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Cook has published widely in foreign policy journals, opinion magazines, and newspapers, and he is a frequent commentator on radio and television. He also currently writes the blog *From the Potomac to the Euphrates*.

Prior to joining CFR, Cook was a research fellow at the Brookings Institution (2001–2002) and a Soref research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (1995–1996).

Cook holds a BA in international studies from Vassar College, an MA in international relations from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, and both an MA and PhD in political science from the University of Pennsylvania. He speaks Arabic and Turkish and reads French.