

# Course combines history, technology

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Students must apply to get into the course and both teachers want a specific type of candidate.

"We're looking for people who are looking to work in a team," Ms Hetherington said, noting the success of projects often lies with people setting aside personal differences.

The students will depict the pre-Holocaust lives of survivors from Lithuania, Poland and Hungary, then show what it was like during the war.

Now in its second year, the idea to create a course combining history and media technology came to the teachers four years ago, when they were preparing for Remembrance Day.

Collaborating on other projects and working well together, they decided to combine their specialties.

Ms Hetherington and Mr. Berridge have been named one of 25 finalists for six Governor General Awards.

"Students become immersed in it. It's all about the project and doing justice to the person's story," Ms Hetherington said.

Choosing the Holocaust for this year's project was no accident.

"We want them to learn this could happen so easily," Ms Hetherington explained.

The message rang through loud and clear for Mr. Birnbaum. He's still wearing a red bracelet bought at the museum's gift shop. It's meant to create awareness about the current crisis in Darfur, Sudan.

"I didn't know it was happening in Sudan," he said.

The project has had personal meaning for Mr. Birnbaum. His grandparents are Holocaust survivors and the project helped him comprehend what happened to



**SHEILA HETHERINGTON:** Teacher says program shows how easily horrors of Holocaust happened.

them. "Up until Washington it was all stats. Until we saw the piles of children's shoes and smashed gravestones, I didn't realize the magnitude," Mr. Birnbaum said, adding he didn't understand how calculated the process was leading up to the Holocaust.

The project's impact on students, is already apparent.

"It's overwhelming. You don't understand how it could happen," Ms Dunham said, adding if awareness isn't created about the past, it could happen again.

All three students found their way to the course either because they are planning careers in the media or they were impressed by productions from last year's class.

For Ms Dunham, a history documentary junkie, the class is a stepping stone to a future career in documentary.

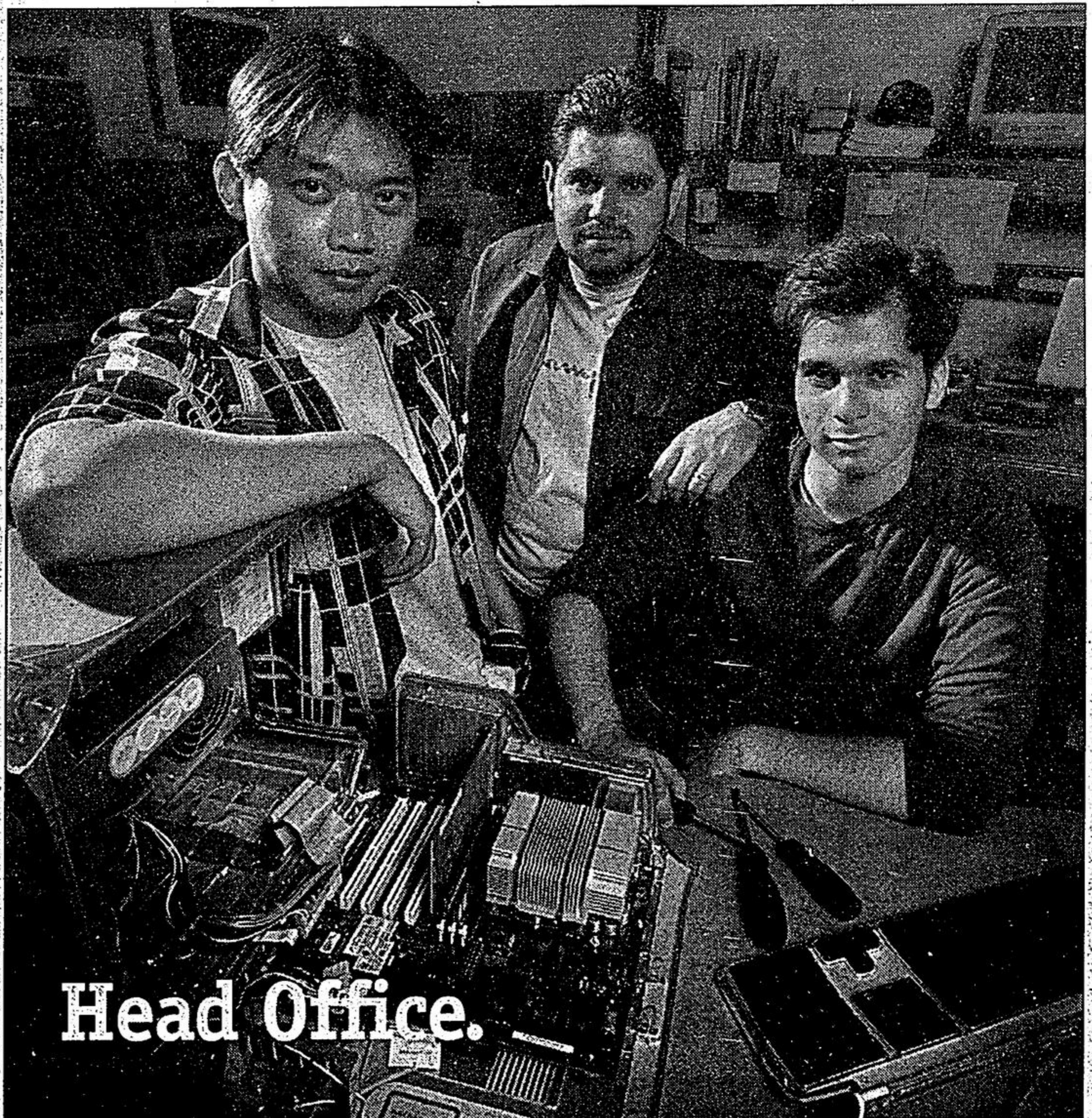
Mr. Birnbaum is contemplating a career in radio and TV arts.

They are not far from their goals, as Ms Hetherington and Mr. Berridge can attest.

With only a year under their belts teaching the course, they already have students at the Toronto Film School and Ryerson University's journalism and film programs.

The sky is the limit for the projects, with students able to travel wherever they can to get a story.

A memorable project immediately springing to both teachers' minds from last year's course was called Cultural Revolution.



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