

SATURDAY, June 15, 1991

## CONVOCATION

# Pair graduate from Western after quitting high school

Michael Barnes received a doctorate in psychology and Kevin Short graduated from a combined law and business program.

By Lisa Blackburn  
*The London Free Press*

If you had told Michael Barnes or Kevin Short 15 years ago that they would be receiving graduate degrees, they probably wouldn't have believed you.

Neither man had completed high school. Both served stints in the Canadian Armed Forces, and both started their university careers as adults.

Michael Barnes, 58, who received his doctorate in psychology on Friday, quit school in Grade 10. At 16, he lied about his age to get into the army. Five years later he was discharged after injuries left him blind in one eye.

Later, Barnes worked at British American Oil, then joined a Quebec school board as a director of finance. He decided to become a teacher in 1978.

**CONSULTING BUSINESS:** After getting his master's in education at Western, Barnes says he wanted "the most powerful credential possible" for his research on teenagers and the school system and decided to work on his doctorate. He has no job plans but is thinking of starting his own consulting business. He would like to go to outlying school boards and help set up teaching programs.

Kevin Short, 38, is the first mature student in Western's combined law and graduate business program. He began articling with an Edmonton

corporate law firm in August and says it doesn't seem quite real.

"Imagine, me in a suit. This whole thing is going to take a while to get used to."

Short quit school in Grade 12 and worked in factories before joining the army after he turned 21. He later was a police officer in Hanover and Exeter and be-

gan working on his degree part-time in 1979 while he was still in police work.

Short says he found going to school terrifying. "It wasn't until my last year that I felt normal about it. . . . But going to university showed me that everyone is human, and that it's just a matter of working hard."