When Lobbying Backfires:
Balancing Lobby Efforts With Insights From Stakeholder Theory

Abstract

Purpose: This paper seeks to improve upon lobby theory by learning from a failed lobby campaign in which the lobbyist managed to annoy and anger key constituencies.

Design/methodology/approach: A qualitative case study was conducted on attempts made by the Norwegian oil industry in 2002–2004 to achieve a tax amendment. Qualitative interviews were carried out with oil industry representatives, two former ministers, political advisors, and members of parliament, and with journalists who had followed the campaign.

Findings: The main argument being put forward in this paper is that lobbyists should use insights from stakeholder theory.

Research limitations/implications: This is a single-case study and it is difficult to generalise its findings. This invites more research.

Practical implications: Combining lobby theory with an approach suggested by stakeholder theory might temper single-minded advocacy that is too preoccupied with getting immediate political results, and help organizations to remember that it is important to develop good long-term relations with stakeholders.

Originality/value: Has potential to improve lobby theory and efforts

Keywords: Lobbying, Stakeholder Theory, Politics

Paper type: Research paper
Introduction

It is a well-established axiom that organizations need to co-exist peacefully with their environment if they are to survive in the long run. However, this axiom could present a challenge to organizations that seek to influence political decision makers. As politics has to do with the distribution of burdens and scarce resources, organizations that engage in politics risk alienating key constituencies. Some stakeholders may feel that they will be disadvantaged if the lobby campaign succeeds. Stakeholders could also be offended by the methods or vigor with which the campaign is carried out. In other words, a lobbyist must balance the interests and perspectives of the organization with the interests and perspectives of key constituencies in its environment.

The challenge described above is seldom dealt with in the lobby studies of political science (e.g. Austen-Smith & Wright, 1994; Berry, 1977; Hall & Deardorff, 2006; Kollman, 1998; Munk Christensen & Rommetvedt, 1999) or in the field of strategic communication (e.g. Haug & Koppang, 1997; Kugler, 2004; Mack, 2005; McGrath, 2005b, 2006; Terry, 2001; Vining, Shapiro, & Borges, 2005). We would argue that drawing on lobby theory and stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984, 2006; Jones, Wicks, & Freeman, 2002; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997) could help organizations in this respect. The two theories differ in their orientation: lobby theory focuses on immediate political goals, while the stakeholder theory deals with long-term relations. We pose the following research question: how can insights from stakeholder theory strengthen lobby theory?

In discussing this research question we make use of and extend a qualitative case study conducted by one of the authors [removed reference]. In 2002, the Norwegian oil industry began a campaign to obtain a tax amendment based on the premise that economic incentives were needed to increase oil exploration on the Norwegian Continental Shelf. Increased activity would in turn benefit the Norwegian state through a growth in tax income. However,
politicians were not persuaded by the industry’s proposal. Furthermore, an extraordinary situation was created as the industry through its campaign managed to anger both politicians and journalists. Our basic argument is that the latter development could have been avoided had the lobbyist paid attention to insights from stakeholder theory.

The following part of the paper is a theoretical discussion that gives a short overview of the literature on lobbying and stakeholder theory. Thereafter, we present the methodology that is used, before analyzing the case itself. The last part of the paper is a discussion that summarizes the analysis, links it to the broader discussion on lobbying and stakeholder theory, and points to further avenues for research.

**Literature Review**

*Lobby theory*

Not surprisingly, political scientists have paid attention to lobbying as a social and political phenomenon (e.g. Austen-Smith & Wright, 1994; Berry, 1977; Hall & Deardorff, 2006; Kollman, 1998; Munk Christensen & Rommetvedt, 1999). Some of these studies also describe the types of strategies that lobbyists typically use. These include how lobbyists initiate direct contact with political decision-makers through, for instance, participation in committees, evaluations and hearings. In addition, some scholars also consider indirect strategies such as media relations and coalition building as part of the lobbyist’s repertoire (e.g., Kollman, 1998; Uhrwing, 2001).

These findings and recommendations are largely mirrored in the literature on strategic communication (e.g. Haug & Koppang, 1997; Kugler, 2004; Mack, 2005; McGrath, 2005a, 2005b, 2006; Terry, 2001; Vining, Shapiro, & Borges, 2005). In addition, this literature typically gives advice about how lobbying professionals should conduct their work. The characteristics of the ideal lobbyist include that he or she should be a listener, an observant information gatherer, behave in a pleasant and courteous manner, and have
Lobbying

relational skills (McGrath, 2006). One study points out how the lobbyist might use arguments based on facts and science, efficiency, or equity (distribution) (Vining, Shapiro, & Borges, 2005).

The aforementioned literature is strangely quiet about the antagonistic dimensions of lobbying. Among the few exceptions are the studies carried out by Maria Jaatinen (1997; 1999). She defines lobbying as, “influencing political decision-making in the interest of a group by communicating with publics relevant to the political process of a certain issue” (Jaatinen, 1999, p. 22).

Jaatinen draws on the work of the public relations scholar James E. Grunig and his colleagues that suggests that an organization needs to build so-called symmetrical relations with its environment (e.g., J. E. Grunig, 2001; L. A. Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002). It has been argued that organizations must seek to maintain a balance with their environment; in some situations, the organization has to adapt, while in others it aims to control.

Jaatinen suggests a so-called contingency model for conflict accommodation along these lines, and presents a map for how lobbyists should apply certain tactics under certain given situations. At the base of her model lies the premise that the organization should act in accordance with the symmetry model, and that it should maintain a broad focus concerning which stakeholders matter for its success. Still, Jaatinen is first and foremost results oriented, and does not fully juxtapose the need for both goal attainment and relations maintenance.

We maintain that public relations scholars would do well to reconnect with the debate in management literature about who it is that an organization has responsibilities towards, and how these responsibilities ought to be handled. Here, the debate on stakeholder theory seems fruitful.

**Stakeholder Theory**

A typical definition of stakeholders is “those people and groups that affect, or can be
affected by, an organization’s decisions, policies, and operations” (Post, Lawrence, & Weber, 2002, p. 8). The prime merit of the stakeholder concept is that it points out the important relational aspects of organizations, and it functions as a useful heuristic in this sense. The basic idea is that an organization’s success depends on how it is able to manage its relationships with key groups, such as customers, employees, suppliers, communities, politicians, owners, and others, that can affect its ability to reach its goals. It becomes the manager’s job “to keep the support of all of these groups, balancing their interests, while making the organization a place where stakeholder interests can be maximized over time” (Freeman & Philips, 2002, p. 333).

Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) argue that stakeholders can be identified and ranked based on the salience of the traits of legitimacy, urgency, and power; in short, making the stakeholders with all three traits present the definitive stakeholders of the organization.

These authors see power as being displayed when one part in a relationship is able to impose its will on the other part. This may be through force (coercive power), material or financial resources (utilitarian power), or symbolic resources (normative power). Legitimacy, for its part, is to be understood as, ”a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions” (Suchman, as quoted in Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 866). Urgency refers to ”the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention” (p. 867). Thus, this framework incorporates both the idea of primary and secondary stakeholders, and the concept of derivate and normative stakeholders.

The framework of Mitchell et al. (1997) provides a more fine-scaled and precise approach than the previously mentioned publics approach, and minimizes the risk of overlooking stakeholders that are not sufficiently organized or do not communicate vigorously enough. In the case of lobbying, the stakeholder theory also has merit in reminding the
lobbyist about the need, over time, to balance the interests of the organization and the stakeholders. This call goes beyond the usual advice that the lobbyist should be observant of how politicians rely on other parties, behave in a pleasant and courteous manner, have relational skills, and so forth (i.e., Mack, 2005; McGrath, 2006).

**Methodology**

A qualitative case study was conducted of the lobby campaign that was carried out by the Norwegian oil industry from 2002 to 2004. The campaign was conducted in several different phases with the involvement of the cluster wide initiative called Kon-Kraft in the first phases, and with the Norwegian Oil Industry Association (the OLF) at the helm in the last phase. Four qualitative interviews were conducted with representatives of these organizations. The list includes: Frode Bøhm, Manager for Fiscal Conditions, OLF, and member of the Kon-Kraft Tax Project Work Group (09.12.2005); Nils Heileman, Vice Director General, OLF (28.11.2005); Tom Einar Rysst Jensen, Vice President International Business Development, Hydro, and head of the Kon-Kraft Tax Project Work Group, (02.02.2006); and Tore Torvund, Executive Vice President for Oil and Energy, Hydro, and chairman of the Kon-Kraft Tax Project Steering Committee, and Chairman, OLF (27.03.2006).

In addition, we interviewed six public officials and politicians, including two former ministers. They included: Per-Kristian Foss, former Minister of Finance, and member of the Conservative Party (05.01.2005); Øyvind Håbrekke, political advisor, the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, and member of the Christian Democratic Party (02.02.2006); Tore Nordtun, Member of Parliament, Vice Chairman of the Committee for Finance, and Labour Party representative on the Committee for Energy and Environment (09.02.2006); Einar Steensnæs, former Minister of Petroleum and Energy, and member of the Christian Democratic Party (25.01.2005); and Ingebrigt Sørfonn, Member of Parliament, and Christian
Democratic Party representative on the Committee for Finance (07.02.2006). We also interviewed an anonymous source from the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (06.01.2006). The politicians represented either the parties in office during the period of the campaign (a coalition government made up of the Conservatives, the Christian Democrats, and the Liberals), or the most important opposition party (Labour).

The following two journalists that followed the campaign closely were also interviewed: Alf Ole Ask, Aftenposten (06.10.2005); and Jostein Lovás, Dagens Næringsliv (05.10.2005). Each interview was taped, and a transcript of the entire interview was submitted to the interviewee for approval. Few major changes were requested by the interviewees. Quotes from the transcripts were then translated from Norwegian to English by the authors.

The media coverage of the campaign was tracked using an online news archive (www.a-tekst.no). One hundred and eleven news stories were located this way and used for the analysis. In addition, several documents and reports from both the oil industry, and the government were analyzed and used as background material (Kon-Kraft, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2004; Ministry of Finance, 2004; NOU, 2000:18; Oljeindustriens Landsforening, 2003).

Conducting a qualitative case study like this has obvious limitations. It is difficult to argue that our results will be relevant to all other lobby campaigns. Still, we would argue that as our purpose is to generate and discuss theory, a qualitative case study such as this is an appropriate method (Lee, 1999). Future studies might test whether the assumptions seem valid.

We also use an anonymous source in this study, which is something that we justify on the account that the source provided us with inside information that we could not obtain from other sources. The anonymous source was located in the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, and felt bound by his role as a bureaucrat to not engage in politics as such.
A problem with using qualitative interviews is that the interviewees might have an interest in justifying their previous choices, or in promoting their own role, or that of their organization, or political party. An official account may be an after-rationalization of strategies or conduct. This was particularly an issue in this case study, as it centred on a failed campaign, and those who were involved might have tried to cast the campaign in a positive light, or to distance themselves from any responsibility for the outcome. Balancing the accounts against each other can check some of these problems. Nevertheless, it seems that a reflection upon the problems of using qualitative interviews may be the most adequate response.

The Case: Lobbying for a Tax Amendment

In the late 1990s, the Norwegian oil industry feared for its financial results as the oil price dropped dramatically. In 2002, an intensive lobby campaign was initiated with the aim of achieving a tax amendment for new activity.

The First Phase: Preparing the Ground

A tax cut on new activity was something that would benefit several of the companies working on the Norwegian Continental Shelf, and leading industry actors took the initiative to plan an industry wide lobby campaign. This campaign was to be executed within the so-called Kon-Kraft process that had been commenced in 1999 to boost the oil industry’s competitiveness. Kon-Kraft was a joint initiative of the oil companies and the suppliers in conjunction with the authorities, the shipping industry, trade unions, and research institutions. The OLF provided the secretarial functions for Kon-Kraft (see www.olf.no).

One of the first things that the oil industry did in this campaign was to invest heavily in research to show that a tax cut was a measure that would contribute to increased activity. What was called “the Tax Project” was constituted, and several consultancies and academics were hired to evaluate the Norwegian petroleum tax regime and related issues. Their
conclusions would, the oil industry hoped, count as non-partisan third party arguments. In other words, the oil industry opted to use arguments based on fact and science (Vining, Shapiro, & Borges, 2005).

In parallel with building this argument base, the oil industry also used media relations and coalition building to promote its case. While actively promoting its position in the media, the oil industry simultaneously worked to obtain support from other Kon-Kraft members, and other organizations such as the Federation of Norwegian Engineering Industry.

The media analysis revealed that the press was, if not openly supportive, then at least not dismissive of the industry’s arguments. Headlines like “Oil activity heading downhill” (Østerbø, 2002), and “Oil-Norway is pressed for time” (Olderkjær, 2003) reflect the media’s willingness to present the position of the industry: that it was at a crossroads and that something had to be done.

The oil industry pointed out that increased activity on the Norwegian Continental Shelf could benefit the troubled yard industry and thus the many local communities along the coast that more or less depended on this industry. The latter argument was used by the oil industry when it attempted to mobilize local political engagement in the regions where the petroleum industry is pivotal to a large number of communities and their economies. The basic idea was that, “If changes are to be affected in Norway in this area [tax laws], a broad-based consensus is needed” (Tom-Einar Rysst Jensen, interview, 2.2.2006).

The oil industry also discussed the issue with bureaucrats in the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy. Representatives of the oil industry say that their arguments were met with understanding, but an anonymous source in the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy claimed that the industry was given a clear signal at this point: the ministry would not support a tax cut. This anonymous source suggested that the industry hoped to obtain the support of politicians despite the fact that, “it is very unlikely that [it]
believed that any bureaucracy, either in [the Ministry of Finance] or [the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy], could be convinced” [removed reference].

In summary, during the first phase of the campaign, the oil industry succeeded in obtaining favorable media coverage, and also built some local support for the basic idea that something had to be done to change the conditions under which the petroleum sector was operating. The tax cut idea allegedly produced mixed signals from bureaucrats, but the oil industry continued with its campaign.

*The Second Phase: Bringing out the Big Guns*

The second phase of the campaign began with a press conference in August 2003, to present the Tax Project’s final report (Kon-Kraft, 2003c). The 116 page report concluded that a tax amendment was economically necessary for the industry, as well as for society in general. A tax cut could create a “win–win situation” for society and the oil industry (Tom-Einar Rysst Jensen, interview, 02.02.2006; Tore Torvund, interview, 27.03.2006).

Importantly, a major change had occurred in the market while the industry had prepared its report: The oil price had soared. This made it difficult to talk about hard times for the oil industry. The leading financial paper even warned against the proposal (Mathiassen, 2003). As a journalist interviewed for this paper phrased it, “how can you argue that the fat cats ought to get even fatter?” (Jostein Lovås, interview, 5.10.2005). Several other stakeholders indicated that they were surprised that the oil industry did not change its tactics at this point, or drop the campaign altogether. A Labour representative, former Vice-Chairman of the Committee for Finance, as well as a representative on the Committee for Energy and Environment, pointed out that, “with the good financial results of the companies; they had to realize that this was no easy run” (Tore Nordtun, interview, 09.02.2006). The then Minister of Finance stated flatly that, “the timing of the campaign was incredibly bad… I think they should have given up in due time. … No one felt sorry for the oil companies”
Lobbying

The oil industry, nonetheless, pressed on with the campaign and OLF now took the helm. A new Director General of OLF was appointed, and the organization established an office in the capital Oslo, to increase the pressure on the government and the Storting.

The second phase of the campaign was thus characterized by increased lobby activity, but the oil industry continued to face a challenge as the oil price increased. Gradually, the campaign ran into more trouble.

The Third Phase: Pushing Towards Defeat

As the oil price soared, political difficulties for the oil industry increased. Not only did the media coverage start to focus on the campaign itself (Birkevold, 2004; Grande, 2004), but the negative signals coming from politicians increased. In February 2004, even the Minister of Petroleum and Energy (a Christian Democrat) stated that he was far from convinced that a tax reduction was the right solution (Rosenberg, 2004). In our interview with the former minister he stated flatly that he “perceived the proposition as quite hopeless, ill-founded and totally unacceptable. … We thought they went too far in painting a bleak picture” (Einar Steensnæs, interview, 25.01.2006).

In Norwegian politics, the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy is known as a sector-loyal ministry that will speak for the oil industry’s interests. In other words, when the oil industry did not succeed in persuading “its own” minister, it would have to pin its hopes on other politicians, perhaps from other parties. In April, however, the media reported that the Minister of Finance (from the industry friendly Conservatives) would not be among them (Natland, 2004). In our interview with this minister, he claimed that at this time there was a broad consensus within the government, as well as between the government and the opposition on the issue (Per-Kristian Foss, interview, 05.01.2006). On May 11, the government also presented its Revised National Budget, delivering a blow to the oil industry’s
A special tax reduction will have little effect on the profitability after tax for the small projects with moderate profitability. … A special tax reduction will, on the contrary, lead to a large revenue loss for the state. … The revenue loss can be estimated in the order of NOK 10 billion annually. (Ministry of Finance, 2004, p. 104)

In other words, the Ministry of Finance had not bought the industry’s arguments and predictions about the future of the activity on the Norwegian Shelf. From being an issue about improving the industry’s income in order to increase the state revenue, it had turned into an issue about an industry motivated by profit. The industry had instead entangled itself in a technical and economic debate with the Ministry of Finance, which had a very distinct understanding of its own role and its expertise in economic theory.

As early as February 2004, however, the media had reported that politicians felt an “apparent strain and irritation from the industry’s long and intensive lobby campaign” (Grande, 2004). Nonetheless, during this whole period the oil industry continued its campaign. A politician from the Christian Democratic Party, Ingebrigt Sørfonn, stated that: “this campaign was characterized by a very distinct arrogance on the industry’s part. There is every reason to say that there was a strain… It is obvious that people from a wide political milieu disliked the manner in which the campaign was conducted” (Sørfonn, interview, 07.02.2006).

After it became evident that there was no support from the government for the tax amendment proposal, the industry turned most of its attention to the Storting, where it hoped to win over the opposition. This resolve of the industry seemed to further annoy many politicians, particularly those from the parties in office. The former Minster of Finance said that, “in spite of [the conclusions from the government], the OLF continued on extra time. I
suppose that was perceived as annoying by some” (Per Kristian Foss, interview, 05.01.2006).

Since the government was a minority coalition, the oil industry could, at least theoretically, have won over the opposition and have it trump the proposal through. At the Storting, however, it was only the Progressive Party (which held 16% of the seats) that supported the industry. Nonetheless, the leader of the Tax Project argued that that it would be “very hard to disagree” with the industry’s conclusions (Tom-Einar Rysst Jensen, interview, 2.2.2006). Tore Torvund, a leading figure from the first phases of the campaign, insisted that the industry’s analysis would withstand criticism from “any professor in economy”, and that the industry could “not be arrested on grounds of incorrect facts” (Tore Torvund, interview 27.3.2006).

One of the leading politicians from Labour, the largest opposition party, said that it seemed to have come as a shock to the industry that other perspectives and other ways of calculating existed. He cautioned that the industry might come across as arrogant (Tore Nordtun, interview, 09.02.2006).

The then political advisor to the Minister for Petroleum and Energy saw the industry’s faith in and obsession with its own rationality as a problem.

Engineers and the mindset of engineers dominate the oil industry. [They believe] that if they produce a report that documents how two plus two equals four, the politicians [will] decide that two plus two is four. But the world is not that simple; the world is not that rational. (Øyvind Håbrekke, interview, 02.02.2006)

During the latter half of this last campaign period, several of the important media outlets also turned on the industry, or published facts that challenged the picture that the industry was trying to paint. The journalist, Alf Ole Ask, said he was provoked by what he saw as a proposal that was the worst insult to his “ability to reason and to being an intelligent
human being [that he had] experienced in years” (Ask, interview, 06.10.2005). Norway’s leading financial paper reported that the smaller oil companies were satisfied with the tax regime, clearly indicating that the industry was not united on the issue after all (Løvås, 2004a). The most important newspaper in the south-western oil region, labeled the oil industry as a “constant whiner” (Bøe, 2004). The lobby campaign was called a “failure” and a “gigantic lobby flop” (Hegerberg, 2004; Løvås, 2004b; Nyborg, 2004; Øverby, 2004).

In the course of early summer 2004, the issue disappeared from the public agenda. The former Minister of Finance gives the following verdict of the campaign:

As a lobby campaign it was very amateurishly executed, and it probably had greater negative than positive effect. … As a result of this campaign, I believe that [the industry] has to be very clever the next time [it] fronts a proposal … for a tax amendment. There is a certain skepticism that has been raised (Per-Kristian Foss, interview, 5.1.2006).

In summary, the oil industry continued its lobby campaign to the very end, and either chose to ignore the strong negative political signals or failed to pick them up. In either case, the oil industry can be criticized for pushing its campaign too far so that many of the most important stakeholders were annoyed. In political circles, the oil industry was perceived as lacking political fingerspitz gefühl.

Discussion and Conclusion

The case analysis reveals that the Norwegian oil industry made several strategic mistakes during the course of its lobby campaign. One was its lack of sensitivity towards changes in the economic conditions upon which its arguments were constructed. It should have been apparent that it would be very difficult to talk about hardships in the industry when it was making more profits than ever before.

Still, the main weakness was probably the industry’s inability to take proper notice of
resistance to the campaign from politicians and bureaucrats. Our anonymous source in the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, wondered how the industry could fail to see the campaign as a “non-starter” as it could not even muster support in “its own” ministry or in the Ministry of Finance (06.01.2006).

The failure to appreciate the points-of-view, the needs, and the rationality of the stakeholders led to a strain in relations with them. The oil industry was perceived as having an exaggerated faith in its own rational argument, thus making it appear arrogant in the eyes of politicians and public officials. The chosen approach also suggested an inability to recognize and appreciate the perspectives and interests of other parties. The industry clearly demonstrated that its perceptions were out of line with that of its stakeholders (Freeman, 1984).

The oil industry not only failed in its attempt to obtain a tax amendment, it also failed to maintain favorable relations with key stakeholders. The Ministry of Finance discredited the industry’s extensive research and its arguments. It is likely that the lobby campaign led to a reputational setback, which in turn may have a negative influence on future attempts to convince the government to introduce tax amendments. Had the oil industry thought in terms of lasting stakeholder relations instead of immediate results, it probably would have decided to halt the campaign at an earlier stage. This is a typical example of where it is likely that an awareness of the cyclic nature of lobbying, as presented by Jaatinen (1999), could temper the lobbyist’s urge to pursue a goal regardless of signals given by stakeholders.

With a few notable exceptions (Jaatinen, 1997, 1999), the literature on lobbying pays little attention to stakeholders and the need to balance the goal of the organization with the needs of stakeholders. On the other hand, stakeholder theory is silent when it comes to the need of organizations to engage in issues management and lobbying. Based on the literature review and the analysis, we would argue for an approach where lobbyists apply the same
criteria for identifying and dealing with their constituencies as that of stakeholder theory. In addition, we suggest that there is a need to take the merging of lobby theory and stakeholder theory even further, by giving results and the development of relationships an equal priority when lobbying. In practice, this would imply a shift of focus from the ultimate goal of the lobbying effort, which is to obtain a favorable political decision, to include the equally important goal of maintaining good stakeholder relations. Lobbying should not be regarded as singular, strategic campaign, but as part of a continuous dialogue between two parties who acknowledge and respect each other’s views and motivations.

Lobbyists need to be conscious of the relational aspect of their activities, and maintain a parallel focus on results and relationships. This is also an ethical shift, as it implies treating the maintenance of good stakeholder relations as a goal in itself, and not only as a means to a political end. Thinking in terms of relationships implies applying the same criteria when dealing with strategically important stakeholders such as politicians and public officials, as when dealing with any other constituency. Success in building good relationships would thus imply an empathic and open-minded approach to the opinions, and world-views of stakeholders. When involved in a lobbying campaign, an organization runs the risk of being locked into its own realm of perception and argumentation, which may not necessarily be aligned with that of its stakeholders. Unwillingness to renegotiate its position may strain the organization’s stakeholder relations. The worst thing that can happen to a lobbyist is perhaps not an immediate failure, but failure as a result of an already damaged reputation.

The case study has demonstrated the perils of pursuing a hard-nosed lobby campaign that is based on a belief in the power of rational argument and one’s own perspective. One resounding conclusion from this analysis is that a lobbyist would do well to keep in mind that others might have competing rational arguments and another perspective that cannot easily be ‘done away with’ by use of ‘superior’ rational arguments. The lobbyist can be reminded of
this by use of the stakeholder theory that helps to map the environment of an organization and in turn assess the needs, claims, and perspectives of these stakeholders.

This discussion has been based on a single qualitative case study, which in turn suggests that our findings have clear limitations. The results may vary under other conditions. Future research should be conducted to determine more precisely how an integration of lobby theory and stakeholder theory could be developed and whether it would have the benefits that we suggest here.
References


Freeman, R.E. (1984), Strategic management: A stakeholder approach. Pitman, Boston, MA.


Kon-Kraft. (2003b), Norsk petroleumsvirksomhet ved et veiskille – Hvordan kan Kon-Kraft bidra til forbedring av næringsens omdømme [Norwegian petroleum industry at the crossroads – How Kon-Kraft can contribute to an improvement of the industry's reputation]. Kon-Kraft, Oslo.

Kon-Kraft. (2003c), Norwegian petroleum industry at the crossroads: Proposals for tax amendments to stimulate greater activity and added value. Kon-Kraft, Oslo.


Løvås, J. (2004a, June 1). De små er storforøyd [The small are highly satisfied]. *Dagens Næringsliv*


Oljeindustriens Landsforening. (2003), *Verdier må skapes før de deles – Samfunnsrapport [Values must...*
be created before they are distributed – Social report].


