

Keynote Speaker

His Excellency John Ralston Saul, C.C.

Rethinking Development: Local Pathways to Global Wellbeing

June 20-24, 2005

St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada

His Excellency John Ralston Saul participates in many activities which are designed to encourage national debate among Canadians of all ages on issues such as bilingual education and the future of Canadian democracy.

John Ralston Saul was born in Ottawa in 1947 and educated in the public school systems of Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario before receiving

- an Honours B.A. at McGill University and a
- Ph.D. on the modernization of France at King's College, University of London.

Policy Advisor

After creating and managing a European investment firm (1973-1976), Mr. Saul worked as Special Assistant and Policy Advisor to the founding Chairman of Petro-Canada from 1976 to 1979. Active in the cause of freedom of speech, he served as secretary, vice-president and president of the Canadian Centre of International PEN between 1987 and 1992. He is now its Patron.

Essayist and Novelist

Mr. Saul has had a significant impact on political and economic thought in many countries; a reputation that was firmly established with his 1995 Massey Lectures. The resulting book, *The Unconscious Civilization*, won the 1996 Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction and the Gordon Montador Award for the Best Canadian Non-Fiction Book on social issues. He is also author of *Voltaire's Bastards: The Dictatorship of Reason in the West*, *The Doubter's Companion: A Dictionary of Aggressive Common Sense*, *On Equilibrium*, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin*, and five novels.

French Language Advocate

Since 1998, John Ralston Saul has been bringing together French immersion and francophone students across the country for the annual *French for the Future/Français pour l'avenir* conference. The conference has grown from a one-community event in 1997 to a cross-country forum, in 2003 linking students in twelve different cities from Vancouver to St. John's.

Public Debate Advocate

Through the annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Conference, John Ralston Saul encourages Canadians to come together in a national debate on the future of Canada's civic culture. By looking back at the historical context of our democratic roots, he feels, we are in a better position as a society to discuss the way we imagine ourselves and our evolving democracy.

Promoter of Canadian Wines

Mr. Saul has also taken a lead role in promoting Canadian wines. The Rideau Hall cellar is now stocked with 100% Canadian VQA wine and every year, John Ralston Saul leads delegations of industry representatives, ambassadors from wine-producing countries and potential exporters at the annual Cuvée in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario and the Okanagan Wine Festival in British Columbia.

Honours and Awards

- Mr. Saul holds honorary doctorates from the Universities of McGill, Victoria, Western Ontario, Simon Fraser, McMaster, Université du Québec à Montréal, Manitoba, St. Francis Xavier, Queen's, Laurentian, Mount Allison, Herzen State, Calgary, and Ottawa.
- Recipient of the first Canadian Teacher's Federation Public Education Advocacy Award
- Recipient of the Tony Aspler Excellence Award for his contributions to the Ontario Wine Industry.
- Recipient of the Pablo Neruda International Presidential Medal of Honour from the Chilean Government, the only Canadian to be so honoured.

Boards

- Founder and Honorary Chair of Le Français pour l'Avenir / French for the Future
- Chair of the Advisory Board of the LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium.
- Board member for the Harold Innis Research Foundation and le Comité d'Honneur, Rencontre Québécoise Internationale des Écrivains.

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