

UBC study of criminals on hold

**University's
image at risk,
researcher says**

BY CYNTHIA LEE
AND DOUGLAS QUAN

VANCOUVER (CUP)—The future of a University of British Columbia study into the causes of predatory violence hangs in the balance after a television station reported on the project last week.

For the past year-and-a-half, convicted

criminals have been brought to the UBC Hospital to undergo neurological tests as part of the psychology department's study into the brain function of psychopaths.

The future of the three-year study, which researchers had hoped to keep under wraps, is now uncertain after BCTV exposed the project.

"It's on hold," said Robert Hare, one of the study's researchers.

"The university's image is at risk."

The study, funded by the Medical Research Council of Canada, involves bringing inmates to the hospital where they undergo tests using magnetic resonance imaging technology.

The study could shed light on the neurobiological causes of predatory violence, Hare said.

The latest group of inmates was to have been brought to the hospital last week. But when BCTV announced it was going to air a report about the research on its newscast, the project was put on hold.

An unnamed source had tipped off BCTV a day before the

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inmates were to be transferred.

"Someone close to the information breached their own code of confidentiality and went to the media and we have no idea who that is," said hospital spokeswoman Linda Bartz.

"It is unfortunate that this research is somewhat in jeopardy because someone decided that it was a story."

Bartz said the study was

deliberately kept confidential because researchers didn't want the public to be afraid.

Researchers involved in the project insisted Monday there was never any risk to public safety.

"Security was a prime concern," said Hare, adding the convicts were always brought to the hospital by a Corrections Canada escort team.

"They're in shackles, hand and foot."

Still, campus RCMP Staff-Sgt. Lloyd Plante said he would have liked to be notified about the planned transfer of inmates last week.

"They are serious offenders... there should be a system in place to ensure that at least we're notified of

the fact that they're in the community and of the profile of these [inmates]," Plante said.

Hare said the RCMP were briefed about the study when it first began but Corrections Canada officials were responsible for notifying the force each time the inmates were brought to the hospital.

Corrections Canada officials did not return calls.

Occupation highlights Chun case

BY DORSA JABBARI
AND ANDREW LOUNG

TORONTO (CUP)—Almost as soon as a group of students occupied the University of Toronto president's office last Wednesday, letters of support came pouring in from the Canadian Association of University Teachers and students in the US and Australia.

The three-day sit-in of Robert Prichard's office ended last Friday after drawing awareness to the case of former seismologist Dr. Kin Yip Chun.

Chun alleged U of T discriminated against him after he failed to win a tenure-stream position in the physics department over the course of four job competitions. He has since launched a wrongful dismissal suit against the university.

The 25 occupants called on the university to disclose its offer to Chun and resolve his case in a fair way. They also demanded U of T implement a comprehensive affirmative action program and more services to create a comfortable environment for visible minorities on campus.

Their actions were supported by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) in a letter last week.

"CAUT supports efforts to resolve the Chun dispute, and the current student occupation of the University of Toronto president's office highlights the unfair treatment eminent seismologist Dr. Kin Yip Chun has received from the

University of Toronto," stated the Mar. 18 letter.

Students and faculty from universities across Canada also sent support.

Letters also arrived from Yale University and the University of Wisconsin in the US, as well as the University of South Australia.

"I applaud your heroic efforts to highlight the inequity of the situation," wrote Denis Ray, a graduate student at the University of South Australia.

The three-day occupation took place while Prichard was away on holiday.

Administrators refused to meet with the students.

"We don't meet with anyone to negotiate if they're sitting in," U of T's provost Adel Sedra said. "We have a university to run."

But protesters said their actions were justified.

"We have taken to these means of expressing our concerns because the U of T administration has not shown any signs of resolving the situation involving Dr. Chun," said student Deniz Ozturk.

Chun, who played no part in initiating the action, agreed.

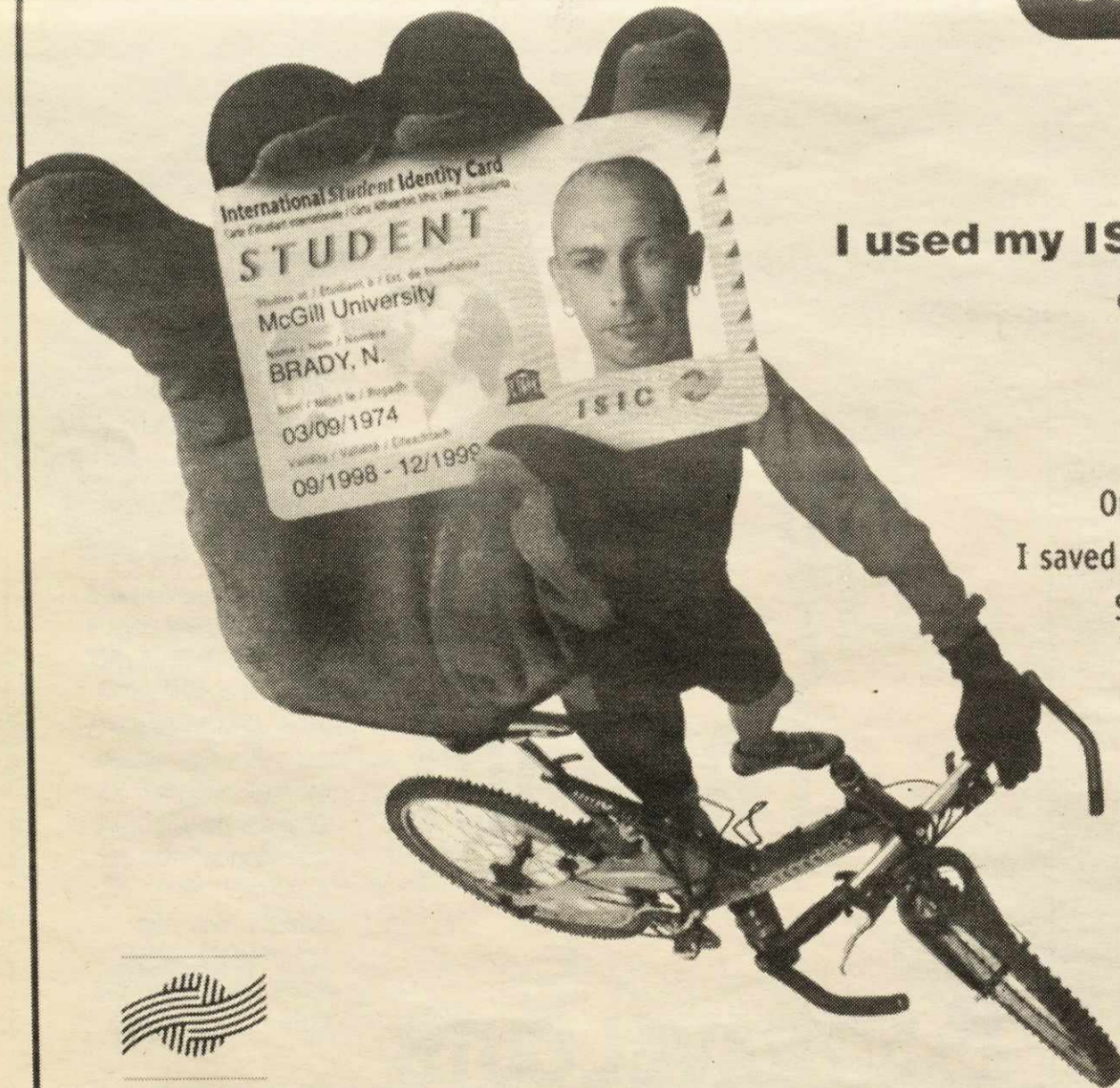
"I'm surprised that students had to resort to these means, but they've tried every other avenue over the years, and the university administration has not been receptive," said Chun. "They've left students with no choice."

Since the sit-in ended Friday, the university has invited Chun into mediation sessions.

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