



Robert Pape

Loving War Speaker Series

Robert Pape
University of Chicago



"The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism "

Wednesday, April 27, 2005
12:00 p.m.

Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Avenue
Room 120



Several cultures have encouraged the formation of cadres that honor self-destruction in order to destroy others: the list includes the Assassins of medieval West Asia, the "Kamikaze" Japanese pilots of World War II, and the Arab suicide bombers today. What common denominators exist between them? What motivates them: tradition or track record? What defenses exist against them?

Dr. Robert Pape is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago specializing in international security affairs. His publications include *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Cornell 1996), "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," *International Security* (1997), "The Determinants of International Moral Action," *International Organization* (1999). His commentary on international security policy has appeared in *The New York Times*, *New Republic*, *Boston Globe*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, as well as on *Nightline*, *ABC News* with Peter Jennings, and *National Public Radio*. Before coming to Chicago in 1999, he taught international relations at Dartmouth College for five years and air power strategy for the USAF's School of Advanced Airpower Studies for three years. He received his Ph. D. from the University of Chicago in 1988 and graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Pittsburgh in 1982. His current work focuses on the effect of technological change on conflict and cooperation among major powers and the theory and practice of suicide terrorism.

This talk is part of a quarter-long series arranged by Geoffrey Parker around the theme of "*Loving War*," and is offered as a graduate seminar (HST 767). The syllabus, including each speaker's recommended readings, is available [here](#).

About the Series:

Many cultures today and in the past see war as good and so build up cadres of killers that threaten the security and stability of their neighbors. This asymmetry raises many issues:

- How are such cadres of killers found and trained; what motivates them; to what extent do they draw on tradition and to what extent do they forge their own? That is: do they kill because that is what their culture expects or because it works?
- Do cultures that embrace war as good have any distinctive characteristics?
- To what extent is a warrior culture natural or universal? To what extent do individual societies promote, shape, control and suppress the instinct to "love war"?
- What connects and what divides the warrior's understanding of fighting as a heroic individual pursuit and the state's conception

of war as protective public policy?

- Do all societies understand, observe and enforce that distinction? If not, is the distinction a hallmark of "civilization" or "modernity"?
- What happens when this distinction is not honored?
- Above all, do the killers "just do it" or do they actually enjoy killing

Upcoming Events :

*April 6, 2005: [Nicola DiCosmo](#)
April 13, 2005: [Karl Friday](#)
April 20, 2005: [Thomas Kuehne](#)
April 27, 2005: [Robert H. Pape](#)
May 4: [Eliot Cohen](#)
May 11: [Peter A. Fritzsche](#)
May 18, 2005: [Barry Strauss](#)
May 25, 2005: [N.A.M. Rodger](#)*