

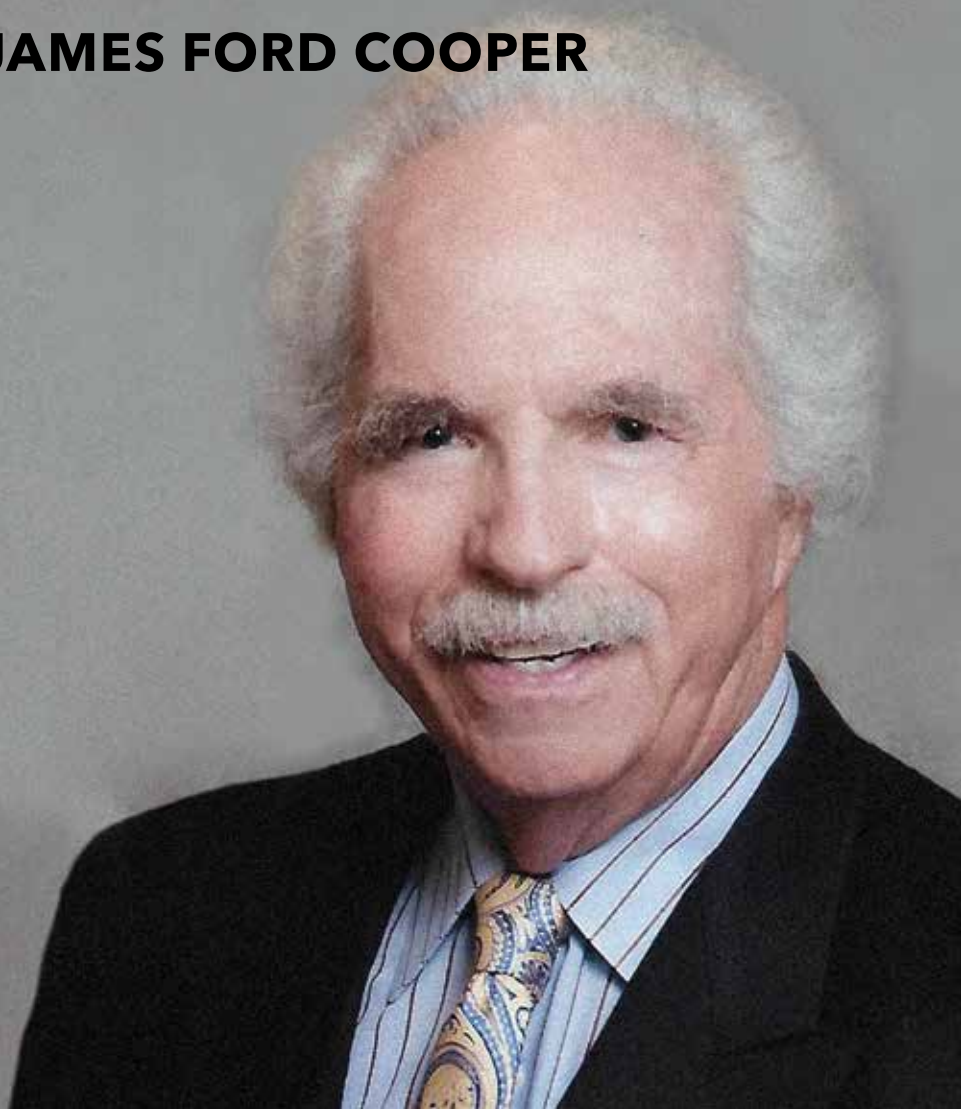


# Finlandia Foundation® National

Inspiring, celebrating and connecting the Finnish-American community since 1953

**2018 LECTURER  
OF THE YEAR**

**JAMES FORD COOPER**



# "Finland and the Cold War"

## James Ford Cooper

In 2006 Finlandia Foundation National (FFN), the premier network of Finnish-American organizations in the United States, introduced its Lecturer of the Year (LOY) program for the purpose of sharing the history and culture of Finland and Finnish America with audiences across the U.S.

Since its inception, FFN chapters have hosted LOY on topics ranging from the Winter War to Jean Sibelius, the architecture of the Saarinen, and folk music traditions.

In honor of the 100th anniversary of Finland's Declaration of Independence in 2017, five Centenary Lecturers spoke about a variety of topics related to Finland's independence and identity.

Current FFN lecturers are Frank W. Eld, whose topic is also the name of his book, *Finnish Log Construction---The Art*; and James Ford Cooper.

Ford Cooper enjoyed two assignments in Finland during his 34-year career with the United States Foreign Service. From 1976-79 he was Political Counselor of the American Embassy in Helsinki, and he returned to serve as Deputy Chief of Mission (deputy ambassador) from 1984-86. His book, *On the Finland Watch* (1999), is based on his observations and analysis during those periods, and reviews United States-Finnish-Soviet relations during the Cold War.

In his LOY talk, "Finland and the Cold War," Ford reviews the very different experiences and roads that Finland and the U.S. traveled to reach the Cold War years, and how these perspectives had to be taken into account in managing Cold War relations.

He argues that Finland's unique geopolitical location and dramatic historical experiences---from its Fenno-

Ugric origins, through the long Swedish period, the 19th century experience as a Grand Duchy of Russia, the brutal and traumatic revolutionary and independence struggles, the Winter War heroics, the Continuation War experiences and the hard fact of the emergence of the Soviet super power---all influenced Finnish policies and policy makers during the Cold War.

Meanwhile, the U.S. perspective was that of a super power that emerged after World War II as the most powerful country in the world, and was faced with an economically prostrate Western Europe and an Eastern Europe under the domination of the Soviet Union.

Naturally, the U.S. and Finland would have different approaches on how to address Cold War issues. In the process, the people of both nations drew great comfort and pride in knowing

that throughout this 45-year Cold War period, the overriding and unwavering U.S. policy goal was to support Finland's independence and its western-oriented economic and democratic values, and to promote as best as possible the concept of Finland as a neutral country.

Ford holds a BA in Political Science from Michigan State University and master's degree in Government from Cornell University. He is fluent in the Spanish language and a competent speaker (now a bit rusty, he says) of the Finnish language. He and his wife Magda live in Florida.

The Lecturer of the Year term begins in July of 2018 and runs through June of 2019. Learn more about Finlandia Foundation, its LOY and other programs at the website: [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org)

## PAST LECTURERS OF THE YEAR:

**2017** Centenary Lecturers:  
Thomas A. DuBois, Sharon  
Franklin-Rahkonen, Peter  
MacKeith, Börje Vähämäki and  
K. Marianne Wargelin

**2015-16** “An Evening with  
Taina Elg: From Finland to  
Stardom,” with Heli Sirviö

**2014** Suzanne Jurva and  
Erin Smith, filmmakers of the  
documentary *Yoopera!*

**2013** Yvonne Lockwood,  
“Traditional Material Culture in  
Modern Finnish America”

**2012** Glenda Dawn Goss,  
“Sibelius: A Composer’s Life  
and the Awakening of Finland”

**2011** Carl Rahkonen,  
“The Finnish-American  
Musical Journey”

**2010** Arnold Alanen,  
“From Finland to North  
America: Buildings, Landscapes  
and Cultural Change”

**2007-09** Mark Coir and Susan  
Saarinen, “The Saarinen  
Architectural Legacy”

**2006** Ben Stout and *Fire and  
Ice*, a documentary about The  
Winter War between Finland  
and Russia



**F**inlandia Foundation  
National, the most  
important source of support for  
Finnish culture in the U.S., was  
founded in Pasadena, California  
in 1953. FFN administers  
grants, scholarships and  
programs supporting and  
celebrating Finnish heritage and  
Finnish-American culture and  
traditions, and contemporary  
Finnish America.



FFN is a 501(c)(3) organization.  
For more information:  
[FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org)

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