

# **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.

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## **Biography**

Robert A. Saunders is a professor in the Department of History, Politics & Geography at Farmingdale State College, where he teaches courses on comparative religions, global politics, and world history. In addition to his role as an instructor, Dr. Saunders is also Chair of the Science, Technology and Society (STS) program, the largest baccalaureate program in the School of Arts and Sciences at Farmingdale. He holds a PhD in Global Affairs from Rutgers University and degrees in History from Stony Brook University (MA) and the University of Florida (BA). His geographic areas of focus include Russia and Central Asia, Europe, and the Muslim world. His research explores the impact of popular culture and mass media on geopolitics, nationalism, and religious identity.

Dr. Saunders' scholarship has appeared in *Progress in Human Geography*, *Nations and Nationalism*, *Slavic Review*, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, and *Geopolitics*, as well as other journals. He is the curator of the "Popular Culture and IR" blog channel at E-International Relations.

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." He is also the author of "Ethnopolitics in Cyberspace: The Internet, Minority Nationalism, and the Web of Identity" (2010), and the co-author, with Vlad Strukov, of the "Historical Dictionary of the Russian Federation" (2010).

During the fall of 2014, Dr. Saunders held a Visiting Senior Research Fellowship at the University of Leeds, hosted by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures' Leeds Russian Centre.

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## **Availability**

Keynote, Moderator, Panelist, Workshop, Author Appearance

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## **Industry Expertise**

International Affairs, Education/Learning, Entertainment

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## **Areas of Expertise**

International Politics, Russia and Central Asia, Islam and the Middle East, Nationalism, Cyber-Politics, Terrorism, Political Violence, Popular Culture, Politics, Comparative Religions, Global Politics, World History

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## **Affiliations**

• Association of American Geographers, • Phi Beta Kappa Society, • Sigma Iota Rho The National Honor Society for International Studies, "Soft Power Cinema and the BRICS" research network, European International Studies Association, Association for Slavic East European and Eurasian Studies

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## **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

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## **Education**

**Rutgers University**

PhD Global Affairs

**Stony Brook University**

MA 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

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