



150 Stories for 150 Years

Violence Has No Place in the Life of a Pacifist

Submitted By: Richard F. Sidwell '68
Beallsville, Ohio

While a junior at Wilmington College in 1967, Rich Sidwell was featured in a WC publication, *Campus*, designed specifically for Quakers to gain insight into the College. Titled "The Conscientious Objector," he was described as "a well-behaved, handsome and quiet young athlete and scholar" — perhaps the antithesis of the stereotypical college student in the mid-1960s demonstrating against American involvement in the Vietnam War.

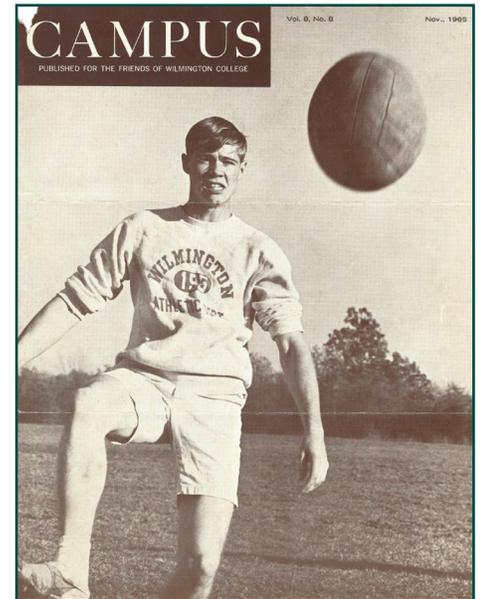
"I just believed that I should show what my feelings are," he said at the time when questioned about his participation in a campus vigil. "Vietnam is too important not to have strong feelings about. I never talked much about it publicly. I didn't stand in that line to tell anyone that they should think my way, but only to say, 'Look, this is the way I feel.'"

He said that he was a conscientious objector to war and explained. "A CO is a pacifist, and a pacifist isn't somebody who stands around and lets others run over him. A pacifist lives an active, creative life in such a way that violence just doesn't have any place in that life — his or anyone else's."

Sidwell, whose family members have been Quakers for many generations, went on to say he's not certain that the weekly Wednesday vigils in which he and many others participated actually brought about any changes but stressed that, "On the other hand, I don't think they have to. They're still worth doing.

"I guess I was born a CO. I've never felt that I could be anything else."

Sidwell went on to a career in education, including serving a head of Olney Friends School in Barnesville, Ohio. He currently is vice chair of the College's Board of Trustees.



*Rich Sidwell '68 was featured in the cover story of the 1967 issue of a WC publication called *Campus*. It addressed his campus involvement that included soccer, a work-study job at a factory and having a double major in psychology and history/government. He bicycled across the country before coming to WC.*

150
WILMINGTON COLLEGE
1870 - 2020

**150 Stories
for 150 Years**



Rich Sidwell is pictured participating in a campus vigil (the fourth student from the right) in 1967 as WC Trustee Wallace Collett '36, President James Read and Vice President Brooke Morgan pass by.

[RETURN TO SITE](#)