

Biography Dr. Laura Cook Kenna

Dr. Laura Cook Kenna is a cultural critic and 20th century US historian by training; a lover of ideas by disposition; and a professor, writer, and editor by trade. As faculty at Trinity Fellows Academy, she developed a writing process to guide fellows toward rigorous and writable research projects that take shape in light of each individual's passions and in the sustaining feedback of community. She also leads sessions for TFA on defining and critiquing culture and its uses, especially film.

In addition to teaching at TFA, Dr. Cook Kenna regularly consults for the US State Department's Foreign Service Institute. In the last five years, she's trained 750 cultural attaches and press officers how to understand and interpret recent trends in American popular culture. Previously, she taught in the American Studies and Film Studies departments at George Washington University. At GWU Cook Kenna designed and taught seven different upper-level courses.

As an author and editor, most of Cook Kenna's work has been in academic publishing. In late 2016, her research on gangster television will be published in *Italian American Review* and her work on 1970s African-American film audiences will appear in the book *Beyond Blaxploitation*. She has also published on the Rat Pack's influence on Las Vegas' culture, 1960s TV censorship tactics, and why pastors should read Foucault. She recently worked as developmental editor on a book project about the intersection of politics and digital technology and has previously provided substantive editing on three academic books and ten academic articles. Her non-academic writing has appeared online at Christianity Today, Patheos and Rare and in print in the Washington Times and USA Today. When she has the bandwidth, she also blogs about pop culture at remotepossibilitiesblog.com.

Laura Cook Kenna graduated from Pennsylvania State University summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa with a BA in Political Science. She received her PhD in American Studies at George Washington University. Her scholarly work has been funded by a Jacob K. Javits Fellowship from the US Department of Education, an Academic Excellence Fellowship from GWU, and a Gaming Research Fellowship from UNLV Libraries.

Laura and her husband are long-time residents of Washington, DC. Her husband Randy is a recovering attorney who, after four years practicing law, has spent the past decade as a commercial developer of multifamily housing and retail. They have three vivacious children, ages five and younger. In another, less grown-up version of life, Laura would bang on her drums all day (literally) and bake things and binge on sci-fi, fantasy, and historical fiction. When she's fortunate, this alternate life is called, "Saturday."