

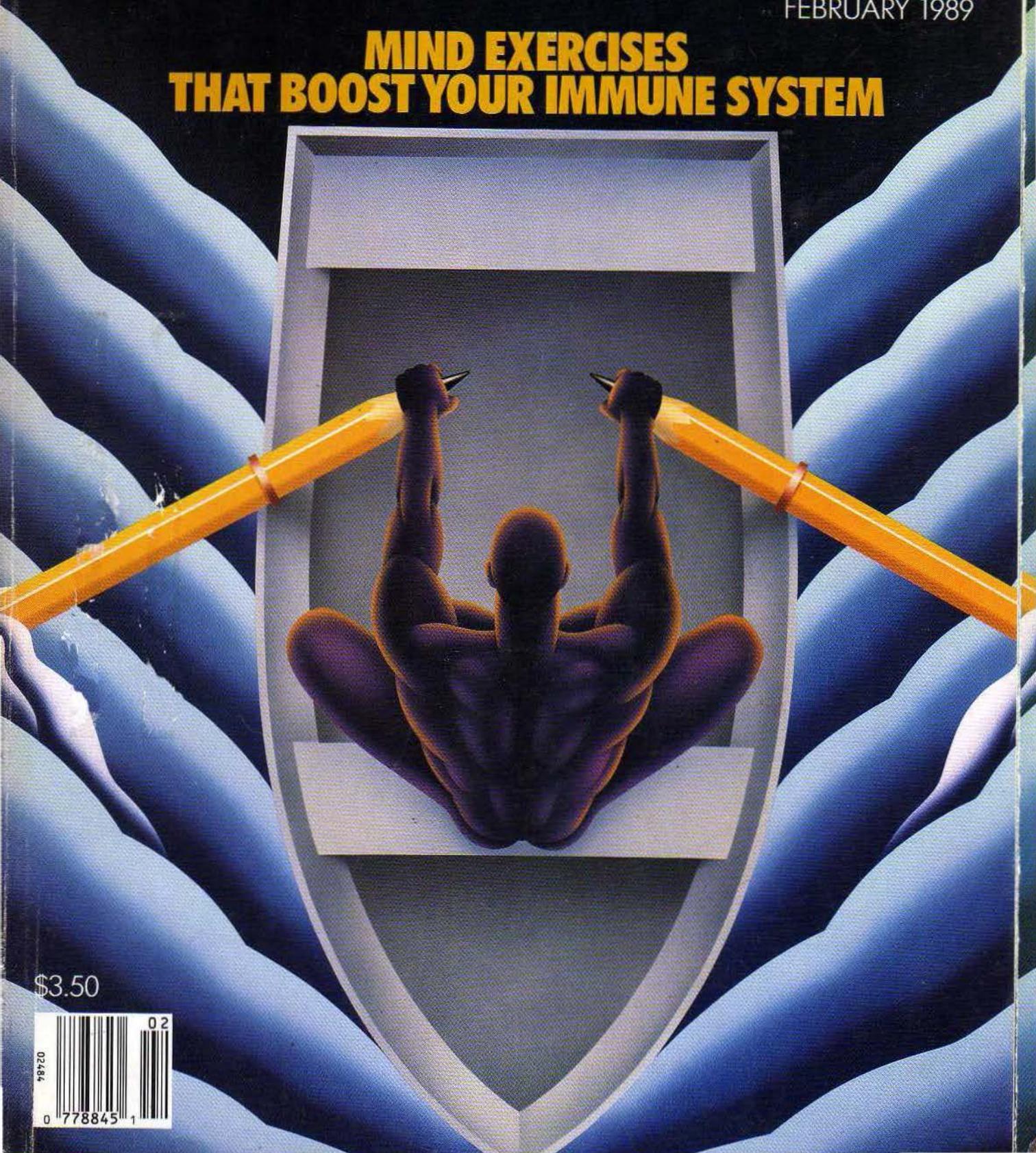
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● According to one  
neuropsychologist, UFO field-workers  
are particularly  
vulnerable to suicide and cancer. ●

## ANTI MATTER

These days cancer seems to lurk behind everything we eat, drink, and do. So it should come as no surprise that investigating UFOs may bring on the disease as well. That, at least, is the warning issued by Canadian neuropsychologist Michael Persinger, one of the world's leading authorities on the effects of magnetic fields.

According to Persinger, a professor at Laurentian University of Sudbury in Ontario, the danger does not come from extraterrestrial weapons or from deadly green rays but rather from intense natural electromagnetic fields. That's be-

cause most UFOs, says Persinger, are simply "luminous phenomena produced by extremely energetic geophysical forces" such as the movement of the earth's crust.

Similar low-frequency fields, Persinger says, are routinely experienced by electrical engineers and technicians and by those living near overhead power lines. And studies of these groups indicate that they are likely to suffer a higher risk of brain tumors and leukemia, as well as depression and suicide, than the normal population.

These complications are also a concern for the UFO buff, adds Persinger, "particularly for those who spend literally hours, if not days, out in the field."

Persinger is not suggesting that people stop investigating UFOs. Nor does he suggest that all those who investigate UFOs will develop brain tumors or other cancers. (Not everyone who smokes, he notes, gets lung cancer.) But, he warns, UFO researchers should take precautions like bringing detection equipment to do the dirty work and try to



## UFO UPDATE

of appendicitis." And Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) director Walt Andrus, who first published Persinger's warning in *The MUFON UFO Journal*, says, "I was afraid to even publish the article, because I thought it might scare people away. But that has not occurred." MUFON has about 1,000 investigators across the country, Andrus adds, and no one has resigned due to the recent report.

Persinger, however, counters that while many researchers write about UFOs, few actually spend much time in the field. This lack of exposure, he adds, means that UFO researchers may not be the best population in which to demonstrate his hypothesis.

Toward that end, Persinger has begun examining cancer records in areas that have been repeatedly exposed to the luminous displays otherwise known as UFOs. If he is correct, Persinger says, these areas should show a rise in cancers and depressive disorders within five years of the time a spate of sightings occurs.—PATRICK HUYGHE

keep exposure down.

Persinger's evidence for the UFO-cancer theory, many critics believe, is slim. It's true that at least two UFOlogists—including J. Allen Hynek, the father of the field—have died of brain tumors. And at least two others are known to have committed suicide.

But UFO researchers are not impressed with these examples. "I think it's just a crazy coincidence," says John Keel, author of *Disneyland of the Gods*, who spent four years in the field investigating UFOs in the mid-Sixties. "Probably just as many UFOlogists have died