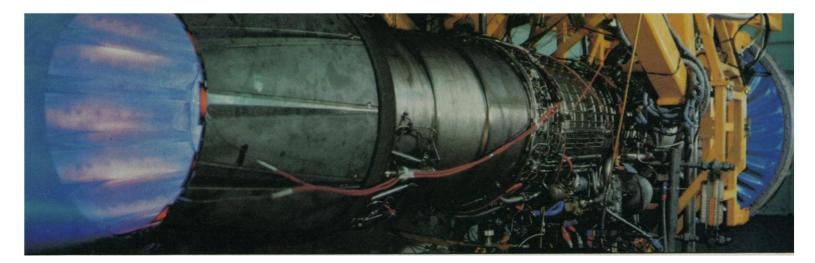
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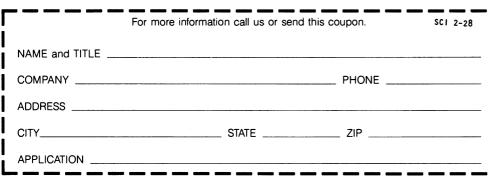
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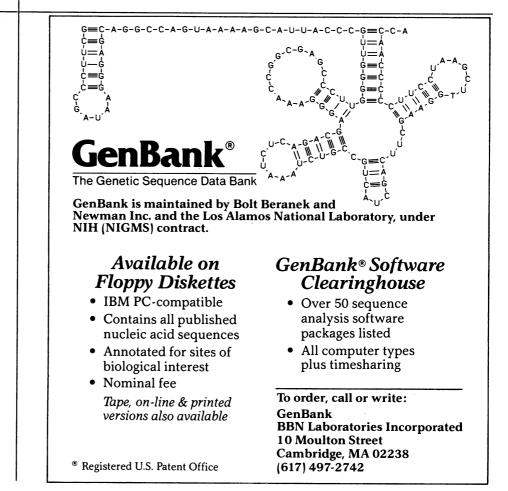
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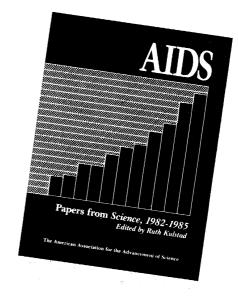
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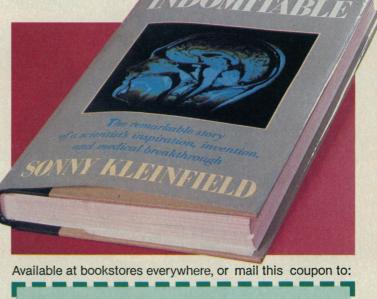
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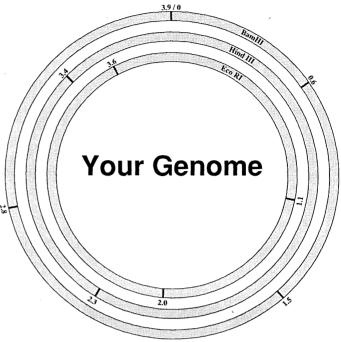
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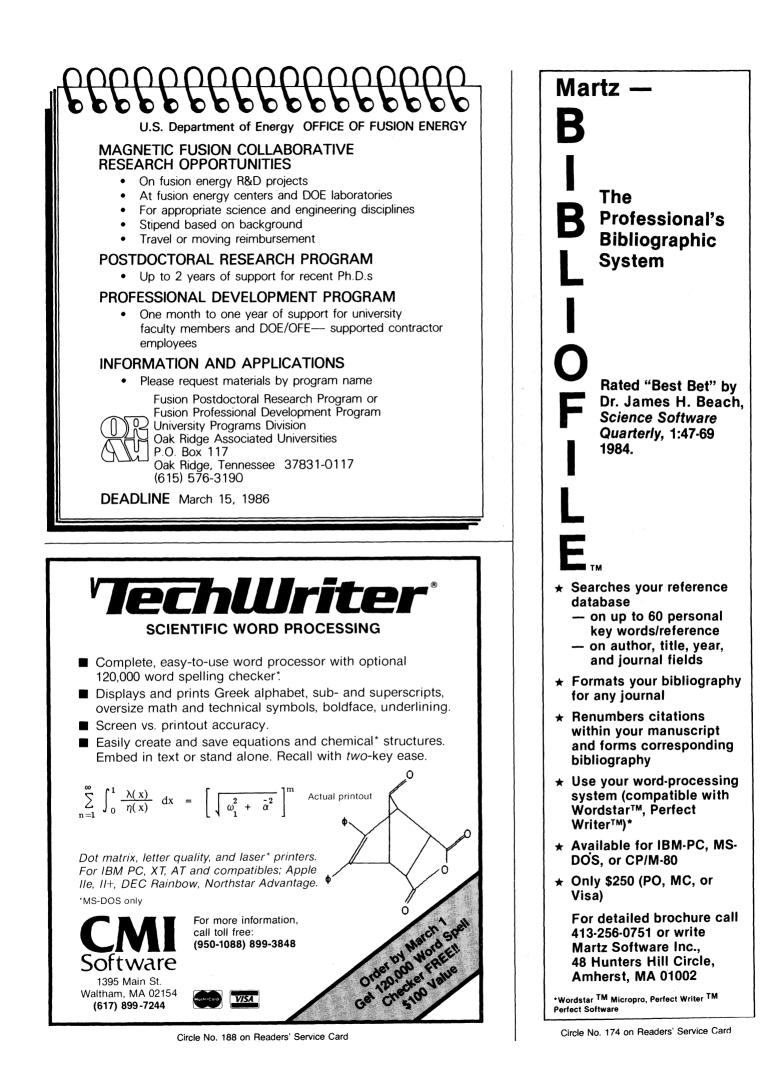
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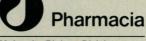
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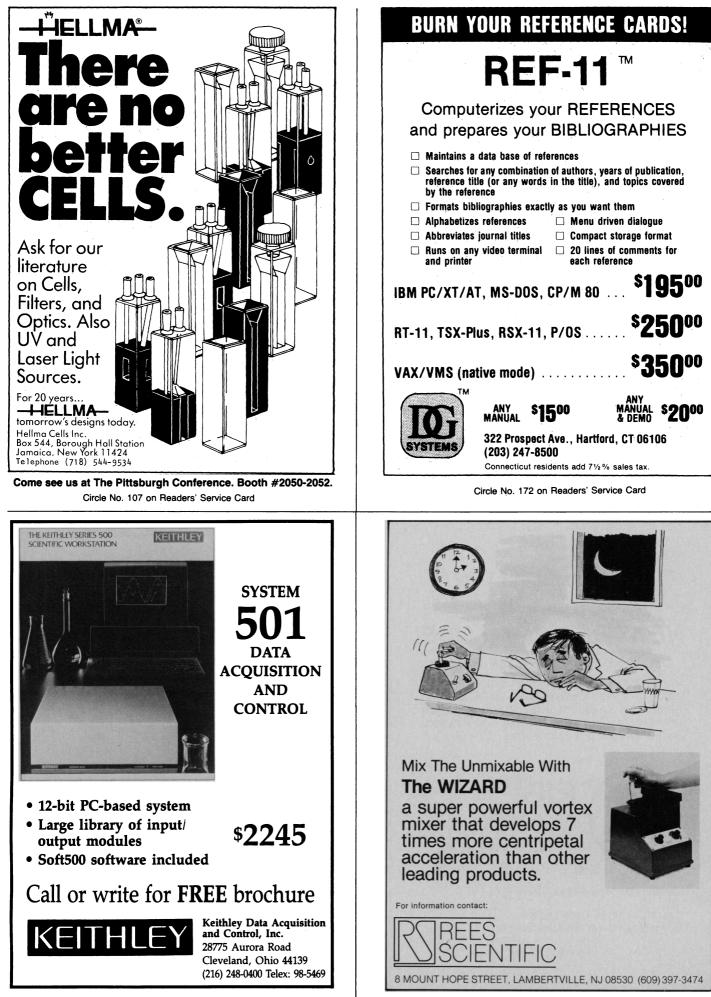
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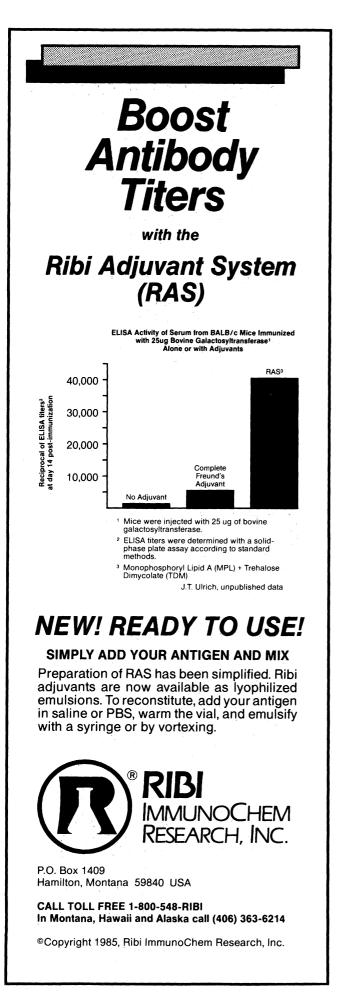
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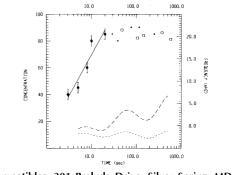
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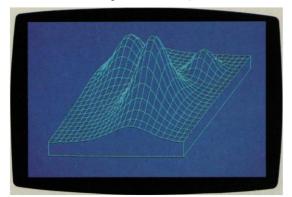
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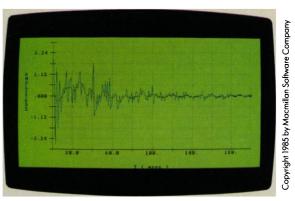
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