Samuel F. Wells Jr. is a Senior Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. He received his B.A. from the University of North Carolina and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard University in History and International Relations. He has taught at Wellesley College, and for thirteen years at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At the Wilson Center he founded the International Security Studies Program in 1977 and directed that program until 1985. Since then he has served as Associate Director and Deputy Director of the Center while also serving as Director of West European Studies.

His publications include Economics and World Power: An Assessment of American Diplomacy Since 1789 (1984; co-editor), Strategic Defenses and Soviet-American Relations (1987; co-editor), The Challenges of Power: American Diplomacy, 1900-1921 (1990; author), The Helsinki Process and the Future of Europe (1990; editor), New European Orders, 1919 and 1991 (1996; co-editor), The Quest for Sustained Growth: Southeast Asian and Southeast European Cases (1999; co-author), and "Transatlantic Ills," Wilson Quarterly (Winter 2003). He was also a contributor to and co-editor of The Strategic Triangle: France, Germany, and the United States in the Shaping of the New Europe (2006).

His most recent publications are "Centralizing Power: Domestic Considerations in the Shaping and Implementation of the War on Terror after 9/11," in Pierre Melandri and Serge Ricard (eds.), La Politique exterieure des Etats-Unis au XXe siecle: le poids des determinants interieurs (2007) and with Sherrill Brown Wells, "Shared Sovereignty in the European Union: Germany's Economic Governance," Yale Journal of International Affairs 3 (Spring/Summer 2008), 30-43.