Transforming Ideas into Operations

The Minerva Project
on
Operationalizing Social Science Research for Defense Users
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What is "Minerva?"

The Minerva Initiative is a Department of Defense (DoD)-sponsored, university-based social science research initiative launched by the Secretary of Defense in 2008 focusing on areas of strategic importance to U.S. national security policy

The goal of the Minerva Initiative is to improve DoD's basic understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that shape regions of the world of strategic importance to the U.S

The research program will:

- Leverage and focus the resources of the Nation's top universities

- Seek to define and develop foundational knowledge about sources of present and future conflict with an eye toward better understanding of the political trajectories of key regions of the world

- Improve the ability of DoD to develop cutting-edge social science research, foreign area and interdisciplinary studies, that is developed and vetted by the best scholars in these fields

- The Minerva Initiative brings together universities, research institutions, and individual scholars and supports interdisciplinary and cross-institutional projects addressing specific topic areas determined by the Secretary of Defense

95% of Minerva Research Grants have been made to Civilian Colleges and Universities

Statement of the Military Problem

To meet the challenge of an increasingly complex security environment, U.S. Department of Defense professionals need greater understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that drive conflict and influence instability. The processes, means and methods for consistently incorporating cutting edge social science research to address this imperative into training, doctrine, education, policy, and leader development have proven to be a significant challenge

Description of the Project

Using the forthcoming NDU publication, *Impunity: Confronting Illicit Power in War and Transition* as a pilot case study, this project examines the methods, processes and pathways that most effectively convey emerging social science insights to Defense professionals, and translates those insights into recommendations on how to increase the effectiveness of the Minerva Grants Program

Challenges

Sponsorship: Who's waiting for the product?

Selection: How is relevance determined, and who needs to be involved?

Process: What are the DoD processes that move ideas into implementation; who "owns" those process and do entry points exist for Minerva research products?

Evaluation: How is the utility of Minerva research evaluated, and by whom?

Content/Format: Are Minerva research products designed and formatted in a way that can be easily adapted for use by Defense professionals?

Delivery: Are Minerva products so specialized that only the researchers themselves can deliver the material, or is the research capable of being delivered through a broad set of extant educational platforms and methods?

Project Deliverables

➢ **Identify PME institutions that have a stake in the use of Minerva-funded, social science research; with a map of the requirements generation and curriculum development processes they use**

➢ **Courseware, and plug-and-play teaching modules on countering illicit power structures that represents best practice among PME institutions, and can serve as a model for Minerva-funded researchers**

➢ **Recommendations for OSD on how to increase the operational impact and relevance of Minerva-funded social science research for Defense professionals**

PSOTEW Working Group Intent

As part of the 2015 PSOTEW, The Minerva Project "Transforming Ideas to Operations" will conduct the first of two Expert Consultations to Introduce the DoD Minerva Initiative to a wide range of Defense stakeholders in the peacekeeping and stability operations community, and through the "Ideas to Operations" roundtable discussions, solicit their input on how to increase the utility of Minerva-funded research

Key Related Project Milestones

✓ 5 Jan: Minerva Research Team under contract

❑ 5 Jan-31 May: Field research and coordination with PME institutions and Minerva researchers completed; Courseware in development

❑ 5 Jan – 31 May: Final editing of *Impunity*

✓ 12 Feb – Quarterly update to OSD and Minerva

❑ 14-16 April: Expert Consultation #1 – PSOTEW Working Group @ NDU

❑ Mid-May – Quarterly update to OSD and Minerva

❑ June: Warfighter coordination and research completed

❑ June: Expert Consultation #2 – Courseware rollout and presentation of preliminary recommendations @ NDU (dates TBD @ CCO)

❑ 3-7 August: Launch of *Impunity* and final report on courseware/integration recommendations to OSD @ NDU

❑ NLT 27 August: Final report to OSD

PSOTEW Working Group Schedule
Day 1

13:00-14:30 – Overview of the DOD Minerva Research Initiative, and the Ideas to Operations Project

Joseph Collins, Director, Center for Complex Operations, NDU

Michelle Hughes, Co-Author and Co-Editor of *Impunity;* Senior Project Analyst

Erin Fitzgerald, Program Director, Minerva Research Initiative, Office of the Secretary of Defense

15:00-17:00 – Overview of the Case Study: A Panel Discussion with key Contributing Authors to *Impunity: Confronting Illicit Power in War and Transition*

<u>Moderator</u>: Michelle Hughes

PSOTEW Working Group Schedule
Day 2

9:30-10:15 – Illicit Power: The Professional Military Training & Education Challenge
> Joseph Collins, Director, Center for Complex Operations, NDU; Michelle Hughes, Co-Author of *Impunity*

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 – Challenge #1: Bureaucracy – Identifying the Roadmap from Idea to Implementation
> <u>Moderator</u>: Christopher Holshek, Senior Project Development Assistant

12:00-13:00 Lunch break

13:00-14:30 – Challenge #2: Quality and Relevance – Making it matter; delivering the right stuff
> <u>Moderator</u>: David Gordon, Senior Concept & Courseware Developer

14:30-15:00 Break

15:00-16:30 – Challenge #3: Beyond Training and Education – Influencing Strategy, Policy and Doctrine
> <u>Moderator</u>: Christopher Holshek, Senior Project Development Assistant

16:30-17:00 Wrap-Up
> Joseph Collins, Director, Center for Complex Operations, NDU; Michelle Hughes, Co-Author of *Impunity*

Working Group Outcome Briefings on Day 3
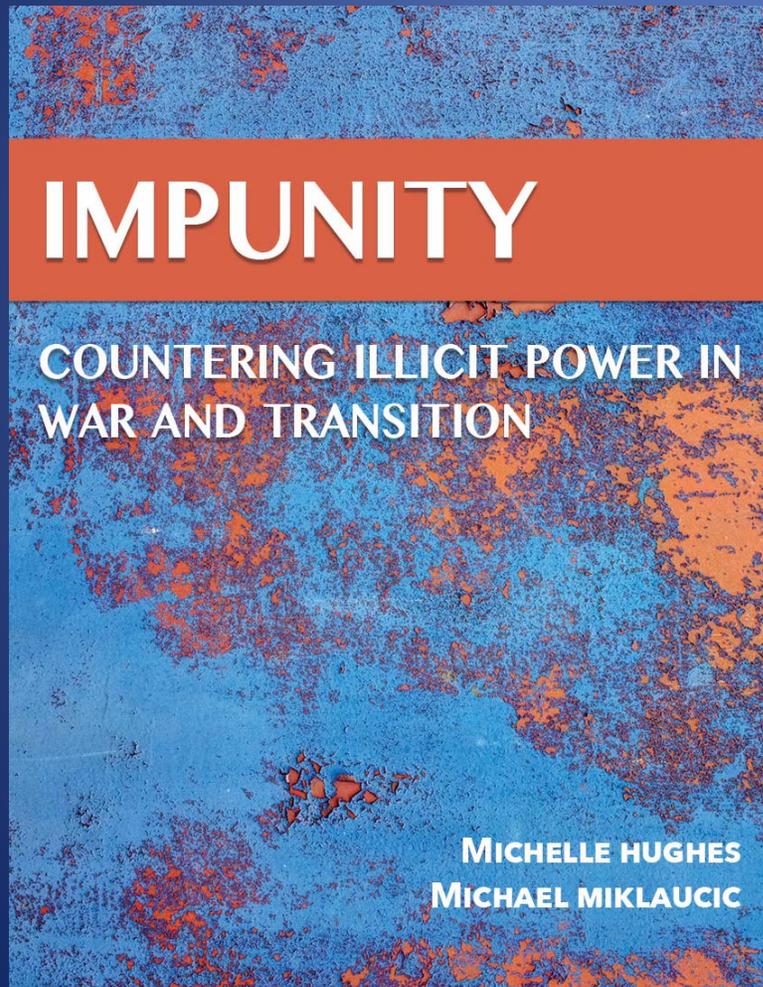
PSOTEW Deliverables and Benefits

PSOTEW deliverables include:

- ✓ **Roadmap of the DoD process for integrating social science innovation into training and educations**
- ✓ **Identification of the major stakeholders and customers within the peacekeeping and stability operations community for Minerva-funded research**
- ✓ **Lessons learned for the development of high quality, relevant training and education materials that are based on emerging social science research**
- ✓ **Identification of key challenges, barriers, and impediments, and barriers to rapid integration of social science research, innovation, and insights**
- ✓ **Recommendations and a way ahead**

Benefits to the PSOTEW Community of Interest:

- ✓ **Greater awareness of opportunities to access and shape social science research to meet both strategy/policy, and war fighter demand**
- ✓ **Opportunity to contribute substantive guidance that will enable military trainers and educators to more easily leverage cutting edge social science research**
- ✓ **Improved effectiveness and utility of DoD-funded research programs that are designed to improve understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that drive conflict and influence instability**
- ✓ **Provide a platform for introduction of best practices in integration of social science research in PME/training strategies from non-DoD stakeholders/partners**

The Pilot Case Study

IMPUNITY

COUNTERING ILLICIT POWER IN WAR AND TRANSITION

MICHELLE HUGHES
MICHAEL MIKLAUCIC

➢**Written for policy makers, planners, and implementers who must address the problem of countering illicit power structures during conflict, stabilization, and political transition**

➢**Consolidates lessons from more than 20 case studies including Iraq, Afghanistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Haiti, Russia, Ukraine, Liberia, Timor Leste, and following money and weapons around the world**

➢**Introduces readers to a range of tools, processes, and methods for dealing with illicit power, from an operational perspective**

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Key Definitions

- **Licit --** conforming to the requirements of the law: not forbidden by law: permissible

- **Illicit --** not allowed by law: unlawful or illegal: involving activities that are not considered morally acceptable

- **Illicit Power Structures --** entities that seek political and/or economic power through the use of violence, often supported by criminal economic activity. The leadership may be within or parallel to the state, or may constitute armed opposition to it. Illicit power structures operate outside the framework for establishing and maintaining the rule of law, and erode that framework.

Objectives when Confronting Illicit Power

- **Illicit power is contained, controlled, co-opted, or destroyed so that it does not undermine security, stability, and durable peace**

- **Illicit power structures, when appropriate, are transformed into licit organizations**

- **Illicit actors are deprived of their sources of power**

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IMPUNITY

COUNTERING ILLICIT POWER IN
WAR AND TRANSITION

MICHELLE HUGHES
MICHAEL MIKLAUCIC

IMPUNITY: CONFRONTING ILLICIT POWER IN WAR AND TRANSITION
Michelle Hughes and Michael Miklaucic

FORWARD, by Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster
INTRODUCTION, Michael Miklaucic

Impunity: Preliminary Insights

- Where there's a vacuum in power and authority, someone is already waiting to fill it – and not for good
- Understanding the operating environment in which illicit power exists and thrives: We're still asking the wrong questions, of the wrong people, in the wrong places
- Failure to recognize the risk posed by organized crime, corruption, and warlordism leads us to empower those who later represent the greatest threats to stability – we consistently miscalculate the risk
- When we generalize cultural norms and propensities, we're usually wrong
- Successful capacity building doesn't occur unless it addresses politics, power, and factionalism
- Successful government response occurs when security forces adapt and reform; unsuccessful illicit power structures often mobilize their own demise – in both cases, we usually don't recognize the sea changes when they're taking place, and miss opportunities to force multiply as a result
- Regarding behavior, the international community currently holds governments to a much higher standard and we continue to lose the battle of the narrative regardless of what the bad actors have done
- Licit and illicit networks rely on the same licit mechanisms for success and illicit activities are almost always intertwined with licit ones – but our responses tend to be "either or"
- When justice and law enforcement are viewed as "luxuries," things fall apart. Fast. Organized crime and corruption are not secondary to security. They are primary threats
- Our planning assumptions about efforts to "follow the money," "shut down their transportation, weapons, and supply networks," etc., are seldom informed by a realistic understanding of what that means, how long it takes, and who's involved
- Accountability is not just a national issue – it's regional
- Our own failure of accountability and oversight is often the single biggest enabler of illicit power
- The presence of illicit power structures adds layers of complexity to any peace agreement or peace and reconciliation process, and mandates that we have to take the illicit economy and negotiable interests into account, however distasteful they may be

The "Pilot" Courseware

The "*Impunity*"-based courseware will consist of "plug-and-play" modules that can be delivered through various learning platforms, and either comprise stand-alone courses on addressing the challenge of countering illicit power, or can be disaggregated to supplement existing courses and electives

Materials are designed to promote:

- Deeper understanding of illicit power structures; how they operate; and the disruptive impact of illicit power on our ability to achieve strategic objectives

- Critical thinking and adaptive learning during conflict analysis and risk assessment

- Effective identification of critical information and intelligence requirements

- Strategies for more effective international and inter-organizational engagement and cooperation for countering the posed by illicit power structures to include trafficking networks, militias, transnational criminal organizations and political patronage networks

- Greater awareness of available means, methods, and tools for countering the effect of illicit power during conflict and transition, and the planning factors for their employment