

Robert Saunders

Professor, History, Politics, and Geography at Farmingdale State College

Farmingdale, NY, US

Dr. Saunders teaches from a global point of view; he is an expert on British comedian Sacha Baron Cohen.

Biography

Robert A. Saunders is a leading scholar of popular geopolitics, as well as an internationally-recognized researcher in the field of nation branding. His geographic areas of focus include Russia, Central Asia, and Nordic Europe. His research explores the impact of popular culture on geopolitics, nationalism, and religious identity. His articles have appeared in Millennium, Geopolitics, Political Geography, Politics, Social & Cultural Geography, Progress in Human Geography, Nations and Nationalism, Slavic Review and Europe-Asia Studies. A Professor in the Department of History, Politics, and Geography at Farmingdale State College - SUNY, Dr. Saunders teaches courses on International Relations and human geography. He holds a Ph.D. in Global Affairs from Rutgers University and degrees in History from Stony Brook University (M.A.) and the University of Florida (B.A.). Based on his extensive work on Kazakhstan's feud with the British comedian Sacha Baron Cohen, Harper's labeled him the "world's leading Boratologist." His 2008 book on the subject is entitled *The Many Faces of Sacha Baron Cohen: Politics, Parody, and the Battle over Borat*. Building on this research, *Popular Geopolitics and Nation Branding in the Post-Soviet Realm* (Routledge, 2017) explores the tension between Western pop-culture representations of the fifteen former Soviet republics and their own attempts at country branding. His co-edited volume *Popular Geopolitics: Plotting an Evolving Interdiscipline* was published by Routledge in 2018. Professor Saunders is currently completing a monograph on geopolitics, northern Europe, and Nordic noir television series for Routledge. His next book, *Landscape and Television - Bodies, Geopolitics, and Ecologies* (co-authored with Irina Souch and Anne Marit Waade), is under contract with Palgrave. In 2016, Dr. Saunders was awarded the prestigious Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities, a system-wide accolade for sustained scholarship presented by the State University of New York. Dr. Saunders has held visiting researcher positions at the University of Leeds, Aarhus University, and Malmö University. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Leeds Russian Centre; additionally, he is an Affiliate Partner of the Centre for Transnational Media Research at Aarhus University as well as with the DETECT: Detecting Transcultural Identity in European Popular Crime Narratives, funded by a European Union Horizon 2020 grant.

Availability

Keynote, Moderator, Panelist, Workshop, Author Appearance

Industry Expertise

International Affairs, Education/Learning, Entertainment

Areas of Expertise

Anthropocene, International Politics, Global Politics, Comparative Religions, Politics, Popular Culture, Political Violence, Terrorism, Cyber-Politics, Nationalism, Russia and Central Asia, Scandinavia

Affiliations

? Association of American Geographers, ? Phi Beta Kappa Society, ? Sigma Iota Rho The National Honor Society for International Studies, European International Studies Association , Association for Slavic East European and Eurasian Studies , European Communication Research and Education Association , American Political Science Association

Event Appearances

Borat: Satire, Politics, and National Image in the Post-Soviet East
N/A

Popular Geopolitics: The Role of Film, TV, and Other Media in Contemporary International Relations
N/A

Laughable Nations: Parodying the Post-Soviet Republics
N/A

Imagining the Post-Soviet Realm: Popular Culture, Post- Cold War Politics and Geographical Imaginaries
N/A

? ?Separatism in the New Millennium: Looking Back, Looking Forward"
Pulling Together or Pulling Apart: Identity and Nationhood - Spain, Europe, the West

? ?Geopolitical Enemy #1? Anglophone Popular Culture, Vladimir Putin, and the Politics of Representation"
Russian Culture in the Era of Globalisation

? ??Brand? New States: Post-Socialist Europe/Eurasia, Country Branding, and the Challenges of National Differentiation"
The Future(s) of Post-Socialism

? ?The Popular Geopolitics Feedback Loop: Thinking Beyond the ?Russia versus the West? Paradigm"
Popular Geopolitics in Russia and Post-Soviet Eastern Europe

? ?Neopaganism and Nationalism in Northern Europe since 1800: A Preliminary Analysis"
Northern Myths, Modern Identities: The Nationalization of Mythologies in Northern Europe

Education

Rutgers University
PhD Global Affairs

Stony Brook University
MA History

University of Florida
BA History

Accomplishments

Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology Outstanding Scholarly Publication
Specific Research prize for my essay "Pagan Places" in Progress in Human Geography

Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology Outstanding Scholarly Publication
Publication prize for the book Ethnopolitics in Cyberspace

Visiting researcher at the Institute for Urban Research (IUR), Malmö University
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Affiliate Partner of the DETECT: Detecting Transcultural Identity in European Popular Crime Narratives, funded by a European Union Horizon 2020 grant
Affiliate Partner of the DETECT: Detecting Transcultural Identity in European Popular Crime Narratives, funded by a European Union Horizon 2020 grant, since 2019

Affiliate Partner of the Centre for Transnational Media Research at Aarhus University
Affiliate Partner of the Centre for Transnational Media Research at Aarhus University, since 2019

SUNY Russia Programs Network Spring 2018 Travel Award to St. Petersburg, Russia
SUNY Russia Programs Network Spring 2018 Travel Award to St. Petersburg, Russia (April 2018)

Honorary Fellow of the Leeds Russian Centre (University of Leeds)
Honorary Fellow of the Leeds Russian Centre (University of Leeds), since 2017

Awarded the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities
Awarded the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities, May 2016

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