

## Program in Transnational Korean Studies *Presents:*



### **“Not War/Not Peace: The Korean Armistice Under a Nuclear Shadow”**

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University of Chicago

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Distinguished Service Professor in History  
and the College

**Tuesday,  
April 8, 2014**

**4 – 5:30pm**

**Humanities & Social  
Sciences Building  
(H&SS)  
Muir College  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Galbraith  
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### **Abstract**

On July 27, the Korean War armistice entered its seventh decade. It is just an agreement for a ceasefire—it is not a peace treaty, and therefore never brought a final end to the war. The primary legacy of the armistice is therefore not peace, but a continuation of the extraordinary violence of this war through continuous threats by the US and North and South Korea to do it again. Back in 1953, the Eisenhower administration claimed that its threats to escalate the conflict by using nuclear weapons brought North Korea and China to conclude the armistice. It then introduced hundreds of nuclear weapons into South Korea in 1958, and annual war games came to include various scenarios for nuclear warfare. As a result of this, before its first nuclear test in 2006, North Korea was the only non-nuclear country in the world to have been consistently threatened and blackmailed by the US with nuclear weapons. This began during the war, in 1951, and has continued down to the present. Meanwhile discussion of this phenomenon in the American media is so rare as to be virtually nonexistent. The vast majority of Americans and most well informed people know nothing about it. Yet the armistice was forged in the context of American nuclear threats, and sustained ever since by the same methods.