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Taplin Award acceptance speech by [Bill Moyers](#) (PDF format)



Taplin Award acceptance speech by [Judith Davidson Moyers](#) (PDF format)

MOYERSES CALL FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, ACCESS TO IDEAS AT WOODROW WILSON CONFERRAL OF FIRST “PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL” AWARD

PRINCETON, N.J.—“The salvation of democracy requires a public aroused by the knowledge of what is being done to them in their name,” said noted television journalist and political commentator Bill Moyers at a February 7 award ceremony hosted by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation.

Judith Davidson Moyers, president of their shared production company Public Affairs Television, added, “All of us are challenged to help our students, our audiences, our fellow human beings test and refine ideas. To accomplish that we must connect.”

The Moyerses jointly accepted the Woodrow Wilson Foundation’s first-ever Frank E. Taplin, Jr. Public Intellectual Award during a dinner at New York’s Colony Club, attended by 150 guests. The evening also featured tributes to the award’s namesake and the late Eleanor Thomas Elliott, chair emerita of the Woodrow Wilson Board.

Bill Moyers, [in accepting the award](#), emphasized the role of “novelists, playwrights, artists, historians, philosophers, composers, scholars, teachers, all of whom we consider public thinkers” in making clear “not only how to improve our lives as individuals but how to nurture a flourishing democracy.”

Defining the role of a “public intellectual” as offering public access to a full range of perspectives, Ms. Moyers described [in her acceptance speech](#) the challenge facing both teachers and journalists: “How do you share the information, the new interpretations, the thrilling questions and the rattling discoveries of today with your ‘audience’? How can opportunities be opened up for students to think—as public television’s beloved Mr. Rogers said: ‘Simpler. Deeper.’”

The award is a memorial to Mr. Taplin, a Woodrow Wilson Foundation trustee emeritus and former vice chair. A Cleveland native and longtime Princeton resident, Mr. Taplin was known for his commitments to such organizations as the Metropolitan Opera, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Pierpont Morgan Library, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Marlboro School of Music and Festival, and the American Philosophical Society.

The inaugural Taplin Award dinner was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Elliott, who chaired the Woodrow Wilson board in the 1990s, served as a foundation trustee for more than two decades, and played a leading role in establishing the Taplin Award. At the time of her death in December 2006, Mrs. Elliott was co-chair of the dinner.

In selecting recipients of the Taplin Award, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation solicits nominations from community and academic leaders who can speak to the impact of the nominee’s work on the local, regional, or national level. Each year’s award recipients give remarks at a dinner ceremony.

Full text of Bill Moyers’ and Judith Moyers’ speeches can be found at <http://www.woodrow.org/news>. Contact Beverly Sanford at (609) 452-7007, ext. 181 or sanford@woodrow.org, for additional information.

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The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation identifies and develops America’s best minds for its most essential professions. Woodrow Wilson seeks to combat the nation’s most urgent educational problems, to champion academic excellence, and to expand educational opportunity. In all the Foundation does, it has a particular concern with populations whose potential has not been fully recognized.

