



POLEMISTOGENESIS

The unintended or taken-for-granted impact of military action

Joseph Soeters, Tilburg University, the Netherlands



COMMUNITY OF PROFESSIONS

- are not easy to access (only after intensive (self-)selection, long training and socialization)
- Have a 'licence to operate'
- Regulate their own business
- Want protection and support from society
- Are inner-directed



IVAN ILLICH: IATROGENESIS

- clinical iatrogenesis – damage through clinical action (wrong diagnosis, treatment, norms)
- social iatrogenesis – damage through medical (over)consumption and medical interference in social/political issues -> medicalization of society
- Cultural iatrogenesis – damage through autosuggestion, 'disease trap', learned helplessness,



BACKGROUNDS

- Professionalization through specialization, emphasis on functional rationality (= pigeon holing)
- Perverse dynamics in control of public services (-> performance paradox)
- Meta-dynamics: taken-for-grantedness, unintended consequences, workplace silence/open secrets



POLEMISTOGENESIS

- Clinical polemistogenesis - collateral damage (omelette)/taken for grantedness (e.g., casualties at the other side are hardly noticed). This includes non-intervention!
- Social polemistogenesis – expanding influence of the military (politically, particularly in US; budgetwise at the expense of....; contentwise, f.i. disaster management; framing policies vis-a-vis social challenges as “wars on...”)
- Cultural polemistogenesis - unintended consequences such as Libya, peacekeeping, wartime inequalities in Israel



INSIDE POLEMISTOGENESIS

- Sacrificing own troops to gain operational dominance (spectacular example: Vietnam)
- Inside casualties, injuries and psychological trauma



ANALYSIS OF SOLUTION

- Health care knows: mediation, manipulation, ingestion and incursion
- Incursion is seen as most important and requires largest budgets
- Similarly the military values incursion most and trains their personnel particularly for this type of activities
- Ambidexterity and virtuous structures, cultures and policies could prevent this one-dimensionality