



# Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It

*Robert A. Pape, James K. Feldman*

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Almost every week, suicide bombers attack. We know the danger—suicide attacks kill more people than all other forms of terrorism—and in response we have sacrificed the lives of soldiers and civilians, trillions of dollars, and America’s reputation abroad in a futile quest for absolute security. But do we really understand what drives people to deliberately kill themselves on a mission to harm the innocent?

*Cutting the Fuse* offers a wealth of new knowledge about the origins of suicide terrorism and strategies to stop it. Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman have examined every suicide terrorist attack worldwide from 1980 to 2009. Their work fundamentally changes how we understand the root causes of the most important terrorist campaigns today and reveals why the War on Terror has been ultimately counterproductive.

Since 2004, the number of suicide attacks—whether within a country or transnational—has grown with shocking speed. Through a close analysis of suicide campaigns by Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Israel, Chechnya, and Sri Lanka, the authors provide powerful new evidence that, contrary to popular and dangerously mistaken belief, only a tiny minority of these attacks are motivated solely by religion. Instead, the root cause is foreign military occupation, which triggers secular and religious people alike to carry out suicide attacks.

*Cutting the Fuse* calls for new, effective solutions that America and its allies can sustain for decades, relying less on ground troops in Muslim countries and more on off-shore, over-the-horizon military forces along with political and economic strategies to empower local communities to stop terrorists in their midst. “Pape and Feldman are the world’s experts on suicide terrorism. In this carefully researched yet highly readable book, the authors lay bare the causes of suicide terrorism and demonstrate that our current military strategy serves only to breed a new generation of terrorists. This book is a must-read for anyone who cares about America’s role in the world.”—Steven D. Levitt, author of *(em)Freakonomics(/em)*

“Robert Pape and Ken Feldman mine a unique library of data to arrive at a radical diagnosis of what motivates suicide terrorists. I think you’ll find it persuasive, I am convinced.”—Thomas C. Schelling, Winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics

“Pape and Feldman offer a powerful analysis of the factors underlying the rise in suicide terrorism in recent years and bring clarity to a complex and challenging subject. I commend this book to both scholars and policy makers with a serious interest in U.S. national security policy.”—Lee H. Hamilton, Co-Chair of the 9/11 Commission

“In this impressively researched book the authors question our conceived wisdom about the motivation of suicide bombers. If they are correct (and I suspect they are) it calls for a total reexamination of U.S. military strategy. *(em)Cutting the Fuse(/em)* should be required reading for policy makers.”—Thomas Kean, Co-Chair of the 9/11 Commission

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