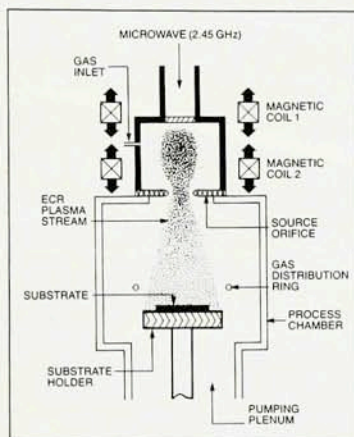


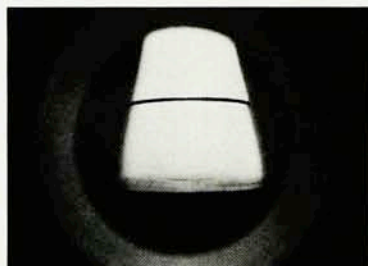
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the facts may be in the case of Exxon, PHYSICS TODAY must see itself as the only advocacy organ we physicists have. If you don't have something nasty to say about Exxon, don't print it at all.

DAVID KLICK

7/87

Chelmsford, Massachusetts

SWEET REPLIES: The news story about Exxon R&E was not intended to put my blessing or the magazine's blessing on the halving of the laboratory's staff. The story intended to take note, as the headline said, that despite the cuts, basic research had revived in a form that seemed likely to enjoy the company's long-term support.

A Very Special Theory of Relativity

John Stachel's contribution, "Einstein and Ether Drift Experiments," in the May 1987 issue (page 45) quotes an interesting sentence from one of Albert Einstein's letters in 1901 to his fiancée, Mileva Marić: "How happy and proud I will be when the two of us together will have brought our work on relative motion to a successful conclusion." Stachel then writes that "this comment raises the intriguing question of the nature of Marić's role in their collaboration. Her letters to Einstein... contain no substantial references at all to physics." In my opinion the answer to this question is rather simple: The "successful conclusion" of the relative motion of the engaged couple is their marriage.

K. SUCHY

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6/87

Düsseldorf, FRG

Of Crays and Creationism

In his letter published in the May 1987 issue (page 145), Arthur S. Lodge conflates two ideas—the origins of life from inanimate precursors, and theories of evolution by natural selection—and profoundly misunderstands one of them—evolution. Natural selection explanations are fundamentally different from the example that Lodge gives: "We need wait only a fairly short time until somewhere a factory full of inanimate matter (electronic components, even) accomplishes by chance the comparatively trivial task of assembling itself into a Cray computer—in working order." Similar statements have been made elsewhere. (Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe,¹ for exam-

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