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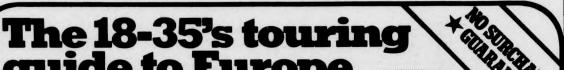
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# Second wind

#### Lydia Pawlenko

They come back to the classroom with new self-images and high expectations, but the transition isn't easy. The crutches are hard to find. Mature women students often face isolation, financial insecurities, endless family demands and sheer physical exhaustion, not to mention being called "ma'am" in tutorials.

About 300 mature women students gathered at Osgoode last Saturday to participate in a conference sponsored by the Women's Centre and Atkinson College, entitled, accordingly, "A Second Chance", in which they were encouraged to recognize and deal with their special difficulties.

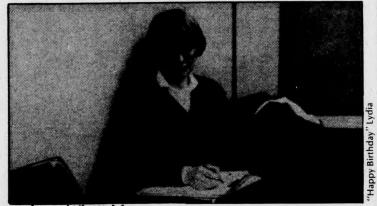
"You're the greatest, untapped, unused resource this country has," proclaimed Doris Anderson, President of the federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Anderson pointed out that if present rates continue, by the year 2000 there will be 2 million her workshop audience that the return to the classroom forces women to "face head on their own abilities." Newton, a humanities professor, spoke from experience. She is a single parent, and had also gone back to university as "an overaged coed".

"You're out on a limb," she said. "You wonder, why am I here? What is the goal of all this? Am I being selfish?"

Undergraduate student Lila Welch, 28, feels "it takes a lot of guts to come back." After working for seven years, she was used to earning money. Even getting into the routine of taking lecture notes took awhile. In some ways she feels professors expect more from mature students. "It's just the image of coming back and being a mature student. You somehow realize you should do better."

Helen Hook, a youthful looking, single parent complained of isolation noting that students who are greyed have the advan-



**Undergrad Lila Welch** 

women living under the poverty level in Canada. "Nobody will be looking after you, so you better learn how to take care of yourselves," she said, declaring this self-sufficiency possible only if women get back into the educational system, tional stream.

With over 25 per cent of all students at York being women over the age of 26, there is an indication that more and more women are giving themselves a second alternative these days.

"I wanted to prove to myself that I could get a university degree," said student Fiona Sibb, who, after 15 years in the work force, decided to enroll at York. "The jobs I wanted to do were going to university graduates. If employers wanted that piece of paper, I could get one," she asserted. tage of standing out as mature students. "People like me can't see each other," she said.

Most of the women agreed with Newton's observation that mature students enter university "saddled with excess baggage." It is difficult to concentrate on schoolwork if your child was sick the night before.

Doris Anderson offered the following Chatelaine-style help-ful hints:

"You're going to be changing your lifestyle, so pack what you like. Don't let women's magazines make you feel guilty about not fixing dinner a certain way. Maximize your assets, because you have a lot of skills you underestimate. Learn to preserve your energies. Use all the help you can get. But above all, keep a sense of humour, you're going to need it."

Elaine Newton suggested to

Vandalism on the rise?

#### Erina Ingrassia Why is vandalism and violence

we're at a loss." Because of the lack of an established code, individual cases are judged from different criteria. In the past, costs resulting from damaged property have been handled by the individual or the residents responsible for the damage. But Smockum suggested the University create a student body to deal with these ad hoc cases. This "student court" would allow students to have a say in the final penalty imposed by the University on vandals who are discovered. Other panel members in this symposium, titled The State of Our Schools, included Erik Bekker, security liaison consultant of North York's Board of Education; and Edwina Lehan, vice-president of Woodfield Road Public School. Both have been actively involved in the search for a positive approach toward vandalism and violence in schools. The symposium also included interested members of the community at large.

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increasing in our schools?

In an attempt to answer that question last week during a York University symposium on juvenile vandalism in schools, panelists agreed that a set of concrete rules and preventative strategies are needed to deal with violent incidents.

"We don't want a kangaroo court, just a student court," CYSF President Keith Smockum told the symposium panel, which was chaired by York's director of Safety and Security, George Dunn.

Presenting a student's perspective, Smockum seemed concerned about the lack of a definite "code of conduct" administered by the University. He described York's solutions to the vandalism problem as being "in a vacuum."

"The University doesn't have any rules for dealing with problems directly," he said. "We don't have any precise procedures to follow, and as a result,

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