Lobbyspeak:
Understanding the rhetoric of lobbyists

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- Understanding the rhetoric of lobbyists
English summary

While we know a lot about the strategies and tactics used by lobbyists to influence the political system, we know less about how they communicate and develop their arguments. This study asks: what kind of rhetorical strategies do lobbyists use to convince decision makers?

In contrast to most previous studies, this study treats lobbying as a communicative process transforming both the rhetor and the audience and bringing them closer to each other. The theoretical starting point is Burke's theory of identification, understood as "the conscious alignment of oneself with the experiences, ideas, and expressions of others" (Woodward, 2003, p. 5). Through a reconceptualization of several classical rhetorical concepts, the study explores the rhetorical strategies exploited by lobbyists in order to achieve identification.

The empirical focus is on the lobbying activity against the Norwegian Parliament's Committee of Energy and the Environment (2014-2020). The study is built on a mixed methods approach combining qualitative interviews of both committee members and lobbyists with a quantitative survey of parliament members and a participatory observation in seminars where lobbyists and politicians participated.

The study finds that lobbying is a complex game of identification where lobbyists are increasingly trying to act and talk like politicians. They build credibility using their competence, character, and goodwill strategies, showing caring and respect, while constantly looking for the correct timing and searching for arguments rooted in topics of "public interest". With lobbyists increasingly "dressing up as politicians", it becomes difficult to separate between legitimate lobbying, collusion, and unwanted political practices.

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Norwegian summary

Vi har mye kunnskap om hvilke strategier og taktikker lobbyister bruker når de ønsker å påvirke det politiske systemet, men vi har begrenset kunnskap om hvordan de kommuniserer og hvordan de utvikler argumentene sine. Derfor spør denne studien: Hvilke retoriske strategier bruker lobbyister for å overbevise politikere?

I motsetning til de fleste tidligere studier, behandler denne studien lobbyvirksomhet som en kommunikativ prosess som påvirker både retoren og publikum og bringer dem nærmere hverandre. Det teoretiske utgangspunktet er Burkes teori om identifikasjon, forstått som «the conscious alignment of oneself with the experiences, ideas and expressions of others» (Woodward, 2003, s. 5). Gjennom en rekonseptualisering av flere klassiske retoriske konsepter, utforsker studien de retoriske strategiene som utnyttes av lobbyister for å oppnå identifikasjon.

Det empiriske fokuset er på lobbyvirksomheten mot Energi- og miljøkomiteen i Stortinget i perioden 2014-2020. Studien er basert på metodetriangulering der kvalitative intervjuer av komitémedlemmer og lobbyister som jobber mot komiteen kombineres med en kvantitativ undersøkelse av parlamentsmedlemmer og deltakende observasjon på seminarer der lobbyister og politikere deltar.

De retoriske strategiene som blir analysert i studien tegner et bilde av lobbyvirksomhet som et identifikasjonsspill der lobbyister i økende grad prøver å opptre som politikere og snakke som politikere. Lobbyister bygger troverdighet ved å bruke kompetanse, karakter og velvilje-strategier, som viser omsorg og respekt, mens de konstant leter etter riktig timing og søker etter argumenter som viser at de jobber for samfunnets interesser. Når lobbyister i økende grad "kler seg ut som politikere" og prøver å smelte sammen med det politiske systemet, blir det vanskeligere å skille mellom legitim lobbyvirksomhet, tvilsomt samarbeid og korrupte politiske praksiser.

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When I started out on this project the only prerequisite was that my PhD should be about "money and power". Thus, the topic of lobbying was perfect because it dealt with both. However, there is no PhD without money, because somebody has to pay for it and for this I am forever grateful to Kristiania University College who funded my PhD and believed that I was able to finish this project at the same time as I worked there.

Before I started writing this dissertation my advisor told me that "if you write the same PhD as in your project proposal you have failed". He was totally right. Four years ago, I started out with an ambitious proposal to use rhetorical theory to study the communication strategies of Norwegian lobbyists. Along the way several ideas were tested and thrown out of the dissertation and if there is one thing, I have learned from this process is that research is a much messier process that what is described in the introductory books on methodology.

There are a lot of people that have helped along the way in doing this work. First and foremost, I have to thank my PhD-advisor, Øyvind Ihlen. Øyvind has guided me through the secrets of writing journal papers, building networks on conferences and replying to irritating peer-reviewers who have a hard time understanding what your work is actually about. In addition to being a terrific scholar Øyvind is a generous person with an exquisite sense of humour. Thus, we have enjoyed each other company on a global tour of lobbying research which has taken us to Japan, the Netherlands, the U.S., Great Britain, France and the Czech Republic. An important part of these travels has been to meet up with the public affairs group in EUPRERA and I owe a great thanks to scholars such as Chiara Valentini, Scott Davidson, Irina Lock and Ian Sommerville.

In a Norwegian context I have had the joy of working with the "grand old man" of Norwegian lobbying research, Hilmar Rommetvedt. Hilmar has provided a lot of valuable input to some of the research questions in this dissertation and some of the questions that are answered are raised by him in previous studies. Hilmar was also a valuable co-contributor to the parliament survey which gave us a lot of valuable data that we are still working on. Furthermore, my old study friend, Dag Wollebæk has been of great help to evolve my understanding of the connection between resources and lobbying outcomes and were the first author of an excellent article we published together in Interest Groups & Advocacy.

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Finally, this dissertation is a product of the joint efforts of my family and in our house, we like to say that "we have taken a PhD". My brilliant and supportive wife, Lene Eikeland,x and our three kids, Kaia, Kristian and Åsne have all been part of this from the start and I could not have done it without their support and understanding.

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Ketil Raknes

1 Introduction

On the 12th of March 2020, Norway went into lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While many people had to stop working or move to a home office, the lockdown became the start of an intense period of activity for Norwegian industrial lobbyists. Just two weeks after the lockdown, the oil industry hired the law firm BA-HR to draft a proposal for massive tax relief for this industry and launched a successful lobbying campaign that resulted in over 100 billion NOK in tax exemptions (Rønning, 2020). The argument was that investments would be postponed, and jobs would be lost if the oil industry did not obtain immediate tax relief. The tax relief led to increased activity in the Norwegian oil industry and boosted the need for immigrant workers. As the COVID-19 pandemic worsened, Norway imposed restrictions on foreign travel, but after another bout of intense lobbying, the oil industry managed to obtain exemptions for immigrant workers (Røed Johansen & Johansen, 2021). Again, the main argument was to prevent closures of valuable local industries and secure future investments (Røed Johansen & Johansen, 2021; Rønning, 2020).

Behind both these campaigns were industrial lobbyists with lengthy experience in the Norwegian political system; when a crisis occurred, they obviously knew what to say and when to say it. In typical fashion, the oil lobbyists packaged their policy proposals in public interest rhetoric and argued that their proposals would somehow help politicians achieve widely shared social goals (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Uhre & Rommetvedt, 2019). In both instances, economists and health professionals did not share the lobbyists' optimistic visions for the realization of the public interest. Eight professors in economics wrote a letter to the Norwegian parliament (Stortinget) and warned that the proposed changes in the taxing regime for the oil industry would lead to the implementation of projects that were "hopelessly unprofitable" and that the Norwegian state would end up losing money (Bjørnestad, 2021). Similarly, the Norwegian Directorate of Health argued that an exemption on the restriction of foreign travels for immigrant workers would lead to more infections. Furthermore, a later evaluation concluded that the travel exemptions probably had little economic value (NOU 2021:6, 2021). Nonetheless, the politicians decided to agree with the lobbyists that these measures were needed to save the Norwegian economy. In other words, they found the rhetoric of lobbyists credible and decided to act on it.

The lobbying campaign of the Norwegian oil industry during the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the central themes of this study: First, why are some lobbyists assumed to be credible truth tellers,

while others appear uncredible and self-serving? Second, how do lobbyists decide the timing of their proposals, and how does their situation influence when they say something and how they say it? Third, how do lobbyists work to package their proposals in public-interest rhetoric and dampen the apparent self-interest in the policies they pursue? In this study, the questions of credibility, timing, and the use of public interest arguments are explored through the rhetorical concepts of *ethos*, *kairos*, and *topos*. The relevance of these concepts to the research questions will be addressed toward the end of this chapter.

The motivation behind this study is that we know a great deal about the strategies and tactics lobbyists use and how they influence the political system. However, we know less about how they communicate and how they develop their arguments (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998; Ihlen, Valentini, Davidson, & Shavit, 2020; McGrath, 2006; Milbrath, 1960). While the question of how lobbyists package their proposals in public interest rhetoric has gained some attention in the research literature, the questions of timing and credibility are largely unexplored (Fleisher & Voiovich, Forthcoming; Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Raknes & Ihlen, 2020; Toshkov, Lowery, Carroll, & Berkhout, 2012; Valentini, Ihlen, Raknes, Somerville, & Davidson, 2020).

To study lobbying as a communicative process, this study focuses on the policy area of the energy and the environment in a Norwegian context. Empirically, it focuses on the politicians who sit on the Standing Committee of Energy and the Environment (SCEE) at the Norwegian Storting and the lobbyists working to influence the members of the committee. Furthermore, unlike many existing studies of lobbying, this study combines survey research with qualitative interviews and participant observation to obtain a more detailed, nuanced picture of how lobbyists communicate and to obtain a closer look at the informal arenas and settings lobbyists use to convey their messages. In this respect, this study is inspired by the work of Nothhaft (2017), who used participant observation in her study of lobbyists in Brussels and uncovered how important informal arenas are for their attempts to build reciprocal relationships with the politicians against whom they are lobbying.

The aim of this first chapter is to define the central concepts of the study. Second, the chapter presents lobbying as a research field and addresses the research gap that this study intends to fill. Finally, the specific research questions for the study are presented, along with a short introduction of the theoretical framework that will be applied.

Definitions and clarifications

Lobbying is a contested concept in both the academic literature and contemporary political debate. Undue influence, closed backroom deals, and corrupt political practices are often associated with lobbying. In a recent study of lobbyists in the U.S., one of the informants told the researcher that his neighbor used to shout at him, "So, you taking your bags of cash with you to work?" when he left the house in the morning (J. C. Scott, 2015, p. 164). A recent report from The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concluded that lobbying is an important part of the policy process, but it is "too open to abuse, with gray areas, loopholes, revolving doors, and incomplete information and scrutiny" (OECD, 2021). Similarly, a Swedish study showed that the media coverage of lobbying was permeated with negativity and dominated by issues such as revolving doors, a lack of transparency, and a negative impact on democracy (Helgesson & Falasca, 2017).

In the academic literature, there has been considerable debate about how lobbying should be defined and studied. Baumgartner and Leech (1998, p. 33) noted, "[T]he word lobbying has seldom been used the same way twice by those studying the topic." After reviewing the literature, Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball, and Leech (2009) suggest that lobbying is "an effort to influence the policy process." Other definitions put more weight on the informational aspects of lobbying. For example, Berry (1977) defines *lobbying* as "the effort of organized interests to inform policy makers and persuade them to choose particular policy choices" (p. 10). Similarly, De Figueiredo and Richter (2014) define *lobbying* as "the transfer of information in private meetings and venues between interest groups and politicians, their staffs, and agents" (p. 164). According to J. C. Scott (2018, p. 26), "an intent to influence along with communication are both necessary and sufficient for a definition of lobbying." Thus, lobbying is at the core of the hunt for persuasive arguments.

This study is inspired by political scientists such as Milbrath (1960) and Wright (1996), who perceived lobbying as a primarily communicative process, and modern rhetorical scholars such as (Burke, 1945/1969) and (Bitzer, 1968), who had a situational approach to rhetoric by which persuasive appeals must always be judged against their context (Herrick, 2017). Consequently, to highlight the communicative aspects of lobbying, I will understand *lobbying* as "the purposeful use of rhetoric by an interest organization to influence the policy process." Such a definition highlights the role of both influence and communication in the lobbying process, as suggested by

J. C. Scott (2018). However, this definition raises four other important questions: What is rhetoric, what is an interest organization, what is a policy process, and what is influence?

Rhetoric, similar to lobbying, has a troubled conceptual history in which the concept often has been equated with insincerity, deception, and empty talk (Vickers, 1988). Classical rhetoric often applies an instrumental view of rhetoric, where the job of the rhetor is to locate "the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle, Trans. 2007, p. 36). Therefore, for Aristotle, rhetoric was a *technique*, or "the study of discovering persuasive arguments and appeals" (Herrick, 2017, p. 86). This study, however, is inspired by the work of Kenneth Burke and his understanding of rhetoric, in which the goal of the rhetor is to overcome division and identify with the audience. Here, rhetoric is more than a technique; it is a process that changes both the rhetor and the audience and induces cooperation and shared meaning. Thus, from this perspective, rhetoric can be understood as the "use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 43). Consequently, the study will explore the rhetorical strategies lobbyists use when they try to create identification with politicians through finding arguments that respond to how the world looks from the perspective of politicians.

Those who engage in lobbying are often described as *interest groups*, *organized interests*, *special interest groups*, or *non-governmental organizations* (Holyoke, 2020). However, the most common term in the lobbying literature refers to those who lobby as *interest groups*. The question of how to define and classify interest groups has received much attention in lobbying research (Baroni, Carroll, William Chalmers, Marquez, & Rasmussen, 2014). There is a general distinction between a broad definition in which interest groups are identified based on their observable activities (Baumgartner et al., 2009) and a narrower definition in which interest groups are understood as membership organizations (Binderkrantz, Christiansen, & Pedersen, 2014a; Rasmussen & Carroll, 2014).

A challenge with the membership-based definition is that individual businesses are excluded from the analysis, along with governmental-based associations. In this study, I will refer to those who engage in lobbying as interest organizations and not interest groups. The reason for this choice is twofold. First, one avoids the often superficial differences between ways of classifying interest groups, which often leads to the exclusion of important lobbying groups such as private companies and governmental organizations (Baroni et al., 2014). Accordingly, in this study, an *interest organization* is understood from a behavioral perspective and can be defined as any

organization that seeks to influence "the formulation and implementation of public policy" (Grant, 1995, p. 9). Second, while the group approach has its roots in U.S. political science, the organizational approach is more in line with the study of organizational communication or organizational rhetoric (Falkheimer & Heide, 2018; Ihlen & Heath, 2018).

Lobbyists try to influence the formulation of public policy. Therefore, they must engage in policy processes. The study of policy processes deals with the "change and development of policy and the related actors, events, and contexts" (Weible, Heikkila, DeLeon, & Sabatier, 2012, p. 3). Policy processes are often complex and involve many actors. Furthermore, a policy process "usually involves time spans of a decade or more, as that is the minimum duration of most policy cycles" (Sabatier & Weible, 2014, p. 3). Correspondingly, a lobbyist who wants to influence the policy process needs deep knowledge of how the policy processes work and the stamina to stay in the political "game" over time.

In this study, the policy process is explored through the perspective of *policy streams*, the most common framework for studying policy processes in the context of lobbying (Godwin, Ainsworth, & Godwin, 2012). From this perspective, political choices are made ambiguously, and policy processes are described as three unrelated streams: political problems, policy solutions, and politics in which interest groups struggle for attention and governments come and go (Zahariadis, 2014). Political choices are made when these three streams are joined at critical moments. Kingdon (1984/2011) labels these moments *policy windows* and defines them as fleeting "opportunities for advocates of proposals to push their pet solutions or to push attention to their special problems" (p. 165). Thus, for lobbyists, it is critical to analyze and observe policy processes to identify the right moment to act.

Notably, this study does not delve deeply into the question of how policy processes are structured and function. Nonetheless, a basic understanding of policy processes is important to give context to how lobbyists work with the questions of timing and finding the right moment to speak. For lobbyists, understanding policy processes and finding political windows of opportunity are crucial for success.

The question of analyzing policy processes and identifying the right moment to act is closely connected to the question of influence. However, trying to measure the influence of lobbying has proven to be an extremely difficult task (Helboe Pedersen, 2013). In their review of the literature,

Baumgartner and Leech (1998) conclude that "never have scholars been able to organize a systematic study that would demonstrate the influence of any particular lobbyist when controlling for all rival factors that might have also affected the decision." In lobbying studies, *influence* is understood as "control over political outputs," where political outputs are understood as political decisions or political actions (Helboe Pedersen, 2013). However, in this study, *influence* is understood from a more processual and rhetorical standpoint and will be defined as the ability to affect both the thoughts and actions of others by persuading or convincing them (Ihlen, 2004). From a rhetorical standpoint, influence is dependent on the acceptance and cooperation of the audience (Corbett & Connors, 1999; Kennedy, 2009).
Consequently, the lobbying campaign of the Norwegian oil industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, which introduced this chapter, was influential not only because of the arguments they advanced but also because decision makers accepted both their description of reality and the political solutions that followed.

The concept of influence relates to the concept of power, one of the large, unsolved problems in social science (Akram, Emerson, & Marsh, 2015; Lukes, 1974/2005). Rhetoric can involve both conscious and unconscious processes. Influencing the actions and thoughts of others through rhetoric is in line with what researchers often label the first and second face of power, where the *first face of power* deals with decision-making power, and the *second face of power* refers to agenda-setting power (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 1974/2005). A major weakness of defining influence as control over political outputs is that it excludes other more subtle understandings of power. The challenge of understanding lobbying influence is addressed in this study by also discussing the so-called *third face of power*, which involves a perspective of power with which lobbyists can work to influence not only political decisions but also the self-understanding and ideological outlook of decision makers (Lukes, 1974/2005). Hence, the study argues that the power of the Norwegian oil industry can be understood not only through its ability to shape political decisions, but also due to its ability to shape the preferences of decision makers by carefully cultivating them in more informal settings such as seminars, receptions, dinners, and travel (Nothhaft, 2017).

Lobbying as a practice and research field

In the following, I will give a short introduction to lobbying as a research field before I describe the research gaps this study intends to fill and the research questions it addresses.

Lobbying is a broad research field with a long history, and the practice of lobbying is as old as democracy, itself. In the U.S., for instance, the right to lobby was written into the U.S. Constitution, and even as early as the 1830s, the word *lobbyist* was frequently used in Washington (Schriftgiesser, 1951). Similarly, the first Norwegian Storting in 1815 took a great many petitions from interest groups that were read aloud during parliamentary sessions. However, the breakthrough for lobbying happened from 1884−1900 (Espeli, 1999). Continuous research on lobbying started in the aftermath of the Second World War (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998).

Most studies on lobbying derive from political science, though there are also marked contributions from sociology and strategic communication (cf. (Davidson, 2014; McGrath, 2005; J. C. Scott, 2018). Particularly in the U.S., the study of interest groups and their influence on the political system has been a topic for nearly 100 years (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998; Binderkrantz et al., 2014a). As mentioned above, even though political scientists frequently use the words *lobbying* and *lobbyists*, they tend to refer to lobbying studies as studies of interest groups and their influence on the political system. The two major perspectives in the literature have been the pluralist perspective, which stems from the U.S., and the corporatist perspective, which has long dominated European research on interest groups. Both perspectives share the notion that, by studying the relationships between interest groups and the state, we can obtain a better understanding of how democracy really works. Below I will briefly explore these two perspectives and their influence on the study of lobbying.

The pluralist perspective of lobbying

The pluralists, such as Truman (1951) and Dahl (1961), argued that the interest group landscape was a fair representation of society as a whole. Therefore, "a multitude of competing groups would be the safeguard of democracy through the free competition of ideas" (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998, p. 52). While the pluralists saw, in particular, U.S. democracy as a stable state of equilibrium, many critics acknowledged notable flaws in the pluralist approach regarding how powerful groups dominated exchanges with the government (Lowi, 1979). In a much-quoted critique, Schattschneider (1975, pp. 34-35) noted, "[T]he flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent."

The fatal blow for the purely pluralist perspective came with Mancur Olson's *Logic of Collective Action* (1965), which argued that special interests will mobilize at a much faster rate than collective interests. Olson's work inspired a string of studies arguing that lobbyists will "push

government officials away from making decisions in the public interest" (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998, p. 86). As mentioned above, the question of the bias and the diversity of the interest group system has permeated lobbying research, and a consistent finding in the literature on interest groups is that groups with superior financial resources obtain more access and probably more influence on the political system (Binderkrantz, Christiansen, & Pedersen, 2014b; Gilens & Page, 2014; Schattschneider, 1975). This is also the case in Scandinavian countries, such as Denmark and Norway, where the current situation has been described as "privileged pluralism" (Binderkrantz, Christiansen, & Pedersen, 2015). Thus, multitudinous groups obtain access to the political system, but the most powerful and resourceful groups dominate the lobbying process (Binderkrantz et al., 2014a; Raknes & Wollebæk, 2018, 2019). Consequently, the group system is seen as a "route to popular presentation and a threat to good government because of the biases it allows" (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998, p. 83).

The corporatist perspective of lobbying

As mentioned, in the European context, corporatism has been the dominant perspective in understanding the political role of interest organizations (Lijphart & Crepaz, 1991; Schmitter, 1974). *Corporatism* can be understood as "the institutionalized and privileged integration of organized interest in the preparation and/or implementation of public policies" (Christiansen et al., 2009, p. 27). Scandinavian research has been dominated by the perspectives of Rokkan (1966), which perceive corporatism as a channel for influence over government decisions. Rokkan summarized the situation in his famous phrase, "Votes count in the choice of governing personnel, but other resources decide the actual policies pursued by the authorities" (p. 106). According to Rokkan, the crucial decisions in Norwegian democracy were not made by the parliament. The most important channel for influence was the corporatist channel, or "the bargaining table where the government authorities meet directly with the trade union leaders, the representatives of the farmers, the smallholders and the fishermen, and the delegates of the Employers' Association" (Rokkan, 1966, p. 106). Hence, in this system, the economic groups had privileged access to the decision-making process, while other types of groups, such as non-profit groups, were marginalized (Nordby, 1994).

The corporatist perspective has dominated Scandinavian research on interest groups. Indeed, the increase in lobbying is seen as a response to the decline of corporatist structures (Rommetvedt, 2005; Rommetvedt, Thesen, Christiansen, & Nørgaard, 2013). In its heyday, the corporatist channel dominated the interactions between interest groups and the political system and led to a

marginalization of the parliament. Kvavik (1976, p. 119) argued, “Legislation was shaped in the administration; once in the parliament, the lines were fixed.” Public committees with the representation of interest groups were seen as the core expression of Scandinavian corporatism. In the 1970s, 42 percent of the members of public committees were public administrators, 42 percent came from interest groups, while only four percent were politicians (Kvavik, 1976).

The decline of corporatism in Norway started early in the 1970s and reflected broader changes in the political system, such as increased voter volatility, which led to an increase in minority governments. According to Espeli (1999, p. 167), the continuous string of minority governments after 1971 led to “a redistribution of power from the government to the parliament.” Furthermore, since the beginning of the 1980s, there has been a dramatic decline in the number of policy committees with interest group presentations that prepare and implement policy (Rommetvedt, 2017b). These broader changes led to a development whereby interest organizations increased their contact with the Storting and consensus-based corporatism was supplemented with a more conflict-driven lobbyism (Rommetvedt, 2003, 2017a, 2017b). Consequently, Norwegian interest organizations put increased emphasis on developing and nurturing their relations with the parliament.

Converging perspectives in lobbying research

In the last 20 years, U.S. and European perspectives on interest groups have been converging. Both U.S. and European scholars are interested in the questions of interest group influence and the strategies and tactics they employ (Bunea & Baumgartner, 2014; Mahoney & Baumgartner, 2009). In the European tradition, studies of interactions with the administration have predominated, while in the U.S. tradition, studies of lobbying against Congress have been the empirical focus. Hence, until recently, lobbying studies focusing on the interactions between interest groups and the national parliament have been quite rare in the European context. Meanwhile, studies of interactions with the European parliament have been burgeoning (Bouwen, 2004b; Marshall, 2010). However, the decline of corporatist structures in many European countries makes studies of the lobbying of the parliament more interesting. The Storting has become the most powerful institution in Norwegian politics, and more lobbyists direct their energy and resources toward influencing the Storting compared to the bureaucracy and the media (Rommetvedt, 2017a, 2017b).

As mentioned, the question of bias and resources permeates lobbying research. *Bias* refers to the fact that interest organizations that lobby do not represent the population as a whole. This leads to biases in which the most resourceful lobbyists dominate the policy process (Lowery & Gray, 2004). Traditional lobbying research examines how financial resources give lobbyists better access to arenas such as parliament, the media, and the bureaucracy. It has also been proven that groups with large and professionalized secretariats are better at producing relevant policy expertise than decision makers want and are better positioned for influence (Rasmussen & Carroll, 2014; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012). This process is often described as a process of *resource exchange*, *legislative subsidies*, or *political insurance* (Bunea & Baumgartner, 2014; Hall & Deardorff, 2006; LaPira & Thomas, 2017). The challenge with these transactional perspectives on lobbying is that what is being said and how these messages are received are often ignored. The aim of this study is to look inside the black box of "resource exchange," "legislative subsidies," and "political insurance" and study lobbying from a rhetorical perspective. Even large and powerful interest organizations must devise credible arguments for why a specific policy should be pursued or avoided. This makes the question of what lobbyists say in their direct meetings with politicians even more interesting. Resources obviously play a role in this process. However, the more pressing question is whether resources give lobbyists access to rhetorical strategies that less resourceful lobbyists do not have. Therefore, examining the arguments of lobbyists more closely can give us a better grasp of what bias looks like and help us better understand the wider democratic implications of the inequalities that lobbying often produces.

The tactics and strategies of lobbyists

Lobbying, like politics, itself, is an extremely complicated and multi-faceted phenomenon. Any lobbyist who tries to influence the policy process will face an array of strategic questions (De Bruycker, 2019). Typical questions would be: Is this a legislative issue or a budget issue? Who makes the decisions for this issue? When and in what arena should I contact them? Should I go to the media to put pressure on decision makers? Finally, when will this issue be decided?

In the literature on lobbying, it is common to distinguish insider strategies from outsider strategies (Kollman, 1998). Insider strategies are based on close cooperation with decision makers, while outsider strategies typically involve appeals through the media and the mobilization of the public. This study follows (Binderkrantz, 2005), who separates direct strategies where lobbyists approach decision makers directly from indirect strategies where they seek influence through indirect means such as media coverage or campaigns. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the various

strategic options of lobbyists. Concerning the direct strategy, there is a separation between targeting the administration and the parliament. Indirect strategies are separated between influencing the media and mobilizing members and supporters. Studies in both Norway and Denmark indicate that instead of relying on one strategy, most groups combine direct and indirect strategies. However, there is a clear tendency for privileged groups to pursue more direct strategies while less privileged groups use more indirect strategies (Binderkrantz, 2005, 2008; Thesen & Rommetvedt, 2009).

Table 1.1 Categorization of lobbying strategies (Binderkrantz, 2005)

Direct strategies		**Indirect strategies**	
Administrative strategy	*Parliamentary strategy*	*Media strategy*	*Mobilization strategy*
Contact the relevant minister Contact national public servants Actively use public committees, etc. Respond to requests for comments	Contact parliamentary committees Contact party spokespersons Contact other members of parliament Contact party organizations	Contact reporters Write letters to the editor and columns Issue press releases and hold press conferences Publicize analyses and research reports	Arrange public meetings and conferences Organize letter-writing campaigns Arrange strikes, civil disobedience, direct action, and public demonstrations Conduct petitions

This study focuses primarily on the *parliament strategy*, when lobbyists meet face-to-face with politicians. The reason for this choice is twofold. First, face-to-face meetings are considered the most powerful way of influencing decision makers (Milbrath, 1960; Nownes, 2006). Second, the Storting has evolved as the most important institution for lobbyists to target. Furthermore, all groups seem to value relationships with the parliament. Moreover, "interacting with Parliament seems to be important for groups integrated in corporatist structures as well as for those relying more on public strategies" (Binderkrantz, 2005, p. 173). This is not to say that administrative lobbying is unimportant. Direct meetings in the administrative arena are particularly significant when it comes to influencing the implementation of policies (Godwin et al., 2012; Klausen & Rommetvedt, 1996). In the context of this study, however, the parliamentary arena was chosen as the empirical venue for the study of the rhetoric of lobbyists.

Lobbying as a communicative process

Even though lobbying at its core is a communicative process, the question of what kind of arguments lobbyists use and when they use them has gained limited attention in the research literature. Thus, this study follows Naurin (2007), who argues that most studies on lobbying tend to neglect the actual content of the messages lobbyists convey to decision makers.

> [I]t seems we simply know too little of what exactly is being said when lobbyists meet decision makers. … The dominant picture, however, is one of an exchange of goods, rather than arguing aimed at convincing decision makers of the merits of the proposal. (p. 34)

As mentioned above, Nothhaft (2017) has studied the communication of lobbyists from an ethnographic perspective. Like this study, she perceives lobbying as a communicative process that goes beyond the exchange of information and contributes to forming deeper relationships. However, she analyzes this process from a sociological perspective, using the theories of Erwin Goffman to illuminate how lobbyists switch between disparate identities to get closer to politicians. Thus, the arguments that lobbyists use in assorted situations and the content of their messages are given less attention.

Most studies of how lobbyists communicate are performed in the U.S. context. It is debatable how relevant these findings are for other political contexts (Woll, 2012). However, nearly 70 years ago, Milbrath (1960) interviewed 101 lobbyists and 39 members of Congress and observed that lobbyists must not only provide information but also solve the "problem of presenting it so that the decision maker will be receptive" (p. 35). Furthermore, Milbrath (1960) argued that even though lobbyists could rely on indirect strategies, such as mobilizing constituents and launching public relations campaigns, the "most effective tactic is the personal presentation of their case to the officeholder" (p. 37).

Nownes (2006) notes, "[N]early every study of lobbying ever conducted illustrates that the lobbyist's stock in trade is information used in an attempt to convince either government officials or the public that he or she is right." Hence, information-based theories of lobbying have been launched as an alternative to exchange theories. According to Wright (1996), members of the U.S. Congress have three interdependent goals: re-election, good public policy, and influence within Congress. However, they are unsure of how to reach these goals, and "the information lobbyists provide reduces uncertainty, thereby helping legislators know what they need to achieve their goals" (Nownes, 2006, p. 27). Wright distinguishes between three types of information that lobbyists give to decision makers: political information about the prospects and statuses of bills, electoral information about the potential impacts that proposals may have on voters, and policy information about "the likely economic, social, or environmental consequences of proposed policies" (Wright, 1996, p. 88).

The most ambitious study of how lobbyists communicate is Baumgartner et al. (2009), who followed 98 randomly chosen issues over four years covering 214 sides of the issues. Their study generated a list of 11 basic argument types in which "most arguments raise concern or offer reassurances about the feasibility of a policy option, suggest why a given policy promotes or inhibits a shared social goal, or emphasize the cost or cost saving of a particular policy" (Baumgartner et al., 2009, p. 133). Furthermore, over 60 percent of lobbyists used an argument that the policy promoted or prohibited the achievement of a widely shared social goal. They noted that lobbyists are quite cautious in their claims, and their communication sharply contrasts with the overheated rhetoric voters face. Therefore, lobbyists' communication is permeated with **"**the rhetoric of the policy wonk," and "lobbyists are dull most of the time." The reason for the dullness is that the audience is not the general public but "others who are just as expert on the subject matter as they are" (Baumgartner et al., 2009, pp. 134-135). The same tendency is noted by Nownes (2006), who describes lobbyists as "the detail men and women of American politics" (p. 208). Consequently, professional lobbyists are cautious and vary in making unrealistic demands. However, there seems to be a difference in approach between the more consensus-seeking European lobbyists and the more brash and conflict-oriented U.S. lobbyists (McGrath, 2005; Woll, 2012). U.S. lobbyists often fail in Brussels because they perceive politics more according to a "winner takes all" perspective rather than a game of consensus (Naurin, 2007).

Nownes and Newmark (2016) have investigated the information portfolios of lobbyists and concluded that most of the information lobbyists provide to policy makers is policy that is analytical in nature. Relying on the categories of Baumgartner et al. (2009), Nownes and Newmark (2016) find that the five most frequent argument types of information that lobbyists provide to policy makers are arguments of feasibility, fairness, costs to government, and costs to non-governmental actors. Furthermore, the type of lobbyist has little influence on the use of arguments. Thus, "when it comes to information provision, most lobbyists behave in remarkably similar ways" (Nownes & Newmark, 2016, p. 67).

Several recent studies on lobbying use framing theory to explore how lobbyists construct their arguments (Binderkrantz, 2019; Boräng et al., 2014; Ihlen et al., 2018; Junk & Rasmussen, 2019; Klüver, Mahoney, & Opper, 2015). In contrast to Nownes and Newmark (2016), these studies find that the type of group and policy issue influences what frames are chosen. Cause groups use more public frames, such as highlighting the impact on the proposal for the environment, while

sectional groups are likelier to employ economic frames. Furthermore, when several interest groups adopt the same frame, the chance of policy success increases.

While these studies yield interesting results, they tend to treat frames not as communicative constructions but as stable inventions that are linked to the type of organization the lobbyists represent. Hence, choices of arguments and strategy are seen as an effect of the type of organization the lobbyists represent rather than a strategic choice. In particular, framing studies underestimate the versatility of the public interest concept and how lobbyists work with this concept to make it resonate with the target audience (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020). Generally, framing studies tend to ignore that lobbying is a communication process in which the interaction between the rhetor and the audience is central to understanding success and failure. Textual analysis and word counts of position papers have their merits. Nonetheless, they give the lobbying process an instrumental character whereby communication is seen as a transaction rather than a process. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the lobbying process from both the perspective of politicians and lobbyists. This corresponds with a Burkean understanding of rhetoric, in which the lobbying process is considered a two-way process where both the lobbyists and the politicians are affected by what is said and when. Hence, identification can only happen when the rhetor adapts to the needs of the audience and the audience concurs (Burke, 1950/1969).

Research questions and research gaps

At the beginning of this chapter, I defined *lobbying* as the purposeful use of rhetoric to influence the policy process. The review of the literature clearly illustrates that, even though many researchers acknowledge the importance of rhetoric and communication in the lobbying process, it is seldom studied as such. Thus, to better understand how lobbyists communicate, this dissertation argues that communication theory is a fruitful starting point, and in this respect, "rhetoric can serve as an overarching theoretical ground for digging into the role of communication in influencing opinions and attitudes toward issues" (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020, p. 2). Furthermore, to explain the communicative choices lobbyists make, this dissertation argues that we need to come closer to the situations in which politicians and lobbyists interact through the combination of survey research, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation. In summary, the aim of this dissertation is to enhance the understanding of how lobbyists communicate through a novel theoretical and methodological perspective.

Theoretically, the study draws on the tradition of organizational rhetoric, which concerns how organizations use rhetoric to pursue their organizational goals (Ihlen & Heath, 2018). Hence, by drawing on perspectives from rhetorical theory, we can obtain new insights into what lobbyists do and how their activity influences the democratic process. According to Bitzer (1981, p. 27), the ancient rhetorical scholars "thought that politics was the principal locus for rhetorical thought and communication, and therefore, they designed their theories for use by political agents." Hence, a central motivation for this study is to take rhetorical theory back to its political roots and depict its relevance to the analysis of a modern political phenomenon.

Therefore, the general research question for this study is the following: *What kinds of rhetorical strategies do lobbyists rely on to influence decision makers?*

Generally, I will argue that lobbyists face three communicative challenges that they must resolve to influence decision makers. As mentioned in the introduction, these are the challenges of credibility, timing, and finding the right public interest arguments. In the following, I will briefly address these three communicative challenges, considering extant literature and how they could be understood theoretically, before I present the detailed research questions connected to each of these challenges. As mentioned in the literature review, the question of what kinds of arguments are convincing has been given some attention in the literature, while the questions of credibility and timing are largely unexplored.

Lobbyists and the credibility question

The credibility challenge is rather existential for lobbyists. In a lobbying survey, 81 percent of surveyed organizations mentioned that the importance of a reputation for being credible and credibility is ranked highest among the resources that lobbyists value (Schlozman & Tierney, 1986). Lobbyists want to establish themselves as trusted sources of information that politicians seek when they want help and advice (Mahoney & Baumgartner, 2009). Accordingly, they used various communicative strategies to overcome this challenge.

A key strategy to overcome the credibility problem is to assume the role of policy expert (Esterling, 2009). Hence, lobbyists often develop "expertise-informed proposals with the intent of advancing the public interest" (Esterling, 2009, p. 1). Another way of solving the problem of low credibility is "creating broad alliances with other actors, preferably actors with a different status as stakeholders, [which] is a core part of lobbying campaigns" (Naurin, 2007, p. 94).

Correspondingly, alliances signal to decision makers that the pursued policy proposals have broad support (Hojnacki, 1997; Hula, 1995, 1999).

According to Naurin (2007), the type of organization influences the legitimacy and credibility of its claims. Therefore, "it is easier to accept a trade unionist becoming upset while defending peoples' jobs than a businessman who is worrying about his profit" (Naurin, 2007, p. 96). Furthermore, it is more difficult for idealistic organizations to engage in technical argumentation and "broad-based social analyses in which they would have little credibility" (Naurin, 2007, p. 96). Decision makers also value policy input from actors that are "close to reality." Hence, it could be better to bring an individual business leader to a meeting to explain the effects of a specific policy proposal instead of bringing in people from the industry association, since "representatives of reality have more authority when they speak" (Naurin, 2007, p. 97). In summary, what is considered a good argument for a lobbyist depends on many factors. Furthermore, as discussed above, resources clearly affect lobbyists' ability to portray themselves as credible (Binderkrantz, 2008). This raises the question of how resources impact the kind of credibility-enhancing rhetoric in which lobbyists engage.

In this study, the challenge of credibility will be explored through the classical rhetorical concept of ethos. Ethos deals with the character or credibility of the speaker (Kjeldsen, 2006), and its dimensions will be elaborated in the theory chapter. As mentioned above, the empirical focus is the members of the Standing Committee of Energy and the Environment (SCEE) and the lobbyists working toward the committee. Thus, how these lobbyists work with their ethos forms the basis of the first two research questions.

RQ1: *What kinds of strategies do lobbyists use to construct and strengthen their ethos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE*?
RQ2: *How do types of organizations and resources influence the kinds of ethos strategies in which lobbyists engage?*

Timing of lobbying messages

While credibility-enhancing strategies have been given some attention in the literature on communication in lobbying, the question of timing is mostly overlooked. Lobbying is about influencing policy processes that typically evolve over a long time span. Lobbyists follow budgetary processes, regulatory processes, and legislative processes and need to find the

opportune moment to intervene with their arguments. According to Fleisher and Voiovich (Forthcoming), temporal factors in lobbying are often so evident "that they are rarely mentioned as more than an implementation afterthought and even less frequently researched."

The few studies that do consider timing focus on the relationship between the timing of legislative actions and the activity of interest groups. On the one hand, De Figueiredo (2004) analyses lobbying expenditures in U.S. states, finding that particularly business groups increase their spending during budget years. Therefore, budget processes are important "structural policy windows" that lobbyists try to exploit. Toshkov et al. (2012), on the other hand, analyze data from the lobbying registry in the EU and argue that "the ebbs and flows of interest group activities and legislative output over time appear to be largely unrelated" (p. 50). Even though their study produces a null finding, they acknowledge that timing matters but probably "in several different ways for different policies and different interest organizations" (Toshkov et al., 2012, p. 68).

Both studies underscore the challenge of studying timing in lobbying from a quantitative perspective. Lobbying expenditures are a crude measure that do not necessarily give relevant information about how lobbyists work with timing. Furthermore, in many political contexts outside the EU and the U.S., lobbyists are not required to register (Holman & Luneburg, 2012). In this study, the question of timing is explored qualitatively through semi-structured interviews and participant observation. One of the striking features is the complexity of the timing issue and how dependent lobbyists are on inside information about the policy process to exploit the issue of timing to their advantage.

The timing challenge will be explored using the classical concept of kairos and Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation. The concept of kairos and the rhetorical situation relate to the fact that rhetoric always plays out in a context, and the context decides what is persuasive (Herrick, 2017). While kairos speaks to the opportunities of the situation, the rhetorical situation focuses on its constraints (Kjeldsen, 2014). Hence, for appeals to be effective, the rhetor must understand the constraints and the opportunities of the rhetorical situation. Consequently, modern lobbying is a complicated rhetorical process in which intimate knowledge about how politicians think and act is a prerequisite for effective appeals that lead to identification. Thus, the research questions related to timing are as follows:

RQ3: *What constitutes a lobbying meeting with the SCEE as a rhetorical situation?*

RQ4: *What is the role of kairos in lobbying campaigns toward the SCEE?*

To look closer at a more specific example of the power of timing, I will use the framework from RQ3 and RQ4 to analyze the lobbying campaign that the Norwegian oil industry launched at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

RQ5: *How did the COVID-19 pandemic change the rhetorical situation for the Norwegian oil industry, and how did the industry exploit the kairotic openings of the crisis?*

Lobbying and the rhetoric of the public interest

The final communicative challenge is what kinds of arguments are likely to convince politicians. As mentioned, the tendency in the literature is to assume that lobbyists package their policy proposals in public-interest rhetoric. This tendency was noted by Milbrath (1960), who observed that lobbyists seldom rely on facts alone but "almost invariably the facts are accompanied by a set of arguments concerning the rightness, wisdom, or justice of the proposed action" (p. 35). In two recent comparative studies that focus on the communicative construction of the public interest from a framing perspective, Valentini et al. (2020) and Ihlen et al. (2018) argue that even though the public interest can be considered a standard strategy in lobbying campaigns in Western democracies, the organization's type influences the ability of the lobbyists to make such claims. Christiansen et al. (2009) and Uhre and Rommetvedt (2019) argue that increasing levels of pluralism and openness require that political actors put even stronger emphasis on how their proposals are for "the best of society." In a longitudinal study of how Norwegian civil associations have argued in policy proposals concerning drug and alcohol policy, Uhre and Rommetvedt (2019) find that these associations "have increasingly appealed to more generalized interests or the public good and that the number of arguments based on mere self-interest has dropped significantly, both in absolute numbers and particularly in relative terms" (p. 248).

In a Norwegian context, Ihlen (2007, 2009b, 2011) has investigated the lobbying communication of the Norwegian oil industry. Ihlen (2007) highlights how the oil industry has constructed frames that help the industry to create an image of environmental responsibility, which potentially enhances its struggle for legitimacy. The most prominent frame is "the responsibility frame," which portrays the oil industry as a guardian of the public interest and integrates concerns for the environment, economy, and society in its activities.

Ihlen (2007, 2009a, 2011) concludes that the Norwegian oil industry has been largely successful in its efforts to portray itself as sustainable and has been able to resist attempts to curtail its activities. These conclusions are of particular interest to this study because they assess the lobbying activity of the Norwegian oil industry in a period when the public interest claims of the industry have come under increased critical scrutiny (Borchgrevink, 2019; Sæther, 2019).

The importance of appeals to the public interest is also evident in the growing trade literature on lobbying. In *The Secret Art of Lobbying,* Nicolle (2019) provides examples of 10 successful lobbying campaigns and concludes that what they all have in common is "the effort to portray their actions as being motivated by higher aspirations rather than just their profits or selfish interests" (p. 51). Furthermore, the seasoned EU lobbyist Robert Mack (2005) advises that "the message should also take into account the interests or concern of the politician and official whose support is sought" (p. 343). Zetter's (2014) global introduction to lobbying practice highlights that a common failure of many companies is to "frame the arguments from their own perspective," while effective lobbyists put a great deal of effort into understanding what drives and motivates policy makers and "try and align those interests as much as possible" (p. 40).

The above insights are frequently mentioned in lobbying studies. However, only a few scholars have tried to examine the rhetorical construction of such arguments (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Ihlen et al., 2018). In rhetorical theory, the process of locating the appropriate arguments closely relates to the concept of topos (Herrick, 2017). Topos has several meanings in rhetorical theory, but it usually refers to the places rhetors go when they are searching for convincing arguments (Jasinski, 2001). Hence, in the last empirical chapter of this dissertation, I ask the following:

RQ6: *What forms of public interest topics are common in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?*

Toward the end of the study, I move the attention from the lobbyists to the politicians, themselves. When lobbyists engage in public interest rhetoric, it is surely because they think politicians respond positively to these types of arguments. However, former studies have largely ignored the investigation of how politicians reason and evaluate when they are met with public interest arguments. Thus, in the second part of the last chapter, I ask:

RQ7: *How do politicians evaluate the public interest claims lobbyists make, and what kind of conceptualization of the public interest do politicians adhere to?*

Public interest is a complicated concept that has been widely discussed in both political science and political philosophy (Bitonti, 2019; Simm, 2011; Sorauf, 1957). Thus, how politicians evaluate public-interest arguments also relates to the complicated questions of influence and power. Accordingly, in the last section of this study, I ask this question:

RQ8: *What does politicians' conceptualization of the public interest mean for the influence of lobbyists?*

In summary, these research questions will be studied through the classical rhetorical concepts of ethos, kairos, and topos combined with Lloyd Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation and Kenneth Burke's theory of identification. A central claim in the study is that lobbyists are not simply trying to persuade politicians; to succeed, they must form a deeper sociological bond through the process of identification. To *identify with someone* means to perceive the world from their perspective and adapt to the needs of the receiver (Burke, 1950/1969; Woodward, 2003). Consequently, lobbyists seek arguments that can foster shared interests and feelings. Appeals to the speaker's character, ethos, and finding the right arguments, topoi, are both rhetorical strategies particularly well suited to creating identification (Burke, 1950/1969).

Methodologically, this study applies a mixed-methods approach combining a lobbying survey of Norwegian parliament members with semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a case study. The lobbying survey of the members of the Stortinget was conducted in 2019. In this survey, 69 of 169 representatives provided answers, which gives a response rate of 41 percent. The survey included questions about the frequency of lobbying from various interest organizations and the effectiveness and consequences of lobbying. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 members of the Standing Committee on Energy and the Environment (SCEE) in the Norwegian parliament (Stortinget) and 17 lobbyist attempting to shape SCCE policy. The interviews were conducted from 2017 to 2020. The participant observation occurred at five seminars in 2018 and 2019 arranged by interest organizations interviewed in the study that lobbied against the SCEE. In all these seminars, SCEE members were present, and I could freely observe and interview politicians and lobbyists in more informal settings, such as dinners, coffee breaks, and meetings at the bar. Finally, I conducted a short case study of the lobbying campaign of the oil industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. The case study was mainly included to

illustrate the relevance and practical application of the rhetorical framework, which will be presented in the next chapter.

The historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. noted, "[E]very close student of Washington knows half the essential business of government is still transacted in the evening" (Jacob, 2010, p. 166). Even though dinners, social events, and social interaction are considered important avenues for lobbyists, they are seldom included in studies on lobbying, even though "social lobbying enhances bonds and reciprocity between [the] lobbied and [the] lobbyist" (Grose, Lopez, Sadhwani, & Yoshinaka, 2022, p. 2). Correspondingly, participant observation of the more informal interactions between lobbyists and politicians is crucial for obtaining a more holistic picture of lobbying as a communicative process. Most lobbying studies have failed to consider these arenas (Nothhaft, 2017).

Overview of this study

Following this introduction, Part II of the study consists of two chapters on theory and methodology. The theoretical chapter builds a rhetorical framework for the study of how lobbyists communicate. The starting point is Burke's theory that the best way to achieve persuasion is to create identification, and the classical rhetorical concepts of ethos, kairos, and topos will be brought in as vehicles of identification. To develop a more dynamic framework for how lobbyists handle the challenges of situational constraints, the theory of kairos is combined with Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation. While kairos focuses on the possibilities of the rhetorical situation, Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation focuses on its constraints. I will argue that the fitting response for lobbyists in rhetorical situations can be found in the interaction between the constraints of the situation and its kairotic possibilities.

The methodological chapter explains why a mixed-methods approach is the most fruitful approach for the study of lobbyists' rhetoric. A *mixed-methods approach* is a type of research in which the researcher integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches in the same study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2016). The chapter argues that the combination of survey research, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation gives a richer picture of how lobbyists communicate and why they use different arguments in different situations. Furthermore, the chapter explains the selection of actors and gives a more detailed presentation of the quantitative and qualitative data. Here, the challenge of conducting elite interviews and the methodological challenges of my own political background is addressed, given that I have a background as a state

secretary in the Ministry of the Environment. In addition, I have served as a political advisor for the Socialist Left Party. Toward the end of the chapter, I discuss the challenges of the study regarding validity, reliability, and possibilities for generalization.

Part III of the study consists of three empirical chapters in which the research questions for the studies are addressed. Chapter 4 deals with how lobbyists construct and enhance their ethos in meetings with decision makers. The focus is on how lobbyists combine the three dimensions of ethos—competence, character, and goodwill—to position themselves as trusted deliverers of information.

Traditional research on lobbying and communication emphasizes the competence lobbyists can provide in the form of technical expertise and policy expertise and describes these processes as *resource exchange*, *political insurance*, or *legislative subsidies* (Binderkrantz et al., 2014a; Hall & Deardorff, 2006; LaPira & Thomas, 2017). However, these perspectives tend to ignore the communicative aspects of lobbying. To create identification with politicians, lobbyists have an array of discursive ethos strategies such as personal closeness, praise, and recognition, third-party support from independent experts, coalition partners, political solutions that fit their political program, a platform to speak on, and the possibility of building a broader network.

Chapter 5 focuses on the complicated question of timing in lobbying and how lobbyists work to adapt their policy proposals to the needs of politicians. The chapter first analyses lobbying as a rhetorical situation based on the theory of Bitzer (1968), which focuses on the constraints of the situation. This perspective is combined with the classical concept of kairos, which emphasizes the opportunities of the situation. The study argues that the challenge of kairos is three dimensional in that a lobbyist must understand the right time for a proposal, the room for political maneuvering, and the appropriate message. An appropriate or fitting response is found in the interaction between the constraints and the kairotic opportunities of the rhetorical situation. The relevance of the revised model of the rhetorical situation is illustrated toward the end of the chapter by inspecting the oil industry's campaign for tax relief in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The success of the campaign can be explained by the oil lobbyists' ability to analyze changes in the constraints of the rhetorical situation in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the ability to exploit new kairotic opportunities.

Chapter 6 delves into the notion of topos and how lobbyists identify shared beliefs among their audience. It asks what the most common public interest topoi are in lobbying campaigns and how politicians evaluate these claims. It shows that even though they have disparate rhetorical starting points, the energy industry, the oil industry, the unions, and the environmental organizations are claiming that they can reach several public interest goals simultaneously. However, all types of organizations find it challenging to balance assorted public interest claims against each other, and cost-effectiveness comes across as a cross-cutting public interest topos. Toward the end of the chapter, I ask what kind of conceptualization of the public interest politicians adheres to and what this means for the influence of lobbyists. It illustrates that politicians have no clear idea of what the public interest is and how it best could be realized, providing lobbyists with room for considerable rhetorical creativity.

Chapter 7 summarizes the answers to the research questions and the contributions of this study to both rhetorical theory and the study of lobbying. The study demonstrates that a rhetorical perspective on lobbying offers insights that other approaches cannot. We get closer to an answer to what lobbyists say, why they say it, and when they say it. By using Burke's concept of identification as a master concept, the study illuminates why lobbying is such a contested and complicated democratic practice. When lobbyists are "dressing up as politicians" and trying to perceive the world from the perspective of the politicians, they operate in a gray zone between friendship and influence peddling.

2 Theory

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the research on lobbying has largely ignored the content of the messages that lobbyists convey when they meet politicians. Therefore, the general research question for this study is: *What kinds of rhetorical strategies do lobbyists rely on to influence decision makers?* This chapter develops a rhetorical framework for studying lobbyists' communication. First, the chapter provides a general introduction to classical and modern rhetoric and the epistemological and ontological debates that permeate the field. While classical rhetoric concerns rational discourse aimed at persuasion, this study leans on Kenneth Burke's (1950/1969) idea of identification, which highlights the role of rhetoric in forging relationships. Thus, Burke's idea of identification and its implications for this study are explained in more detail.

Based on the research questions and Burke's (1945/1969, 1950/1969) own description of how identification can be achieved, the rhetorical concepts of ethos, kairos, and topos are chosen as an analytical framework for the study of the rhetoric of lobbyists. While appeals to the speaker's character (ethos) and appeals to shared values (topos) are considered rhetorical strategies that are effective in achieving identification, kairos points to timing as a contextual challenge that any rhetor faces. While the classical concept of kairos highlights the possibilities of the rhetorical situation, Lloyd Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation emphasizes the constraints. This study, then, argues that a combination of these two perspectives can help to untangle the complicated relationship between rhetoric and context. Finally, topos is a rhetorical technique designed to find arguments that resonate with the audience. A central rhetorical strategy for lobbyists is the frequent appeal to the topos of the public interest. Hence, the last part of the chapter takes a critical look at the public interest concept from a historical and philosophical perspective. Instead of a closed definition, I will argue for a typology that reflects the often-changing and conflicting interpretations of the concept.

The troubled history of rhetoric and lobbying

Rhetoric has a contested history and is often referenced in derogatory terms in daily life. Arguments such as "that is mere rhetoric" or "that is just cheap rhetoric" are often used to undermine opponents in debates (Herrick, 2017, p. 1). The question of ethics and debates regarding the purpose of rhetoric have followed rhetoric from the beginning. In *Gorgias,* Plato famously condemned the rhetoric taught among his contemporaries as "foul" and "ugly." The attack on rhetoric was part of a larger philosophical struggle with the sophists whom Plato

attacked for being relativists regarding the truth. For Plato, Gorgias and the sophists had turned rhetoric into a vehicle of deception. The result was that "an ignorant person is more convincing than the expert before an equally ignorant audience" (Plato, 1960, p. 459). Therefore, rhetoric did not serve the ends of philosophy and dialectic, which were the only way we arrived at eternal truths.

In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle (Trans. 2007) tried to solve the inherent tension between rhetoric and philosophy and claimed that rhetoric is a practical art that could help humans reach probable conclusions and develop rational arguments (Herrick, 2017). Aristotle conceived of rhetoric as "a kind of method and communication leading to reliable judgments about practical and civic matters" (Bitzer, 1981, p. 27). Aristotle (Trans. 2007) also devised the most widely used definition of *rhetoric*, which is "an ability, in each [particular] case, to perceive the available means of persuasion" (p. 37). For Aristotle, rhetoric could be understood as "one-way, strategic communication, with discrete messages, designed for known audiences, in situations of uncertainty yet with clearly stated purposes and with demonstrable or measurable effects" (Cheney & Conrad, 2018, p. 455).

Ever since Plato attacked rhetoric for being a vehicle of deception, the discipline has struggled to find its place among the scientific disciplines, and scholars have voiced opinions on how the history of rhetoric should be interpreted. According to Gaonkar (1990), the underlying question has been whether rhetoric plays any role in the generation of knowledge or whether it merely supplements knowledge. The question of the value of rhetoric and how *rhetoric* should be defined is the background for many contemporary debates concerning ontology and epistemology in the study of rhetoric that will be addressed later in this chapter. However, if there is a common thread in the history of rhetoric, it is the constant ebbs and flows of interest in Greek and Roman rhetoric and a near-constant struggle for rhetoric "to redeem its tarnished public image. Rhetoric bashing continues in an almost unbroken tradition from ancient times to the present" (Herrick, 2017, p. 2).

As mentioned in the introduction, the consistent accusations of corruption, shadiness, and undue influence are an interesting commonality between rhetoric and lobbying. Both rhetoric and lobbying are necessary for a functioning democracy. However, in historical and contemporary debates, both practices have been met with accusations that they are detrimental to a healthy democracy (Ihlen, 2013). Some historical critiques against U.S. lobbying practices in the 18th century are apt in that both bribes and corruption were common (Jacob, 2010). Hence, in the

1850s, Walt Whitman compared lobbyists to "his least favorite members of the human race, together with infidels, secessionists, and slave-catchers" (Bordewich, 2009). In the first edition of the Dictionary of American Politics from 1892, *lobbying* was defined as "a term applied collectively to men that make a business of corruptly influencing legislators" (Jacob, 2010, p. 5).

However, the modern image of lobbying is also strongly associated with corruption, shady deals, and threats against democracy, even though outright corruption is very rare, particularly in Scandinavia and Northern Europe (Allard, 2008; Helgesson & Falasca, 2017). However, in a political environment with decreasing trust in political elites, many countries have tried to regulate lobbying to increase transparency and defeat the image of corruption. Therefore, people who work professionally with rhetoric or lobbying share a common challenge in trying to portray their professions as honorable and ethical (Coombs & Holladay, 2013; Kjeldsen, Kiewe, Lund, & Hansen, 2019).

Two versions of the history of rhetoric

The history of rhetoric is rhetorical in that scholars who write about the history of rhetoric must make inventional choices that affect what kinds of stories they end up writing (Blair, 1992). Even though Aristotle was a bit more nuanced in his assessment of the potential of rhetoric, the long-term result of the conflict with the sophists was that "rhetoric was pushed into the margins of philosophy and the special sciences, and there, it was forced to function as a supplement to knowledge" (Gaonkar, 1990, p. 241). However, the decline of rhetoric was gradual, and its marginalization was reinforced in particular from the Enlightenment onwards (Conley, 1994). In this version of the history of rhetoric, rhetoric is described as an often-misunderstood discipline that had its heyday in the classical ages and has largely degenerated into a service industry for other academic disciplines (Vickers, 1988). This version is typical for those scholars who perceive the history of rhetoric as the history of the influence of classical scholars such as Aristotle, Plato, and Cicero (Blair, 1992; Kennedy, 2009; Vickers, 1988). Covino (1988) has described the history of rhetoric as "a series of footnotes to the Ancients" (p. 45). Here, classical writers are treated with uncritical reverence and later versions as aberrations or unsuccessful copies. Vickers (1988), for example, describes Aristotle's *Rhetoric* as "the most penetrating analysis of speech in its full individual and social dimension" (p. 26), while in contemporary rhetoric, he finds "evidence of a progressive atrophy of the discipline" (p. 439).

The counternarrative to this story revives the tradition of the sophists and tells the story of the inevitability of rhetoric for human discourse. Here, rhetoric has a hidden history that needs to be rediscovered (Gaonkar, 1990). This is largely the strategy chosen by a central scholar in this dissertation, Kenneth Burke. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke (1950/1969) argues:

> [W]e would but rediscover rhetorical elements that had become obscured when rhetoric as a term fell into disuse, and other specialized disciplines such as esthetics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and sociology came to the fore (so esthetics sought to outlaw rhetoric, while the other sciences we have mentioned took over, each in its own terms, the rich rhetorical elements that esthetics would ban). (p. xiiii)

From this perspective, rhetoric has always been a relevant dicipline; it has just not been acknowledged as such. Others, like Ehninger (1968), have taken a more systematic approach according to which the history of rhetoric should be explored as a form of intellectual history in which the development of rhetoric mirrors the historical challenges that rhetors met (Blair, 1992). According to Ehninger (1968), rhetorical theory underwent a "grammatical phase" in the ancient period, followed by "psychological" rhetoric in the late eighteenth century and a more "sociological" contemporary rhetoric. In Ehninger's (1968) version, the history of rhetoric is a history of progress, and "despite occasional setbacks, rhetorics have constantly become both richer in content and more embracing in scope" (p. 57).

The larger theoretical point to be made is that any study that uses rhetorical theory must address questions concerning the scope of rhetoric and the epistemology of rhetoric. The first question deals with the question of what should be considered rhetoric. The answer to that question will determine the answer to what persuasion is and the role of rhetoric in that process. The epistemological question concerns the role of rhetoric in creating knowledge.

This study is inspired by Kenneth Burke's view of rhetoric and his concept of identification. Before I delve into Burke's concept of identification, I briefly describe the major differences between classical and modern rhetoric respecting the scope of rhetoric and its epistemological implications.

From classical to new rhetoric

Even though rhetorical history can be interpreted in various ways, there is little doubt that there have been ebbs and flows in the interest in rhetorical scholarship. According to Herrick (2017), rhetoric went into decay during the 19th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, "interest in

rhetorical theory was perhaps at its lowest point since the discussion of rhetoric began in ancient Greece" (p. 215). The weight of classics such as Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was also a challenge for theoretical and methodological innovation in rhetorical theory, and many scholars felt a new approach was needed. In the classical Neo-Aristotelian approach, the job of the rhetorical critic was to analyze the effect of speeches by well-known lists of topics (Foss, 2017). In a stirring critique of the Neo-Aristotelian approach, Black (1965/1978) argued that the publication of Aristoteles' *Rhetoric* was followed "by two millennia of feeble echoes and babbling murmur of second-rate minds" (p. xvii).

Criticism of the classical view of rhetoric had two central features. The first dealt with the scope of rhetoric, and the second with its epistemological implications. Regarding the scope of rhetoric, several scholars, such as Burke (1950/1969) and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1971), pointed out that rhetoric should expand its focus to include not only oral speeches, but also all forms of symbol use that include new media such as television, radio, and the internet (Herrick, 2017). Furthermore, if rhetoric included all kinds of persuasive and symbolic appeals, this also changed the epistemological basis of rhetoric and launched a larger debate about the relationship between rhetoric and reality.

The change in the scope of rhetoric has important implications for this study. Ancient Greece and Rome were not very institutionalized democracies. There were no political parties, interest groups, or professionalized public administration. When Cicero visited the Roman Senate, he represented himself, and rhetoric was driven by individual agency. This study, however, draws on the perspective of organizational rhetoric, which uses "rhetorical concepts and tools to study the communication of organizations" (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018, p. 8). Hence, when I use the word *lobbyists* and describe how they work with their ethos, I am not referring to their personal ethos, but the ethos of the organization they represent.

This distinction is important. Unlike the tradition in the EU and the U.S., Norwegian lobbyists are usually in-house lobbyists, not hired guns (Gullberg, 2015). That means that all the lobbyists interviewed for this study are full-time employees in companies such as Equinor or Statkraft, industry associations such as Norwegian Oil and Gas or Energy Norway, or environmental organizations or unions. Consequently, when these lobbyists interact with politicians, they represent their organizations, not clients. Nothhaft's (2017) study of business lobbyists in the EU shows that there is a certain distance between the lobbyists and the clients they represent and that

they can sometimes obscure their identities by mixing the roles they play for different clients. Hence, there is a distinction between the individual ethos of lobbyists and the organizational ethos of the organization they represent. The in-house lobbyists in this study did not have that option. Accordingly, the lobbyists in this study are organizational lobbyists who represent their interest organizations. Therefore, when I refer to concepts such as ethos, I am not talking about the individual ethos of the lobbyist but the organizational ethos of the interest organization that he or she represents.

Rhetorical subjectivism and rhetorical objectivism

The extension of the scope of rhetoric, the epistemological grounding, is one of the major disparities between classical and modern rhetoric. The works of scholars like Black (1965/1978), Burke (1950/1969), and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1971) led to increased debate in rhetorical scholarship on the relationship between rhetoric and knowledge. As mentioned, the critique from Plato did not give rhetoric any epistemic status, and rhetoric could not provide reliable knowledge (Jasinski, 2001). R. L. Scott (1967) challenged this position and argued that rhetoric is "epistemic," meaning that rhetoric not only describes reality but also constructs and shapes it. In his famous study of the struggle for independence in Quebec, Charland (1987) argues that rhetoric has a constitutive element in which the people of Quebec use rhetoric to create a distinct social identity. Thus, rhetoric has an ontological effect, and "rhetorical theory must perceive through the 'givenness' of what appears to be the delimitable rhetorical situation, where the ontological status of speaker, speech, audience, topic, and occasion offer themselves as unproblematic" (Charland, 1987, p. 148). This view of rhetoric shares many similarities with social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). In particular, Brummett (1976) argued that reality was a question of intersubjective agreement, and rhetoric was "in the deepest and most fundamental sense the advocacy of realities" (p. 31).

This constitutive or subjective view of rhetoric has been challenged by other scholars, who argued that reality exists independently of discourse and must be discovered by the rhetor (Orr, 1978). This position can be traced to Plato's original position, labeled *objectivism*, in which "the objectivist either sees or searches for a fixed ground or firm place to stand so as to determine what is true and what is good" (Jasinski, 2001, p. 220).

In summary, modern rhetorical scholarship is divided between two opposing epistemological poles that can be labeled *rhetorical subjectivism* and *rhetorical objectivism,* where "some thinkers

claim that reality is socially constructed through discourse; others contend that reality exists independent of and apart from discourse" (Cherwitz & Hikins, 1983, p. 253). This debate is quite similar to the larger debate between social constructivism and positivism in the social sciences (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Shapiro, 2009). In the positivist version, data is already there as observable facts. The job of the researcher is to collect them. In the social constructivist version, however, reality is not a given and is socially constructed by the researcher (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

In its most extreme interpretation, the epistemic version of rhetoric gives little room for a material reality beyond the realm of language, while the positivist version reduces the study of rhetoric to insignificance. A sensible compromise in the debate between positivism and social constructivism has been suggested by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) under the label of *critical realism*. Critical realism acknowledges that there is a material world independent of human beings and structures that affect us; however, our experience of the world is always subjective and perspectival. An important insight in critical realism is that our observations, both as researchers and informants, are not independent of our perceptions and "we always lay a perspective into what we say, and not only that, but seeing is inseparable from the perspective, it is perspectival" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 10).

A similar position on the study of rhetoric is *rhetorical perspectivism.* Cherwitz and Hikins (1983) argue that rhetorical scholarship must coexist with the tension between objectivism and subjectivism, and "a thorough understanding of a particular social phenomena can occur only when all relevant perspectives have been discovered, evaluated, and juxtaposed to form a more complete view of the object of inquiry" (p. 266). Rhetorical perspectivism is also evident in the work of Kenneth Burke. For Burke, reality was simply too complex to fit neatly into a theoretical framework: "Men seek for vocabularies that will be faithful reflections of reality. To this end, they must develop vocabularies that are selections of reality. And any selection of reality must, in certain circumstances, function as a deflection of reality" (Burke, 1945/1969, p. 156).

The importance of rhetorical perspectivism will be illustrated throughout this study. Politicians and lobbyists have diverse interests and aims for what they do. Hence, their perspectives often vary when they discuss the same events. These assorted visions are communicated through rhetoric, and by analyzing the rhetoric they use, we can better understand how they use rhetoric to reach their political goals. Many problems reflected in the measurement of influence in lobbying

are connected to the fact that success is often in the eyes of the receiver. In politics, it is not unusual that both sides claim to have won simultaneously. Rhetorical perspectivism is also key to a sensible solution to the dilemma of the rhetorical situation, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Rhetoric and the study of politics

The question of rhetorical perspectivism also points to the ambivalent relationship between the study of rhetoric and the study of politics. Ever since Plato's attack on the sophists, political theorists have struggled to relate to rhetoric and the power of persuasion (B. Garsten, 2009). The core of Plato's attack was not only about the ability of rhetoric to distort the truth, but also "a refusal of the excess and disorder that democratic politics bring to the community" (Martin, 2013, p. 22). According to Martin (2013):

> Political thinkers have sought a point of reference outside political dispute that draws limits around what can be said, who can say it, and how. Rhetoric is therefore contrasted with, or subsumed into, some eternal or basic "truth" about humans and how they might live together. (Martin, 2013, p. 32)

Thus, political philosophy often tries to avoid rhetoric and persuasion and attempts to create room for rational discourse and consensus in which rhetoric and persuasion do not play a prominent role (B. Garsten, 2009; Mouffe, 1993, 2005). Correspondingly, there is an anti-rhetorical tendency in political theory with which political thinkers use rhetoric to argue against rhetoric. A good example of this rhetorical avoidance is the concept of the public interest, which is central to this study. Traditional political scientists avoid the concept because they cannot measure it, and political philosophers are skeptical of the concept because it is too ambiguous and leaves too much room for the chaos of politics and differences of opinions (Simm, 2011; Sorauf, 1957). Much like objectivists, modern political science wants the study of politics to be based on firmer empirical grounding than competing rhetorical conceptualizations of the public interest. However, a vital debate about the nature of the public interest is important for the legitimacy of a democracy (Habermas, 1996; Rawls, 2005). Furthermore, the concept is frequently used and referred to by lobbyists, themselves (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020). Therefore, instead of avoiding the concept, it makes sense to scrutinize how politicians and lobbyists communicatively construct their public interest claims.

The broader tendency to avoid analyzing rhetoric is also evident in more contemporary studies of political and organizational communication. In contemporary scholarship on political

communication, the study of rhetoric is often reduced to the study of political speechmaking (Kjeldsen et al., 2019). Furthermore, organizational rhetoric is still a small and rather insignificant field (Ihlen & Heath, 2018). Hence, rhetorical theory has struggled to make itself relevant to the study of modern political practices such as lobbying, political campaigns, and organizational communication in general.

This study assumes that politics is inherently rhetorical. Classical rhetoric was intimately connected to politics, and classical thinkers such as "Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian—thought that politics was the principal locus for rhetorical thought and communication, and therefore they designed their theories for use by political agents" (Bitzer, 1981, p. 27). Rhetoric and persuasion are also integral to modern politics because politics "involves making judgments in contexts of uncertainty about what to do. To persuade in such contexts involves transforming, primarily with argument, a variety of possible options into a unified judgment, perhaps even a decision" (Martin, 2013, p. 2). When lobbyists meet politicians, they present arguments and hope that they will be convincing enough for the politicians to follow their lead. However, there are always counter-arguments, and any policy is open to be contested and reformulated as governments come and go and power relations change. Thus, rhetoric reminds us of "the contingency of our political horizon, its essentially groundless nature" (Martin, 2013, p. 5). Consequently, this study is based on a rhetorical approach to politics in which persuasion plays a prominent role and seeks to illuminate how persuasive speech influences decision makers who are lobbied against and how various rhetorical tools can help us understand this process.

From persuasion to identification

Before I examine more closely rhetorical tools such as ethos, kairos, and topos, there is a need to delve more deeply into what it means to persuade someone. My understanding of lobbying as "the purposeful use of rhetoric to influence the policy process" may seem close to the Aristotelian version of rhetoric. When interest organizations engage in lobbying, they use rhetoric to persuade decision makers. Sometimes, their arguments are convincing, and sometimes, they are not.

However, persuasion is a complex process that involves more than just pushing the right argumentative buttons. A central difference between new and classical rhetoric is how they view the process of persuasion. A well-founded critique of Aristotle is that his view of persuasion was too instrumental and did not consider situational and contextual factors (Cheney & Conrad, 2018).

Furthermore, Aristotelian rhetoric insisted on the rationality of persuasion and claimed that "no rhetoric is genuine which is not based upon dialectics or the art of logical demonstration" (Aristotle, Trans. 2007).

The rhetorical scholar who has developed the understanding of persuasion the most is Kenneth Burke. According to Burke, persuading someone is a deeper sociological process that he labels *identification*. Burke also widens the scope of rhetoric by including persuasive language that surpasses appeals to reason (Campbell, 1970). In an essay, Burke (1951) summarized the difference between old and new rhetoric as follows:

> If I had to sum up in one word the difference between the "old" rhetoric and the "new," … I would reduce it to this: The key term for the "old" rhetoric was "persuasion" and its stress upon deliberate design. The key term for the "new" rhetoric would be "identification," which can include a partially unconscious factor in appeal (p. 203).

For Burke, then, a central aspect of the new rhetoric is "a concern with issues of collaboration and mediation rather than with instrumental persuasion and ratiocination" (Heath, 2001, p. 375). Burke introduced the concepts of identification, division, and consubstantiation to provide a more thorough understanding of how rhetorical persuasion works. In the following section, I will give a short introduction to Burke's understanding of persuasion and its relevance to this study.

What is identification?

Identification and identity are extremely rich concepts, and Burke's work was inspired by scholars such as Freud, Marx, George Herbert Mead, and Harold Lasswell (Heath, Cheney, & Ihlen, 2018). For Burke, identification was a basic human drive and was closely related to its opposite: division. The dualism of identification and division was part of man's existential challenges and describes a world "where truth exists beyond logic and rests comfortably among contradictions" (Borrowman & Kmetz, 2011, p. 279). According to Burke, this division was the main reason humans need rhetoric: "Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division. If men were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 22).

Burke underscored that in a world where men are separate, total identification will be impossible. Consequently, the rhetor is always torn between bringing people together through congregation and tearing people apart through separation. Burke summarized this contradiction quite elegantly:

> In pure identification, there would be no strife. Likewise, there would be no strife in absolute separateness. … But put identification and division ambiguously together, so you cannot know for certain just when one ends and the other begins, and you have the characteristic invitation to rhetoric. (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 25)

To overcome division, humans must find commonalities, shared values, and shared beliefs. In a hypothetical example of subjects A and B, Burke saw this as a process of finding shared interests.

> A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is *identified* with B. Or he [sic] may *identify himself* with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes they are, or is persuaded to believe so. ... In being identified with B, A is "substantially one" with a person other than himself. ... To identify A with B is to make A 'consubstantial' with B. [italics in the original] (Burke, 1950/1969, pp. 20-21)

Consubstantial means that A and B are part of the same substance (Day, 1960). According to Burke, "[S]ubstance in the old philosophies was an act; and a way of life is an acting together; and in acting together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, and attitudes that make them consubstantial" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 21). To be part of the same substance, humans must share what Burke labels *properties*, which can be things like status, reputation, or citizenship. To persuade someone, the rhetor must identify his or her properties with the properties of the audience (Day, 1960). Therefore, for Burke, there can be no persuasion unless the rhetor is willing to adapt to the needs of the receiver: "You persuade a man only insofar you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 55).

To achieve "consubstantiality," both the rhetor and his or her audience must "die" and be "reborn" a little. That is, a rhetor might change the audience's opinion in one respect, but will only succeed insofar as he or she yields to the audience's opinions in other respects (Burke, 1937/1984, 1950/1969). That means Burke's theory of identification is receiver oriented. He argues for a rhetoric that is highly attentive to its audience. Burke has a strong adaptive impulse, and his theory of rhetoric can be described as "rhetoric addressed to others" (Woodward, 2003, p. 25).

For Burke, rhetoric can create new ways of identifying and dividing humans. Therefore, the creative rhetor will always find a way to achieve identification. For Burke, identification is both a means and an end (Kjeldsen, 2006). Furthermore, his treatment of the concept is rathery rich. His works invite us to interpret the concept as a "grand theory" of rhetoric. Hence, "identification

might be seen as an elastic concept for the full appreciation of rhetoric as compensatory to the universal condition of division in human affairs" (Heath et al., 2018, p. 114). Burke describes identification as a master strategy that "encompasses the whole area of language usage for the purposes of inducement to action and attitude" (Day, 1960, p. 271).

In summary, identification points to a process of persuasion in which the rhetor not only searches for the available means of persuasion but also tries to overcome division and create identification by appealing to shared interests and feelings. This process is not only instrumental but also has a transformational effect on both the rhetor and the audience. The goal is to transcend conflicting positions and create a situation of consubstantiality. Hence, for Burke, the process of persuasion is not one in which a rhetor can convince an audience of anything. The rhetor must be willing to adapt to the needs of the audience (Woodward, 2003). In this study, I will argue that the concept of identification is fruitful for understanding how lobbyists use rhetoric to influence decision makers. They not only gather the best rational arguments and present them, but they also try to perceive the world from the politicians' perspectives and align their interests and values with the interests and values of the decision makers. That is, they try to achieve persuasion by identification.

Identification and the third face of power

A particularly interesting part of Burke's concept of identification is his idea that identification "can operate without conscious direction from any particular agent" (Burke, 1945/1969, p. 35). Burke also argues that the "major power of identification derives from situations in which it goes unnoticed" (Burke, 1972, p. 28). His analysis in *A Rhetoric of Motives* is clearly inspired by thinkers such as Marx and Freud, whereby social structures and subconscious processes might impact how agents think of themselves and their interests. Consequently, skilled rhetoricians can use this to their advantage by playing on the doxastic or taken-for-granted elements of social reality.

As mentioned in the introduction, the pluralist tradition of interest group studies in the U.S. was closely related to a complex debate on how power was dispersed in U.S. society. Dahl (1961) and his followers argued that power could be studied quite straightforwardly, and the power of interest groups could be understood as their ability to make the government do something it otherwise would not have done (Akram et al., 2015). This view was challenged by Bachrach and Baratz (1962), who argued that power also had a second face, which concerns the ability to take issues on

and off the public agenda and control "non-decisions," also known as the *agenda-setting approach to power*.

Burke's notion that identification can go unnoticed is near what has been labeled the *third face of power* (Lukes, 1974/2005). The sociologist Steven Lukes argued that there is a third face of power where A may exercise power over B "by influencing, shaping, or determining his very wants" (Lukes, 1974/2005, p. 27). This way of thinking about power raises a host of epistemic and epistemological issues. How can we trust people's beliefs and self-understanding if these are reflections of power structures that they are not aware of? Shapiro (2009) notes that third-face power "often operate[s] via the more opaque dimensions of language on agents' self-understandings, any method of investigating consensual actions in a power-laden world that limits the inquiry to those self-understandings potentially involves bias" (pp. 33−34). In modern rhetorical theory, these perspectives are central to critical rhetoric, in which the idea is to "unmask or demystify the discourse of power," drawing particularly on the work of Foucault (McKerrow, 1989, p. 91). Consequently, from a rhetorical perspective, the third face of power focuses on how language can be used to amplify power structures that the agents, themselves, are not aware of or do not reflect critically upon.

Even though Burke never discusses conceptualizations of power in his work, it is obvious that identification strategies can include attempts that exploit the third face of power. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke discusses at length "how ideas and representations are reflections of the social and political circumstances under which they arise" (Wolin, 2001, p. 186). Here, Burke is in line with the thinking surrounding the third face of power, according to which "preferences cannot be reduced to subjective intention alone, but are shaped by social, and highly political, forces, whether we are mindful of them or not" (Akram et al., 2015, p. 356).

This perspective on rhetoric and power is relevant to this study because the self-understanding of both politicians and lobbyists might be influenced by factors they do not necessarily recognize. The way these unconscious forms of identification work can be understood through Burke's conceptualization of ideology. According to Burke (1966), "[A]n 'ideology' is like a spirit taking up its abode in a body: It makes that body hop around in certain ways; and that same body would have hopped around in different ways had a different ideology happened to inhabit it" (p. 6). Thus, an ideology does its rhetorical work without the agents necessarily being aware of its power. According to Charland (1987), this form of identification exemplifies the constitutive

effect of rhetoric because "ideological rhetoric is effective because it is within the bodies of those it constitutes as subjects" (p. 143).

This role of the "third face of power" in lobbying will be explored in Chapter 5, which concerns how lobbyists build and strengthen their ethos, and in Chapter 7, which focuses on how lobbyists construct public interest claims and how politicians evaluate these claims. However, this notion is also relevant when I analyze the way lobbyists approach and build relationships with politicians. According to Nothhaft (2017), lobbying research is built on the assumption that politicians "are always aware of where, how, and when lobbying takes place" (p. 32).

The challenges of identification

Burke's theory of identification has obvious theoretical challenges. Here, I will address three that affect this study. The first is Burke's expansion of the scope of rhetoric. The second is Burke's metaphysical assumptions about human desires, and the third is the relationship between identification and ethics.

First, the concept of identification blurs the lines between rhetoric as a persuasive activity and the more ordinary use of language. If identification is a master strategy that includes all kinds of persuasive activities, it is difficult to say where identification as concept starts and where it ends (Day, 1960). Alternatively, to put it in Burke's (1950/1969) own terms: "Wherever there is persuasion there is rhetoric, and wherever there is 'meaning' there is 'persuasion'" (p. 172). Hence, Burke argues for a view of the discipline of rhetoric with "no distinguishable limits, that it is in effect the study of all language" (Campbell, 1970, p. 106). As mentioned, this is a radical break with the traditional Aristotelian view of both the scope of rhetoric and its persuasive abilities; rhetoric is limited to rational persuasive discourse. The problem with this approach is that it makes it more difficult to develop coherent theories of rhetoric. The advantage is the ability to explore all persuasive uses of language, as discussed in the notion of the third face of power above (Campbell, 1970).

Burke's theory of identification is based on certain assumptions about human nature that are questionable. According to Davis (2008), Burke was inspired by Freud and shared his view that humans were driven by desire but "ditched the Oedipal narrative, arguing that the most fundamental human desire is social rather than sexual and that identification is a response to that desire" (Davis, 2008, p. 124). The human drive for identification and the dualism between

identification and division are theoretical postulates that one must accept to use Burke's theory of identification for analytical purposes. However, Burke's view of the centrality of identity and identify formation has inspired sociologists such as C. Wright Mills and Erwin Goffman (Branaman, 1994).

Identification is a powerful rhetorical tool that can create shared meanings and new identities. However, identification can also result in dysfunctional forms of persuasion such as racism, religious fanaticism, and heightened nationalism (Borrowman & Kmetz, 2011). Many current debates about identity politics and the growth of right-wing populism center on the negative aspects of appeals to identities. The problem is that appeals to shared values and identities could also include exclusion and blame for groups not invited into a community (Condit, 1985).

Burke was acutely aware of this danger, and in his works, these forms of identification are described as dysfunctional (Heath et al., 2018). In his famous analysis of Hitler's *Mein Kampf,* Burke describes Hitler's conspiracy theory of the Jews as a "snake oil that made such a sinister unifying possible within his own nation" (Burke, 1941/1973, p. 165). Hence, he concluded that "this unity, if attained on a deceptive basis, by emotional trickeries that shift our criticism from the accurate locus of our trouble, is no unity at all" (p. 188). Hitler's insistence on total identification between himself and the German people also exemplifies the powerful role of non-rational appeals in creating identification (Burke, 1941/1973).

According to Crusius (1995), "[T]he problem, then, is not with identification per se (trust, faith) but with faulty or malign identifications, which must be exposed, critiqued, discarded, and replaced with sounder loyalties." The question is, then, how should one separate democratically sound and deceptive forms of identification? In the world of lobbying, the question of ethics and identification would often boil down to the motives of lobbyists in creating identification with politicians. This is particularly relevant to the discussion in Chapter 6 on how lobbyists strategically use the topos of the public interest to create identification. The challenge for politicians is, when all types of interest organizations claim to work toward the public interest, how should they evaluate these claims? (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020).

Generally, one can argue that resourceful lobbyists in particular are too successful in their attempts to create identification with politicians, and their special interests are too often conflated with the public interest (Gilens & Page, 2014). Therefore, the increased closeness and elite

circulation between politicians and lobbyists represent a democratic challenge that threatens the integrity of the political system.

Strategies of identification

Rhetorical scholars have debated Burke's idea of identification and tried to conceptualize it in disparate strategies of identification (Crable, 2009; Holland, 1953; Jasinski, 2001). Cheney (1983) adapted Burke's framework to the study of organizational rhetoric and identified one strategy that is highly relevant to this study, which he labels "identification through common ground." Here, the rhetor emphasizes what he or she shares with his audience. Burke mentions the politicians who are rich but still can connect with poor voters by the politicians' claiming they came from a poor background. In an organizational context, the organization might express how it values its employees and print testimonials that reveal how employees express commitment and loyalty to the organization (Cheney, 1983). In the context of lobbying, an organization can claim that its interests align with the interests of decision makers. Consequently, this is a kind of direct associational process in which the rhetor says, "I am like you" or "I have the same interests as you."

In *Attitudes Toward History* (1937, 1984), Burke mentions a specific way of using the common ground technique to appeal to what he labels "ultimate terms and ideographs."
An *ideograph* is a broad political idea that is universally valued, such as freedom of speech, liberty, or equality (McGee, 1980). A typical example is a prime minister who appeals to competing political parties to stand together and protect democracy after a terrorist attack. According to Burke, appeals to ultimate terms and ideographs can be seen as "bridging devices." A *bridging device* is "a symbolic structure where one transcends conflict one way or the other" (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 224). Hence, broad political appeals, such as "the national interest," are often used as bridging devices in politics to overcome partisan division. In this study, I will argue that the public interest topos is the central bridging device that lobbyists use when they want to identify with politicians.

Identification through common ground and the use of bridging devices might be considered broad descriptions of rhetorical strategies that lobbyists might exploit to persuade politicians. Burke was not a disciplined theorist. His treatment of identification is "more suggestive than systematic" (Wolin, 2001, p. 72). He was drawn to rhetoric "more for what its study could tell us about human

relations generally than for the narrower concerns about what makes a speech effective" (Wolin, 2001, p. 1). As mentioned earlier in the chapter, identification in the Burkean sense "encompasses the whole area of language usage for the purposes of inducement to action and attitude" (Day, 1960, p. 271). Burke's theories are both unorthodox and challenging. He was a self-taught scholar and refrained from identifying himself with any particular philosophical or political school of thought (Kjeldsen, 2006; Rueckert, 1994). In the following, I will try to use Burke's work to develop a theoretical framework for the study of the rhetoric of lobbyists.

The road to identification: Ethos, kairos, and topos

The question for this study is, how should we describe and define rhetorical strategies that can lead to identification? In *A Rhetoric of Motives,* Burke (1950/1969) invokes the work of Aristotle, Quintilian, and Cicero and mentions logos, ethos, pathos, enthymemes, topos and figures of speech as examples of "strategies" that can serve the purpose of identification. However, his discussion of the more unconscious aspects of identification also involves thinkers such as Karl Marx, Remy de Gourmont, and Jeremy Bentham. Burke's elaboration on the concept of identification in *A Rhetoric of Motives* is typical of his prolific style, where he sought inspiration and illustration for his ideas in literature, poetry, political philosophy, and modern social theory. Burke (1941/1973) acknowledged that "the main ideal of criticism, as I conceive it, is to use all there is to use" (p. 23).

Consequently, any study that invokes Burke's concept of identification must struggle with the heuristic nature of the concept and the fact that Burke was—"in the best and broadest sense of the word—an undisciplined theorist" (Woodward, 2003, p. 22). However, "to use all there is to use" is not a meaningful guideline for a more focused study of the rhetoric of lobbyists. The choice of using the classical rhetorical concepts of ethos, kairos, and topos as the theoretical starting point in this study is made primarily because these concepts are particularly suited for illuminating the three communicative challenges I presented in the introduction. These are the challenges of credibility, timing and context, and finding the right arguments. This does not mean that these challenges are the only communicative problems lobbyists struggle with or that other concepts from the rhetorical canon, such as logos and pathos, are irrelevant to the study of lobbying. However, these are deemed most relevant for the research questions that this study tries to illuminate, which are how lobbyists solve the challenges of credibility, timing, and finding the right arguments.

Ethos, kairos, and topos will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. Generally, however, ethos deals with the character of the speaker, kairos moves our awareness to the contextual timing of the arguments, and topos turns our attention to how we find and invent arguments (Corbett & Connors, 1999; Kjeldsen, 2006). Furthermore, all three concepts connect to Burke's work, and all three concepts are central to the process of identification. In *A Rhetoric of Motives,* Burke discusses both ethos and topos as rhetorical strategies that are extremely adept at creating identification (Woodward, 2003). In *A Rhetoric of Motives,* topos is described as an effective strategy for identification because "the translation of one's own wishes into terms of an audience's opinion would clearly be an instance of identification" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 57). Furthermore, Jasinski (2001) argues, "Burke's emphasis on identification makes ethos a central component of rhetorical art and strategy" (p. 232). As discussed above, a central feature of identification is the ability to "display the appropriate 'signs' of character needed to earn the audience's goodwill" (Burke, 1950/1969, pp. 55-56).

Even though kairos is not specifically mentioned by Burke in his discussion of identification, the concept speaks to the situational and contextual aspect of Burke's rhetoric. According to Sheard (1993), "[I]n Burkean theory, kairos is the 'scene' of rhetoric" (p. 292). In Burke's thinking, kairos "denotes the infinite combinations of consubstantial, scenic elements that exist as potentialities of discursive acts" (Sheard, 1993, p. 306). In connection with the discussion of kairos, I will also introduce Lloyd Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation, which has been suggested as a modern theory of kairos (Kjeldsen, 2014).

Thus, finding the most persuasive means for a lobbyist is a complicated process that depends on creating a credible character, presenting arguments at the right moment, and seeking arguments in the right places. Therefore, one could argue that topos, kairos, and ethos belong to the phase the Romans labeled as *inventio*, meaning the phase in which the rhetor explored and found ideas for his or her speech (Kjeldsen, 2006).

The combination of rhetorical elements in this study shares similarities with and is inspired by the work of Hartelius (2011) and Woodward (2003), who try to untangle the role of identification in modern rhetorical contexts. In *The Rhetoric of Expertise*, Hartelius (2011) uses the Aristotelian version of ethos as a starting point and combines it with Burke's (1950/1969) theory of identification and Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation. According to Hartelius,

experts use a great deal of time in building a strong ethos, but to succeed, they must "construct ethos as an attachment to a social collective" and build "an appeal of consubstantiality, a connectedness to a community" (s. 13−14). From Bitzer (1968), she adds the element that experts should position themselves to be the necessary and fitting response so their "expertise becomes the solution to a problem or the answer to a question" (Hartelius, 2011, p. 25). Furthermore, in *The Idea of Identification*, Woodward (2003) studies the role of identification in politics and film. Woodward builds on the Burkean view of identification and perceives it as a form of strategic adaptation and understands identification as "the conscious alignment of oneself with the experiences, ideas, and expressions of others" (p. 5). Woodward (2003) uses this as a starting point to analyze persuasive appeals in film and politics. Thus, both the work of Woodward (2003) and Hartelius (2011) exemplifies how Burke's concept of identification is a fruitful tool for the study of rhetoric in the cultural or political realm.

Understanding ethos

In the classical tradition, the most well-known theoretical contributions are the artistic proofs known as ethos, pathos, and logos. *Ethos* is the appeal to the credibility of the speaker, *pathos* is the appeal to the emotions of the audience, and *logos* "is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth with the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question" (Aristotle, Trans. 2007).

In rhetorical analysis, the artistic proofs are related, "and these are at all times coordinate [sic] and interact mutually, distinguishable but not separable from one another, although one may occasionally take precedence over the others" (Conley, 1994, p. 15). Lobbyists naturally rely on all three kinds of artistic proofs when they are trying to convince decision makers. However, in this study, particular attention is given to the concept of ethos. Lobbyists' struggle with ethos is of the utmost importance because "a lobbyist must be trustworthy or reliable or else the legislator will deny him access. Trust is the *sine qua non* for the lobbyist–legislator relationship" (Holtzman, 1966, p. 77). Hence, solving the ethos question is key for lobbyists to get their cases heard.

Like many rhetorical concepts, ethos is simultaneously simple and complex. Farrell (1993) has noted that ethos is "one of the most enigmatic concepts in the entire lexicon" (p. 80). In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle (Trans. 2007) describes ethos as "the most effective means of persuasion" and "the controlling factor in persuasion." Even the most eloquent speaker will fail if the audience

questions his or her credibility. According to Aristotle (Trans. 2007), a credible speaker had to demonstrate practical wisdom (*phronesis*), virtue (*arête*), and goodwill toward the audience (*eunoia*). These three dimensions of ethos have shown remarkable resilience in the research on ethos and have been confirmed by modern quantitative research (Kjeldsen, 2006; McCroskey & Teven, 1999; McCroskey & Young, 1981). In this study, these three dimensions of ethos will be central to the theoretical understanding of the concept and its empirical operationalization.

Aristotle (Trans. 2007) conceptualized ethos as constructed during the speech, itself. This was problematized by Cicero, who perceived ethos as "constant over time, resistant to change, and difficult to dissemble or disguise" (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018, p. 212). Hence, the Roman understanding of ethos is broader and includes previous impressions of the speaker. Furthermore, the Roman orators were more concerned than Aristotle with the emotional component of ethos, in which the rhetor would try to create a kind of "ethos of sympathy" by displaying the emotions he or she wanted the audience to feel (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018; Kjeldsen, 2006). The understanding of ethos as constructed but also challenging to change is central to the modern understanding of the concept, in which ethos can be understood as a dynamic concept whereby ethos is co-created with the audience and can change over time (Kjeldsen, 2006; McCroskey, 2015). Furthermore, ethos can be understood as the audience's "projection of authority and trustworthiness onto the speaker, a projection that is triggered or elicited by the speaker but is otherwise supplied by the audience" (Baumlin & Baumlin, 1994, p. 99). Consequently, when interest organizations are constructing an ethos in their meetings with decision makers, they are not only looking for persuasive arguments, but also for opportunities to form deeper alliances and bonds. Thus, "to examine ethos and identification is one way to take communication beyond information exchange and closer to understanding its capacity to form alliances and community, extending these to constitute organizations" (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018, p. 210). In summary, ethos is a two-way street where socialization is achieved through rhetorical action.

Different dimensions of ethos

Modern scholarship on ethos has centered on the concept of *source credibility*. These studies reformulate and reinterpret the dimensions of ethos mentioned by Aristotle and try to develop various scales to measure dimensions such as expertise and trustworthiness (Berlo, Lemert, & Mertz, 1969; Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957).

With the help of modern statistics and factor analysis, these studies often end up with the same dimensions of ethos as Aristotle, such as competence, dynamism, reliability, and intent toward the receiver (Hovland et al., 1953; Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Kjeldsen, 2006). In a review of the research, McCroskey and Young (1981) argued that even though the previous research identified eight dimensions of ethos, these could be collapsed to the two dimensions of competence and character. Competence and character are quite like practical wisdom and virtue in Aristotle's scheme. In a later study, McCroskey and Teven (1999) also chose to include goodwill as a central dimension of ethos. According to these scholars, goodwill can be described as the "lost dimension" of credibility and has been ignored in many studies on ethos.

Table 2.1 summarizes the operationalization of the dimensions of ethos, as suggested by McCroskey and Teven (1999). The three dimensions of competence, trustworthiness, and goodwill closely correspond with Aristotle's original division between phronesis, arête, and eunoia. However, phronesis, or practical wisdom, is a broader concept than competence because it refers to a broader conceptualization of common sense (Kjeldsen, 2006).

Table 2.1 Three dimensions of ethos and their measurement, scales from 1−7 (McCroskey & Teven, 1999, p. 95).

Competence	**Character (Trustworthiness)**	**Goodwill**
Intelligent/Unintelligent	Honest/Dishonest	Cares about me/Doesn't care about me
Untrained/Trained	Untrustworthy/Trustworthy	Has my interests at heart /Doesn't have my interests at heart
Inexpert/Expert	Honorable/Dishonorable	Self-centered/Not self-centered
Informed/Uninformed	Moral/Immoral	Concerned with me/Not concerned with me
Incompetent/Competent	Unethical/Ethical	Insensitive/Sensitive
Bright/Stupid	Phony/Genuine	Not understanding/Understanding

Competence is typically associated with terms such as expertness and intelligence, while trustworthiness is understood as honesty and high morals (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). These two dimensions of ethos are frequently used as dimensions of source credibility in modern studies in social psychology and marketing (Ismagilova, Slade, Rana, & Dwivedi, 2020; Pornpitakpan, 2004). In this study, I will refer to the second dimension of ethos as character, not trustworthiness. McCroskey and Teven (1999) argue that the constructs are parallel to those that Aristotle theorized. The problem with trustworthiness is that the connotations from the concept are too broad compared to the subset of abilities it is supposed to describe. In the literature on ethos, trustworthiness is sometimes used to describe ethos as a broad concept, and trustworthiness is often used as a direct translation of ethos (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018). However, a general challenge with ethos is that "like many terms from Greek philosophy … ethos remains

untranslatable in any word-for-word correspondence" and "character, authority, charisma, credence, credibility, trust, trustworthiness, sincerity" are examples of modern translations of the concept (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018, p. 24). Originally, arête referred to "good moral character" and, clearly, the operationalization of the concept with pairs like moral/immoral, ethical/unethical, and honorable/dishonorable points in this direction (Jasinski, 2001). Therefore, if ethos is to be divided into three dimensions, character, or "moral character," is a more precise description of the second dimension of ethos. Furthermore, when I refer to ethos as a broad term, I will use the word credibility, which is closer to our everyday understanding of the concept.

In lobbying research, the dimensions of competence and character are often mentioned as important prerequisites of influence, even though they are not discussed within a rhetorical framework. In his classical study of lobbyists in Brussels and the U.S., McGrath (2006) mentions character traits such as honesty, integrity, and credibility as vital to success. Regarding competence, the U.S. lobbying literature separates "hacks," who are the policy process experts, from "wonks," who are more devoted to policy expertise and policy development (LaPira & Thomas, 2017; Medvetz, 2012). LaPira and Thomas (2017) describe hacks and wonks as two ideal types of lobbyists. Hacks play the dominant role and are the most valued because of their superior knowledge of political processes and strategy. Insider knowledge and process competence make "hacks" invaluable because they can perceive when a particular proposal is developing in a threatening direction and when the special interest organization should intervene.

The distinction between *hacks* and *wonks* has also proven useful in a Scandinavian context in a study of Swedish lobbyists (C. Garsten, Rothstein, & Svallfors, 2015; Svallfors, 2016a). *Hackish knowledge* is described as competence that can only be obtained through practical experience and involves an element of tacit skills, such as knowing when to move forward on a political issue and understanding party dynamics (Selling & Svallfors, 2019). I will return to the separation between *hacks* and *wonks* when I discuss the competence dimension of ethos in Chapter 4.

While trustworthiness and competence are frequently used in studies of both lobbying and source credibility, goodwill has proven more difficult to pin down empirically as a dimension of ethos. Teven and McCroskey (1997) suggest that "perceived caring" and "intent toward the receiver" are at the core of the concept. Thus, the scales try to tap into concepts such as understanding, empathy, and responsiveness (McCroskey & Teven, 1999).

This way of understanding goodwill is quite close to its classical roots. In *Rhetoric,* Aristotle does not elaborate much on the meaning of goodwill, and the meaning of the term is vague (C. R. Smith, 2004). In Book 1 of *Nicomachean Ethics*, however, Aristotle gives a more precise description of the concept. Here Aristotle describes goodwill as something other than friendship, since friendship is reciprocal, while goodwill can be seen as the beginning of a friendship. Hence, goodwill is closely related to the notion of doing something for others without explicitly wishing for anything in return (C. R. Smith, 2004). Aristotle's distinction between friendship and goodwill is interesting because it closely mirrors the gray zone lobbyists work within when they assume the role of "the committed partner" or "the helpful professional" (Naurin, 2007; Nothhaft, 2017). Both lobbyists and politicians would shy away from describing their relationships as friendship because that would bring up connotations of corruption and quid pro quo. Thus, goodwill strategies can be effective for lobbyists seeking to create identification with politicians without crossing into the territory of friendship and camaraderie.

Ethos and the situational problem

There are considerable methodological challenges in identifying the dimensions of ethos. According to Cronkhite and Liska (1976), "[T]he search for a generalized definition of credibility by these means [factor analysis] is likely to be as costly and fruitless as the search for the Holy Grail" (p. 92). The problem connects with the arbitrary nature of the selection of the scales, the statistical procedures that generate the scales, and the lack of contextual variables that might affect the outcome.

This speaks to a larger debate on the possibility of generating general principles of persuasion or whether rhetorical situations and audiences are unique and should be treated as such (Kjeldsen, 2006). In a meta-study of five decades of research on source credibility, Pornpitakpan (2004) concludes, "[I]t is rare that there are unanimous findings from studies dealing with the same independent variables" (p. 267). The only general finding is the rather commonsensical insight that "a high-credibility source is more persuasive than is a low-credibility source in both changing attitudes and gaining behavioral compliance" (p. 266). The credibility scales also seemed to adapt to the object of study. In marketing studies and social psychology, the goodwill dimension is never used but replaced with dimensions such as "attractiveness" or "homophily" (Ismagilova et al., 2020; Pornpitakpan, 2004). Therefore, in his review of the persuasion literature, O'Keefe (2015) concludes, "[T]he particular judgments of credibility may vary from circumstance to

circumstance. … It may be useful to develop credibility assessments tailored to specific situations" (p. 150). Consequently, there is no reason to assume that we can obtain a general theory of credibility, but that researchers must be aware that context affects what is deemed credible.

In this study, I will use McCroskey and Teven (1999) and their three-dimensional operationalization of ethos as a springboard for a qualitative analysis of how lobbyists work to construct their ethos in their meetings with politicians. Given the situational character of ethos, the strategies lobbyists use to build their ethos could differ from the scales suggested by McCroskey and Teven (1999). Thus, the scales will be used as a starting point for developing a qualitative coding scheme that captures the ethos strategies of lobbyists. I assume that the dimensions of ethos are both separate and mutually dependent. A lobbyist might portray himself or herself as skilled in the policy field he or she is trying to influence, but if he or she contacts politicians at the wrong moment and acts rude and self-centered, character and goodwill are damaged. The particular challenge for lobbyists is that they need to connect different forms of expertise, such as policy expertise, process expertise, and people expertise (Godwin et al., 2012). How the dimensions of ethos connect will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 4, in which I examine more closely how lobbyists working toward the SCEE construct and strengthen their ethos.

Ethos and its relationship to logos and pathos

As a three-dimensional concept based on the rhetors' competence, character, and goodwill, ethos illustrates the complexity whereby the assorted dimensions of the concept fulfill different communicative functions. Kinneavy and Warschauer (1994) argue that, in ethos, there is a complex interrelationship between the speaker, hearer, and the subject where "*arête* refers to the speaker, *eunoia* to the audience, and *phronesis* to the subject matter" (p. 179). Furthermore, Baumlin and Scisco (2018) emphasize that "phronesis refers to the logos-aspect of ethos, eunoia to the pathos-aspect, and arête to ethos or ´moral character´ per se" (p. 10). These distinctions are interesting and show why ethos is such a powerful rhetorical tool that opens up several possibilities for the rhetor. Hence, when a lobbyist wants to build competence, he or she can build on the logos arguments of the case, itself, while character arguments can be used to enhance their ethos as a speaker. Goodwill strategies, though, open up the possibility of connecting with the audience through empathy and understanding.

In lobbying research, the rhetoric of lobbyists has been described as "the rhetoric of the policy wonk" and that "lobbyists are pretty dull most of the time" (Baumgartner et al., 2009, p. 135). This is true in that lobbyists use a great deal of time to gather policy expertise and package this in rather dry prose (Esterling, 2009; Nownes & Newmark, 2016). Goodwill strategies, however, allow for getting in touch with and understanding the emotions of their audience through empathy and responsiveness. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 4, this dimension of ethos opens up a whole new array of rhetorical strategies that are underexplored in studies of lobbying, such as caring, giving praise and recognition, and not being self-interested. Herein also lies ethos's ability to create identification because "the rhetor's ethos is built out of a speaker–audience interaction" (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018, p. 10).

Kairos, context, and the rhetorical situation

As mentioned in the discussion above, rhetoric does not provide any general guidelines or universal recipes for achieving persuasive goals. Rhetoric always plays out in a context, and the context affects what is persuasive. The contextual dimension of rhetoric permeates the work of Kenneth Burke and Lloyd Bitzer, the two modern rhetorical scholars central to this study. Bitzer and Burke are both part of part of the "sociological" or "situational" tradition within rhetorical studies (Herrick, 2017). Kinneavy (1990) has noted that "one of the most overpowering concepts in contemporary rhetoric … is the notion that a piece of discourse must be judged against the cultural and situational contexts in which it was produced and in which it is being interpreted" (p. 192). As discussed above, Burke's concept of identification is closely connected to the rhetors' ability to analyze the context of the situation and perceive the situation from the perspective of the receiver.

Bitzer's contribution to rhetorical theory will be discussed later in this section. First, though, I will turn my attention to *kairos*, the concept the ancient rhetoricians devised for evaluating how context influenced rhetoric. Kairos is one of the most elusive concepts in rhetorical theory; its popularity has waxed and waned in the history of rhetoric. It is often translated in English as "the right time," "occasion," "opportune," "the fitting," "appropriate," "arising circumstances," and "opportunity" (Sloane, 2001, p. 28). Therefore, Kinneavy (1986) has defined *kairos* as "the right or opportune times to do something, or right measure in doing something" (p. 80). Consequently, kairos deals with the situational context of rhetoric.

In classical rhetoric, the concept of kairos has been approached in several ways. Kinneavy and Eskin (2000) argue that in Aristotle's seminal work *On Rhetoric*, every section utilizes the notion of kairos "in one form or another" (p. 442). Furthermore, kairos is operative in each of the three kinds of rhetoric—legal, deliberative, and epideictic—and is relevant to the various kinds of rhetorical proofs. An influential ancient theorist like Isocrates is said to have given "primacy to the kairic dimensions of any rhetorical act," emphasizing context (Sipiora, 2002, p. 8).

Aristotle, Isocrates, and other ancient rhetoricians approached kairos in various ways. Kairos has had several meanings, including being associated with symmetry, propriety, occasion, fitness, and decorum, to mention a few. Indeed, this ambiguous character of the term has been celebrated by some authors as being productive and essential to theoretical innovations in rhetoric (Sloane, 2001; Trapani & Maldonado, 2018).

Kairos is often seen in contrast with chronos, the concept of endless time just floating away. Kairos then becomes the moment when time is punctured and a moment of opportunity occurs (Kjeldsen, 2014; J. E. Smith, 1986). J. E. Smith (1986) describes kairos and chronos as two sides of the same coin, where kairos is the qualitative dimension of time, while chronos is the quantitative dimension. Hence, kairotic time is "a season when something appropriately happens that cannot happen just ´anytime´… to a time that marks an opportunity that may not recur" (p. 4). When we speak about chronos, the relevant questions are "How old?," "How fast?," or "How frequent?," while kairos addresses questions such as "When?" or "What is it time for?"

The several overlapping meanings of kairos have been summarized by Kjeldsen (2014), who argues that kairos has at least three dimensions. First, kairos has a temporal dimension. The sudden puncturing of chronos opens a time to act, and the rhetor needs to seize the moment before it disappears again. Second, kairos has a spatial dimension; there is a rhetorical space or a "problem space" that opens up that can be occupied by the rhetor to obtain an advantage. Third, there is a dimension of the proper measure. Even though an opportunity for the rhetor opens up, success depends on "what we say and how we say it" (Kjeldsen, 2014, p. 250).

Kairos, as the proper measure or what is appropriate, connects with the idea of decorum in which "speech will not be effective unless it fits in with the characteristic features of the speaker, subject, audience, occasion, or medium" (Sloane, 2001, p. 199). Cicero once said, "[I]n oration, nothing is harder than to determine what is appropriate" (Cicero, Trans. 1949). Unlike Bitzer's

fitting response, decorum is also about unleashing the creative potential of the rhetor. Consequently, decorum speaks to the rhetor's ability to create identification by adapting to the needs of the receiver by showing that "you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 55). Thus, while the spatial dimension of kairos is concerned with identifying the correct "problem space" and the potential room for rhetorical action, the proper measure is about finding the right words and arguments that can fill this void.

The temporal dimension and the dimension of proper measure correspond with an understanding of kairos as the opportune time to do something and find the right measure (Kinneavy, 1986, 2002; Kinneavy & Eskin, 2000). The spatial dimension, however, goes back to the original Greek uses of kairos in archery and weaving, referring to an "opening thread through which a weapon could find its way or through which a woof-thread could be shot through the warp" (Kjeldsen, 2014, p. 249). C. R. Miller (1992) compares this understanding of kairos to the way researchers search for a research gap to be filled when they are writing scientific articles. The good researcher reviews the literature, identifies a problem that has not been addressed, and creates an opening for promoting new research.

The rhetorical situation

Kairos is an ancient concept, and many scholars posit Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation as a modern theory of kairos (Kjeldsen, 2014). Before I delve into the similarities and differences between kairos and the rhetorical situation, it is necessary to present Bitzer's theory in more detail.

Bitzer (1968) defined a *rhetorical situation* as follows:

> [A] rhetorical situation may be defined as a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence that can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence. (p. 6)

Therefore, a rhetorical situation has three defining components: exigence, audience, and constraints. The first element, exigence, is "an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 6). However, not every problem is an exigence. Death, natural disasters, and the change of seasons are exigencies, but they cannot be changed. Hence, to be rhetorical, exigence must be able

to be changed or modified by the assistance of rhetoric. For an environmental lobbyist, increasing greenhouse gas emissions (CHG) is an exigence or a pressing problem that threatens human life on earth. Rhetoric can help lobbyists introduce legislation that will reduce GHG emissions. This might help reduce problems, but in politics, many issues are never fully resolved and tend to recur. According to Jasinski (2001), "[M]ost rhetorical scholars believe that rhetorical exigencies are resolved through deliberation and action; rarely (if ever) are they solved or eliminated in a final sense" (p. 515).

In a later article, Bitzer (1980) emphasized that exigencies are modified by human interests. Thus, "a rhetorical exigence consists of a factual condition plus a relation to some interest.… An exigence exists when a factual condition and an interest are joined" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 28). This nuance is important because, in lobbying, pressing problems are always tied to interests and there is often disagreement about how the problem should be perceived and what an appropriate solution is. Hence, "persons with competing interests may disagree on the actuality of an exigence even when they perceive almost the same facts" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 44). An environmental lobbyist arguing for increased reductions in Norwegian CHG emissions would probably not be challenged on the numbers but could be met with arguments that reducing national GHG emissions might be too costly and that Norway instead should contribute to global reductions in CHG emissions by investing in other countries. Hence, politicians do not dispute the lobbyists' fact that they just have a different view of the exigency and its solutions. Consequently, to succeed, lobbyists should adapt to the needs of the audience and make the audience's exigence lobbyists' exigence and the audience's constraints the lobbyists' own constraints (Garret & Xiao, 1993).

The second element of a rhetorical situation is the audience. According to Bitzer, a rhetorical audience must meet two conditions. They must be "capable of being influenced" and function as "mediators of change" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 8). In the case of lobbying, politicians are the obvious audience, but the lobbyist can also resort to influencing public opinion to put pressure on politicians (Binderkrantz, 2008). Even though lobbyists work on the assumption that politicians can be influenced, this is not always the case. Some studies of lobbying reveal that many lobbying campaigns fail because of "the power of the status quo" (Baumgartner et al., 2009). The challenge is that the interests of the wealthy and powerful are built into the status quo. Therefore, any change of the status quo is likely to be met with fierce resistance.

The third element of the rhetorical situation is the constraints, which are circumstances that give shape to the rhetors' ability to respond to an exigence. A much-quoted passage from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* by Karl Marx (2008) illustrates the dilemma a rhetor faces with the constraints: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past" (p. 15). Thus, an oil lobbyist must accept the increased international demands for reductions in GHG emissions as a constraint and use rhetoric to illustrate that he or she takes this problem seriously. Traditionally, the Norwegian oil industry has resolved this constraint by arguing that its production is sustainable since it strives to cut emissions, that there is no realistic alternative to oil, and that Norwegian production is less polluting than oil production elsewhere (Ihlen, 2011).

According to Bitzer (1968), constraints are "made up of persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence" (p. 8). In politics, the arguments of the opposition are typical constraints that could hamper any policy initiative (Jasinski, 2001). Constraints are among the most difficult components of the rhetorical situation to define, since they involve so many things (Grant-Davie, 1997). Furthermore, to evaluate the arguments a rhetor uses, "the critic needs to determine the constraint of both the speakers and the hearers" (A. B. Miller, 1972, p. 117). Hence, to analyze the rhetorical situation of the lobbying meeting with SCEE in Chapter 5, there is a need to discern what kind of constraints the lobbyists struggle with, but also to pay attention to the constraints of the politicians they are trying to influence.

In summary, exigence, audience, and constraints are the three elements that constitute the rhetorical situation. Together, these elements influence what constitutes a fitting response. According to Bitzer (1968) every situation has a fitting response, but whether the rhetor can devise such a response depends on the rhetor's ability to read the rhetorical situation accurately.

Bitzer's theory has spawned much debate. I will argue that there are two major theoretical challenges with Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation, which I label "the perception problem" and "the agency problem." Regarding the "the perception problem," a central weakness with Bitzer's theory is the assumption that the exigence of a rhetorical situation is a kind of objective fact that is shared by both the audience and the rhetor (A. B. Miller, 1972). Most rhetorical situations do not have a "controlling" exigency. However, those who participate in the

situation can have disparate perceptions of what the exigency is, and the rhetor can have limited control over how the audience perceives the exigency. Hence, an analysis of a rhetorical situation should adhere to the principle of *rhetorical perspectivism* (Cherwitz & Hikins, 1983), which I presented earlier in this chapter, and explore the perspective of both the rhetor and the audience "to form a more complete view of the object of inquiry" (p. 266).

"The agency problem" deals with the heaviest critique of Bitzer's epistemological position, which several critics consider deterministic (Jasinski, 2001; Kjeldsen, 2006). Therefore, Bitzer (1968) leaves little room for individual rhetorical creativity because "the situation controls the rhetorical response in the same sense that the question controls the answer, and the problem controls the solution. Not the rhetor and not persuasive intent, but the situation is the source and ground of rhetorical activity" (p. 4). In the debate between rhetorical objectivism and rhetorical subjectivism explored earlier in this chapter, Bitzer presented himself as an objectivist.

Bitzer's claim that the rhetorical situation is an "objective" phenomenon that exists independent from human perception has been challenged by many scholars (Brinton, 1981; Consigny, 1974; Lucaites, Condit, & Caudill, 1999). The strongest objections to this perspective came from Vatz (1973), who argued that a rhetorical situation cannot have a nature that is independent from the interpretation of the situation and the rhetoric that created the situation. Thus, rhetors not only respond to situations, but also they help to create and define situations (Jasinski, 2001). However, Consigny (1974) argues that these two perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Rhetoric can both create and respond to situations. However, Trapani and Maldonado (2018) are probably right in their assessment that "no singular framing would satiate the ambitions of the discipline, nor does an ideal kairotic equilibrium between rhetorical actors and their conditions of possibility exist" (p. 279).

The debate between Bitzer and Vatz is at its core about the role of rhetorical agency. The question is whether there is room in a rhetorical situation for rhetorical creativity and invention, or if the structural constraints of the situation determine the response. *Rhetorical agency* is a contested concept in rhetorical theory and can be defined as "the relative capacity of speech to intervene and effect change" (Hoff-Clausen, 2018, p. 257). The difficult question is to determine how much room for agency there is, and "rhetorical agency focuses on the constellation of individual and structural aspects that in the interaction between the speaking agent and the situational conditions are relevant for rhetorical meaning making and action" (Villadsen, 2008, p. 27). In the classical

humanist version of rhetoric, the rhetor is given a considerable capacity for inducing change, while in the posthumanist understanding of agency, humans are generally "not assumed to be free, choice driven, and fairly stable subjects" (Hoff-Clausen, 2018, p. 290). This study leans on a more dialectical understanding of rhetorical agency, where the effect of rhetoric always depends on the circumstances and events (Campbell, 2005). Therefore, I will explore the role of rhetorical agency in a rhetorical situation through the concept of kairos, and I will argue that the room for rhetorical agency can be found in the interaction between the constraints of the rhetorical situation and its kairotic possibilities.

Kairos and agency in the rhetorical situation

As already mentioned, Bitzer's theory is sometimes called a modern version of kairos, and the two theories are intertwined. There is a similarity in that both in the notion of kairos and the theory of the rhetorical situation, "a rhetorical space opens up and creates a rhetorical situation" (Kjeldsen, 2014, p. 251). However, they differ in their approaches to the role of agency and the role of predictability in rhetoric.

Regarding agency, "the kairotic perspective emphasizes the openness and opportunities that such rhetorical spaces offer a speaker, while the perspective of the rhetorical situation emphasizes the exigencies and constraints of such spaces" (Kjeldsen, 2014, p. 251).
Furthermore, the notion of kairos enhances the role of unpredictability in rhetoric, while the theory of the rhetorical situation enhances the role of planned or fitting responses. In its most extreme interpretation, the notion of kairos stresses the uniqueness and unpredictability of every rhetorical situation, which causes great demands on the rhetors' ability to adapt and be creative. Thus, "rhetorical theory cannot cast its net over unforeseen, unpredictable, and uncontrollable moments. In a sense, then, every rhetorical act becomes a reinvention of theory as well as of the discourse itself" (Sipiora, 2002, p. 6). From this perspective, the notion of kairos highlights the role of rhetorical agency in shaping a response to a rhetorical situation.

In a later article, Bitzer (1980) claimed that a rhetorical situation moves through four stages: origin and development, maturity, deterioration, and disintegration. Kjeldsen (2014) has equated these phases with the classical description of the phases of chronos. Hence, the phase of maturity is the *kairotic moment.* This points to another crucial difference between kairos and rhetorical situations. While a rhetorical situation can be a stable condition that lasts a long time, the kairotic moment is a swift, fleeting moment where a rhetorical possibility appears and then disappears

again. When we tie the rhetorical situation to the notion of kairos, it is evident that the rhetorical situation is not only driven by constraints but also gives the rhetor opportunities to exploit the context of the situation (Andersen, 1997; Ihlen, 2011; Kjeldsen, 2014). Therefore, the relationship between agency and context is dynamic and should be explored empirically without resorting to determinism on the one hand or overstating the rhetors' ability to shape the discourse on the other hand.

In summary, a rhetorical situation has both opportunities and constraints, and the notion of kairos is key to understanding how the rhetor can adapt to these constraints but simultaneously use these constraints as opportunities to create a fitting response. Furthermore, the three dimensions of kairos can help us untangle how a rhetor deals with these opportunities and constraints in a concrete rhetorical situation.

Lobbying, kairos, and the rhetorical situation

Politics has a strong kairotic component in that politicians are constantly searching for opportune moments to say or do something (Kingdon, 1984/2011). Simultaneously, a crisis and unexpected events can throw them off course. In a similar vein, when historians are searching for explanations, "the dynamic is found in those individuals and movements which seek to identify the opportunity in some critical juncture of history and seize it in the form of transformatory action" (J. E. Smith, 1986, p. 15). Thus, the debate on rhetorical agency has many similarities to the debate on individual agency in history (Carr, 2018).

Similarly, lobbyists who seek to influence the policy process meet challenges related to all three dimensions of kairos described above. Regarding the temporal dimension, the lobbyist must discern when decisions are made and at what moment it is most important to try to influence the decision. Second, they must discern what is possible to achieve. What is the room for political maneuvering on the issue? This relates to the spatial dimension of kairos, where the lobbyist must discern "the problem space" and what kinds of political solutions are likely to succeed. Finally, they must determine what constitutes an appropriate or fitting message. This refers to the dimension of the proper measure. What kinds of arguments are likely to make an impression on the decision makers, and what kind of arguments are likely not to work?

The complexities of figuring out the spatial and temporal elements of kairos have many commonalities with theories of the policy process. According to Sabatier (1999), the policy process "involves an extremely complex set of interacting elements over time" (p. 3). As mentioned in the previous chapter, among the most influential theories here is Kingdon (1984/2011) theory of policy streams. According to Kingdon, the making of public policy is influenced by three unrelated "streams," which he calls the *problem stream*, the *policy stream*, and the *political stream*. The problem stream consists of the political problems floating around on the political agenda. The policy stream consists of the alternative political solutions that interest groups and public experts are trying to tie to the problem stream. Finally, the political stream is where elections are won and lost and public opinion on issues waxes and wanes. Political change occurs when the three streams are joined in a "window of opportunity" (Sabatier, 1991). Like a surfer waiting for the big wave, one must be prepared to get on the board before the window of opportunity closes (C. Garsten et al., 2015; Kingdon, 1984/2011).

The challenge for the lobbyist is that all the above-mentioned dimensions of kairos are affected by constraints over which the lobbyist has limited influence. Political parties already have party programs or have agreed to government platforms that constrain the political options of lobbyists. Therefore, even though lobbyists can deliver the right message at the right time, they must consider these constraints when they craft their appeals. Thus, the challenge for lobbyists is to bring their own constraints and the constraints of the politicians into agreement. By "knowing his [sic] own constraints, he can, by determining the constraints of his hearers, calculate the options available to him in adapting his conceptualizations to the thinking of his hearers" (A. B. Miller, 1972, p. 117).

The complicated relationship between the constraints and the opportunities in a rhetorical situation will be explored in detail in Chapter 5, where I will investigate more closely how lobbyists working toward the SCEE identify constraints and use the various dimensions of kairos to devise a fitting response.

Topos, lobbying, and the search for common ground

While ethos and kairos deal with the character of the rhetor and the timing of appeals, *topos* are schema for generating and classifying arguments: useful in inventing or

discovering arguments that are likely to appeal to particular audiences" (Leichty, 2018, p. 127). The theory of topos stems from ancient rhetoric (Greek plural topoi). In Latin rhetoric, the term means "commonplaces" (Latin locus, plural loci). Both notions are devised as helpful when a rhetor wants to structure arguments (Clark & Delia, 1979; C. R. Miller, 2000; Söderberg, 2012; Wallace, 1972). Hence, topos exploits the way the human mind works in that we always try to categorize and generalize when we think about topics (Corbett & Connors, 1999).

Topos is a disputed term in rhetorical theory, and we can find several meanings of the concept among classical rhetorical scholars (Gabrielsen, 2008; Kjeldsen, 2006). The most common understanding is that topics are a more general method for finding arguments (Herrick, 2017). According to Kjeldsen (2006), Quintilian compares the search for arguments with hunting and argues that a skilled hunter would probably have greater success in finding the right places where the prey is hiding. Thus, finding the right arguments is a process that requires a great deal of skill and training. Cicero and Quintilian argued that a skillful speaker needs a broad education because it would provide the best starting point for inventing arguments on a broad range of subjects.

Aristotle separates common topics from special topics. The special topics are directly tied to the three basic species of rhetoric: deliberative (political), epideictic (ceremonial), and forensic (judicial; (Leichty, 2018). These topics are meant to help the rhetor structure arguments when addressing a specific topic. Therefore, the work of Aristotle is filled with a detailed list of topics that mirrors the discursive culture of ancient Greece. For example, if the rhetor wants to address war, Aristotle advises first choosing between focusing on the strength of the army, the potential strength of the army, its quality, or its history (Gabrielsen, 2008). Consequently, special topics can give us valuable information about what kinds of arguments and topics are salient and important in a political system at a given time.

Common topics are not limited to a specific area and can be used on any subject. The main purpose here is not to find arguments but to make inferences and logical connections. Thus, the common topics play on our human desire to define, compare, and seek similarities and differences (Corbett & Connors, 1999). Therefore, Gabrielsen (2008) points out that the topics have a dual nature. They are devices for inventing arguments, but they are also devices for drawing conclusions and inferences.

Four understandings of topics

The Aristotelian separation between common topics and special topics has been challenged by Gabrielsen (2008), who distinguishes between four understandings of topics. The topics can be a heuristic for locating arguments, a search for collective arguments or commonplaces, a way of studying the common values and viewpoints in a society, or different forms of inference. While the topics as a heuristic and the topics as a form of inference are like the Aristotelian separation between special topics and common topics, the topics as commonplaces and topics as a way of studying common values add new dimensions to the concept. This study follows Gabrielsen (2008) typology, and in the following, I will elaborate on his four understandings of the topics.

First, topics can be understood as heuristics for locating and inventing relevant arguments. This is similar to what Aristoteles labeled *special topics* and can be lists of potential facts that are relevant to give a thorough examination of a topic (Gabrielsen, 2008). Hence, these lists of topics work as mental maps whereby the rhetor can hunt for relevant arguments (Kjeldsen, 2006). Second, the topics can be understood as the search for commonplaces, or *loci communes*, which are ways of arguing that are so common and frequently used that they can be invoked in all types of situations. This way of understanding topics was particularly popular in the Renaissance and resulted in several so-called commonplace books in which a rhetor could find a host of acceptable opinions, quotes, and examples that could be reused in disparate situations (Gabrielsen, 2008). A rhetor who runs out of specific content can always seek refuge in commonplaces.

Commonplaces are particularly suited to creating identification because the rhetor uses the typical opinions and values of the audience as the starting point for locating arguments (Gabrielsen, 2008). According to Burke (1950/1969), commonplaces can "be a survey of things that people generally consider persuasive, and of methods that have persuasive effects" (p. 56). Furthermore, Cicero (Trans. 1949) argued that the topics were a tool for creating consensus because they found the arguments that the audience had in common. Therefore, it makes sense to connect commonplaces to the strategy I have labeled "identification through common ground." Lobbyists seeking common ground must identify topics they think will resonate with politicians.

Notably, understanding topics as a heuristic for locating arguments or using commonplaces is closely tied to acute problems of information storage in an oral culture. Thus, Ong (1967) argued that ancient rhetoricians had to "operate verbally in formulas and formulaic modes of expression combined with a tendency to group material for memory" (p. 84). The understanding of topics as

a heuristic or commonplace is also closely tied to the third understanding of topics. Its focus is not so much on the process of argumentation, itself, but what the choice of topics tells us about society generally. Gabrielsen labels this understanding of topics *cognitive*. Gabrielsen (2008) argues that studying topics can tell us something about what kinds of arguments and viewpoints are taken for granted in a society. Hence, the topics can reveal the *doxa*, understood as the opinions and common beliefs in a society (Jasinski, 2001). Gabrielsen (2008) wants to move scholarship on topics in a more constructivist direction and rehabilitate topics as an inventive discipline in rhetoric.

The fourth conceptualization of topics as various forms of inference is similar to what Aristotle labeled *common topics*. Common topics are not limited to a specific area and can be used on any subject. The main purpose here is not to find arguments but to make inferences and logical connections. Therefore, the common topics play on our human desire to define, compare, and search for similarities and differences (Corbett & Connors, 1999).

Gabrielsen's (2008) topical typology has been criticized by Kjeldsen (2007). Gabrielsen's (2008) aim is to move scholarship on topics in a more constructivist direction. However, it is unclear what Gabrielsen really refers to when he calls his method "constructivist" and how his approach to rhetoric differs from other scholars who also perceive communication as constructionist or constitutive. Thus, according to Kjeldsen (2007), Gabrielsen (2008) fails to engage properly with those rhetorical scholars who have tried the same, such as the sophists, Bitzer (1968), or Charland (1987). His version of constructivism remains theoretically underdeveloped. Furthermore, Kjeldsen (2007) emphasizes that even Aristotle understood topics as belonging to the inventio phase of rhetoric and acknowledged the persuasive and intentional character of topics. Consequently, Gabrielsen's (2008) topical typology is less original and closer to the classical understanding of the concept than he acknowledges and leans heavily on existing theories on topics.

As mentioned, the topic is a multi-faceted phenomenon, and there is no scholarly consensus on how the concept should be understood and studied (Leichty, 2018). The advantage of Gabrielsen's (2008) typology is that it is a fruitful starting point for the topical analysis of empirical material. Consequently, in this study, the three first understandings of topics as a heuristic, commonplaces, and the way of analyzing doxa in a society will be central. These three understandings of topics will be discussed in Chapter 6, where I look closer at how lobbyists construct public interest

arguments. I will describe this process as a hunt for commonplaces since a skilled lobbyist will search for convincing arguments based on what kinds of arguments he or she from experience knows are likely to make an impression on politicians. Simultaneously, the public interest is a flexible concept that opens up several understandings of how the public interest can be realized. Thus, the public interest topos is also a heuristic lobbyists use to locate public interest arguments that are relevant and fitting (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020). Furthermore, I ask how politicians evaluate the public interest claims that lobbyists make. To give a thorough answer to these questions, we need a more elaborate understanding of the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the public interest concept.

Topos and the public interest

As mentioned in the introduction, a general finding in the academic and trade literature on lobbying is the frequent appeals lobbyists make to the public interest (Nicolle, 2019; Uhre & Rommetvedt, 2019). In *A Rhetoric of Motives,* Burke is keenly aware of the challenges we face when trying to align our private interests with those of the society: "A man who identifies his private ambitions with the good of the community may be partly justified, partly unjustified. He may be using a mere pretext to gain individual advantage at the public expense; yet he may be quite sincere, or even may willingly make sacrifices on behalf of such identification" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. xiii).

Burke's statement illustrates many major challenges with the public interest as a concept. Whose interest are we talking about, and how shall we evaluate interest groups who claim that they work for the public interest? Are there one or several public interests? How can the receiver of the message discern between self-serving claims dressed in public-interest rhetoric and public-interest claims that are sincere?

To evaluate how the public interest is communicatively constructed and evaluated by the receiver, we need a more thorough understanding of the concept. The idea of the public interest is central to the history of political philosophy, sometimes under names such as "the common good," "public good," or "general welfare" (Bitonti, 2019; Douglass, 1980; Simm, 2011). Consequently, public interest has been associated with disparate schools of thought. According to Zarecor (1959), "[It] would be perfectly plausible to interpret the history of political theory as a series of attempts to formulate the best possible method of serving the public interest" (Zarecor, 1959, p. 277). Consequently, the public interest goes to the core of what politics is all about and deals with what

kinds of arguments or ways of reasoning are legitimate when making decisions on a societal level. Hence, the concept has proven to be frustrating for researchers because it evades a clear definition and is difficult to measure empirically (Bozeman, 2007; Flathman, 1966; Simm, 2011; Sorauf, 1957).

In antiquity, the public interest was understood as a "natural God-given goal for the society and politics within" (Simm, 2011, p. 555). Furthermore, the public interest or common good was "considered to be of higher value than the individual good, but it was also assumed that in most cases the two coincided" (Simm, 2011, p. 555). Hence, for thinkers like Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates, the common good was objective and possible to identify through debate and rational thinking. Once one had figured out the common good, there was no fundamental opposition between what was good for society and what was good for the individual. This view of the public interest is sometimes described as the *unitary vision of the public interest* and was the dominant understanding of the concept in antiquity and the Middle Ages (Held, 1970). However, toward the end of the Middle Ages, the public interest became associated with the increasingly selfish and paternalistic interests of the monarchies. Hence, the concept of "interests" became central to the liberal and democratic revolt in Europe, and the concept was closely related to individual interests (Douglass, 1980). Therefore, the public interest can be seen as an innovation of liberalism, where individual interests were recognized and could sometimes be at odds with the interests of the state (Simm, 2011).

The modern debate on the concept of the public interest reached a high point in political theory and political science in the 1950s and was closely related to debates on how power was dispersed in U.S. democracy (Bitonti, 2019; Bozeman, 2007). In particular, political scientists attacked the ambiguity, inconsistency, and immeasurability of the concept and dismissed it as both a "childish myth" (Schubert, 1961, p. 348) and "fables" (Sorauf, 1957, p. 638). Furthermore, as the pluralist school won hegemony within the study of interest groups, the public interest was perceived as the natural outcome of the process of group struggles (Bozeman, 2007). Consequently, the public interest was reduced to "political Darwinism that naively presumes that the public interest will automatically be served if all men pursue their own interests" (Sorauf, 1957, p. 630).

A typology of the public interest

Even though the public interest as a concept has been heavily critiqued, there is little reason to leave the concept in the study of politics. Many broad political concepts that capture our

imagination, such as democracy, liberalism, or equality, are often hard to define and measure (Bozeman, 2007). Furthermore, the struggle to understand the public interest is a real-world problem in that it is frequently referred to by both politicians and lobbyists. A recent study of 58 Norwegian organizations showed that 57 of them made some kind of public interest claim when asked about how they argued for their lobbying positions in meetings with decision makers (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020). Accordingly, one may agree with Simm (2011, p. 555) that this versatility is an advantage for the scholarship on the public interest since "perhaps it is this openness to reinterpretation that has secured the concept its longevity and continued usefulness for thousands of years."

Several attempts have been made to create typologies of the conceptualizations of the public interest (Bozeman, 2007; Cochran, 1974; Johnston, 2017; Sorauf, 1957). This study follows a typology developed by Bitonti (2019), who separates between five ideal−typical conceptualizations of the public interest. These can be labeled as the *formal*, *substantive*, *realist*, *aggregative*, and *procedural conceptualizations* of the public interest (see Table 2.2). Bitonti's (2019) typology has many similarities with earlier typologies, such as Cochran (1974) and Bozeman (2007). However, this typology also reveals how conceptualizations of the public interest led to various visions of how a democracy should work and the role of lobbying.

The formal conceptualization of the public interest is quite similar to the medieval understanding of the concept, whereby the public interest is whatever the formal authority says it is. The substantive view, conversely, has a very precise and substantial idea of how the public interest should be understood. This kind of understanding is often connected to totalitarian philosophical systems such as Plato's idea of a republic led by philosophers or Marx's vision of a communist utopia (Bitonti, 2017, 2019). Walter Lippmann's (1955) classical definition of the *public interest* as "what men would choose if they saw clearly, thought rationally, acted disinterestedly and benevolently" (p. 50) relates to this kind of thinking. According to Lippman, most people were so prone to misconceptualizations and bias that they could not govern themselves (Bozeman, 2007). Thus, both the formal and substantive views of the public have potentially illiberal consequences.

The realist, aggregative, and procedural view of the public interest is closely related to the modern debates of the public interest discussed above. In the realist understanding, the public interest does not exist. The only thing that exists is the clash between interests that claim to act in the name of the public interest. As mentioned above, this understanding closely relates to modern political

science, where several scholars have argued that it is the public interest that is "an empty vessel" and can be best understood as a rhetorical label to strengthen one's position in an ongoing power struggle (Cochran, 1974; Schubert, 1961; Sorauf, 1957). Consequently, the public interest can be seen as a rhetorical tool that lobbyists employ to advance their case.

The aggregative and procedural conceptualizations of the public interest are closely connected to different visions of liberal democracy. In both perspectives, the public interest is relativist in that the public interest grows out of the peaceful power struggle between groups. Hence, there can be several public interests, and the idea of what is in the public interest can change. In the aggregative view, however, more weight is put on the democratic framework, and the public interest is represented by the "rules of the game" (Bitonti, 2019). This understanding of the public interest is close to political thinkers such as Karl Popper and John Rawls. According to Rawls (2005), "[P]olitical liberalism … does not try to fix public reason once and for all in the form of one favored political conceptualization of justice" (p. 451).

The procedural conceptualization of the public interest, however, places more emphasis on the procedure of deliberation, itself. Here, only those options that live up to the ideals of rational and unbiased deliberation can be said to be in the public interest (Habermas, 2015). Hence, the public interest must grow from a procedure of rational deliberation between rational actors, according to which the best option is a consensus of what is in the public interest.

Even though Habermas labeled his disagreement with Rawls as a family dispute, the procedural and aggregative visions of the public interest have crucial differences (Finlayson, 2019; Fjørtoft, 2007). In general, one could argue that the Habermasian vision of the public interest must live up to stricter ideals of discourse ethics in which the debate should be as open as possible and all interested parties should be listened to and heard. If participants are faced with superior arguments, they should adjust their opinions to accommodate the needs and interests of others (Habermas, 1996). Rawls, though, does not set up any ideal doctrine that public debate should live up to. Rather, Rawls sees the public interest as resulting from a free exchange of opinion, which can result in an overlapping consensus in which people can agree on principles of justice, even though they disagree on everything else (Finlayson, 2019). Although these concepts might seem abstract, Rawls and Habermas share a pragmatic vision of contributing to how both politicians and interest organizations reason when they justify their claims.

The Habermasian version of deliberative democracy has many similarities with John Dewey's political philosophy. According to Dewey, the public interest is best discovered through vigorous public debate in which alternatives would be tested and social consequences clarified. Unlike Lippman, Dewey had considerable confidence in citizens' ability to find their shared interests through democratic deliberation. In *Liberalism and Social Action*, Dewey ([1935] 2000) wrote that "of course there are conflicting interests; otherwise there would be no social problems. The problem under discussion is precisely how conflicting claims are to be settled in the interest of the widest possible contribution to the interests of all—, or at least the great majority" (p. 81). Consequently, the public interest "on any given policy question cannot be known prior to social inquiry and public discussion and debate" (Bozeman, 2007, p. 110). Based on Dewey's pragmatic idealism, Bozeman (2007) has suggested that the *public interest* can be defined as "the outcomes best serving the long-run survival and well-being of a social collective construed as a 'public'" (p. 12).

Table 2.2 Five conceptualizations of the public interest (Bitonti, 2019, p. 6)

Conceptualization	**Vision of public interest**	**Vision of democracy/Constitutional framework**	**Political thinkers**	**Vision of lobbying**
Formal	Whatever decision of formal authority	Compatible with any regime	Freud	Neutral or negative
Substantive	One absolute truth or ultimate good	Potentially illiberal	Plato, Marx, Lippman	Negative
Realist	Does not exist; only a rhetorical label	Value-free scientific approach	Sorauf, Schubert	Neutral
Aggregative	The liberal basic "rules of the game"	Open society, pluralist liberal democracy	Rawls, Popper,	Positive
Procedural	Fruit of rational discussion	Deliberative democracy	Habermas, Dewey	Negative

The public interest and visions of a liberal democracy

The five conceptualizations of the public interest presented in Table 2.2 lead to disparate consequences regarding the view of lobbying and democracy in general. The formal conceptualization can be compatible with any kind of political regime. However, it would probably be neutral or negative toward lobbying because the government would always know what is in the public interest and lobbying would be an irrelevant disturbance in this process (Bitonti, 2019). The realist version of the public interest would also be neutral toward lobbying since the public interest here does not exist. The only thing that exists is the fact that special interest groups lobby and claim to do things that are in the public interest (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998). The substantive version of the public interest, though, would be clearly negative toward lobbying, since a privileged elite can often know the public interest and absolute truths. Lobbying would here interfere and distort the process of governing a society under the common good. In its most extreme version, this view of the public interest could lead to a denial of democracy.

The aggregative version of the public interest, however, would consider lobbying a natural and welcome part of democracy, since the public interest can only result from a free exchange of opinions. This view is close to the pluralistic view often found in U.S. lobbying research. A typical example is Drutman and Mahoney (2017), who argue that when it comes to the democratic results of lobbying, "the best we can hope for is that out of a vibrant public discussion, only the most convincing and well-supported claims are left standing. Whatever the 'real reasons' might

be, what should matter ultimately is whether the policy can be justified on public interest grounds" (p. 307). The procedural view of the public interest, however, would be more negative toward lobbying because it distorts the ideal speech situation (Bitonti, 2019). Lobbying is not an academic seminar, and the question is whether lobbyists are interested in gathering all relevant information, leaving their own biases behind and seeking consensus on what is in the public interest.

The public interest and power

These broad conceptualizations of the public interest will be used as a frame of reference when I look closer at how lobbyists construct public interest claims and how politicians evaluate these claims in Chapter 6. In a way, these conceptualizations of the public interest are material topics that either politicians or lobbyists could lean on whey they are claiming to work in the public interest or evaluating claims of working in the public interest. It is not given what kind of conceptualization the public interest lobbyists would lean on in a particular lobbying campaign. Hence, when studying lobbying campaigns, "it will be easy to stumble into strategic uses of various conceptualizations of the Public Interest, depending on the actual speaker or on the context" (Bitonti, 2019, p. 7). Lobbyists can choose to use the substantive view to convince decision makers that their proposal is truly in the public interest. However, they could also turn their attention to the aggregative or procedural view if they want to influence the design of the policy process or a regulatory framework. Therefore, the flexibility and adaptability of the public interest concept makes it ripe for rhetorical creativity and strategic maneuvering.

Even though the typology gives a heuristic framework for the empirical study of the public interest, some issues remain unresolved. One overall challenge for all perspectives is the question of power and dominance. As mentioned, the substantive conceptualization and the realist conceptualization of the public interest runs the risk of simply accepting the dominating power structure as representative of the public interest. However, this critique is also valid from the aggregative and procedural perspectives. As Simm (2011) has pointed out, these perspectives seem to hold that "all we need is a fair procedure, and any result of a debate automatically produces the correct definition for the public interest. This is essentially a formal procedural method offering no guidance on a concept's normative content" (p. 561). Much of the contemporary critique of lobbying stems from the fact that lobbying produces unequal outcomes despite the existence of both procedural rules and a sound constitutional framework (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998; Gilens & Page, 2014; Lowery et al., 2015; Schattschneider, 1975). Consequently,

the risk of powerful groups bending the understanding of the public interest to their own advantage is always present.

Most definitions of *public interest* refer to some kind of majority interest. Nonetheless, it is unclear how this majority should be defined and measured. Douglass (1980) defines the *public interest* as what is good for the whole people, and "in a democratic society, this would mean what is excellent for the whole people as interpreted by the people" (p. 114). Furthermore, Cochran (1974) argues that the goal of the public interest is "the common good of the whole society" (p. 355). The question then remains: How should "the whole people" or "the whole society" be understood? Are we talking about majority preference, consensus, or a philosophical principle?

Simm's assertion about the normative aspect of the public interest points to the unavoidability of making claims of moral superiority when discussing the public interest. Thus, "the difficulties with the concept reflect the difficulties that we as individuals and members of society have in terms of the moral and political choices that we make" (Simm, 2011, p. 561). In a similar vein, Cochran (1974) argues that "a sound theory of the common good must consider it to be an end or a goal which is normatively defined" (p. 346). If an environmental lobbyist argues that a certain proposal should be pursued because it will reduce GHG emissions even though it is costly, he or she claims the moral superiority of environmental arguments. Similarly, a business lobbyist arguing against an environmental measure because it will reduce profits and result in job losses argues for the moral superiority of economic arguments. Thus, for all practical matters, most public interest claims made by lobbyists are substantive in that they include reference to moral superiority. Political solutions need to weigh assorted interests against each other, and eventually, a decision must be made regarding what kind of interest is superior.

Public interest dilemmas

In summary, the dilemmas of the public interest are unavoidable and center on how we define and understand both the terms *public* and *interest*. Hence, most claims of working in the public interest must answer two basic questions: Whose interest is morally superior, and what kind of public or majority will benefit from the proposal? The first dimension relates to the fact that, in politics in general and the policy area of energy and the environment in particular, public interest arguments will often be pitted against each other. A typical dilemma is that concern for the environment affects economic growth, or the development of renewable energy clashes with

nature conservation. Second, within a policy area, there might be disagreement regarding what political level or group would benefit from the proposal. In environmental policy, the question is often whether to reduce CHG emissions on the national level or the global level. If it is more expensive to reduce emissions on the national level than buying quotas, why should we choose costly national measures? The same dilemmas are evident in economic policy. When oil companies are developing new oilfields, increased tax income will be generated at the national level; simultaneously, there is a strong expectation of jobs and economic growth at the local level. However, forcing companies to implement costly local solutions can hamper the cost effectiveness of the projects.

The answer to these two questions is the core of what I label *public interest dilemmas*. In Chapter 6, I will not only depict how the type of organization affects what kind of public interest claims lobbyists make, but also underscore how organizations struggle with public interest dilemmas. Not only the type of organization, but also the party program and the minority−majority situation in the parliament influence how they solve these dilemmas and adapt their resolutions to the political parties against which they are lobbying.

Summary

In this chapter, I have developed a rhetorical framework for the empirical study of how lobbyists seek cooperation and mutual trust based on Kenneth Burke's theory of identification. Therefore, in this study, my focus is those rhetorical strategies that lobbyists use to create identification and common ground with politicians. Appeals to the interest organization's character (ethos) and locating shared beliefs among the audience (topos) are two rhetorical strategies that are very well suited to creating identification. However, attempts to identify with or persuade someone happen in a context; thus, I have introduced the concept of kairos and the rhetorical situation to obtain a better grasp of how lobbyists work with the timing of their arguments and how they work with the constraints they meet.

The concepts of ethos and its role in lobbying against the SCEE will be explored in Chapter 4 of the study, where I explore how lobbyists exploit all three dimensions of ethos in their attempts to identify with politicians. In Chapter 5, I will explore how lobbyists use kairos when they try to work out the opportunities and constraints of rhetorical situations. Finally, the question of how lobbyists find and invent their arguments will be analyzed in Chapter 6, with a special emphasis on how lobbyists invent public interest arguments and adapt these arguments to circumstances.

The overarching idea is that the concept of identification is a fruitful approach to studying how lobbyists communicate.

3 Methodology

The aim of this study is to analyze the rhetorical strategies lobbyists use to influence decision makers. In this chapter, I will first explain why I have chosen to focus on the politicians working with the Standing Committee of the Energy and the Environment and the interest organizations that are trying to influence them. Second, I argue that a mixed-methods design is the best way to illuminate the research questions of this study. This will be followed by a more detailed presentation of the qualitative and quantitative data that will be analyzed. Here, I will also address the challenges of conducting elite interviews and how my own political background is both an advantage and a weakness when conducting interviews and participant observation. Finally, the questions of the reliability and validity of the study are discussed.

Selection of actors and objects of study

As mentioned in the theory chapter, lobbying can happen in several arenas and affect disparate phases of the policy process (Godwin et al., 2012). In this thesis, the object of study is limited to the Standing Committee of the Energy and the Environment (SCCE) in the Norwegian parliament and the interest groups who work actively to lobby the members of this committee. This choice was made for three reasons. First, there is no lobbying register in Norway, but the committee system provides a formal framework for studying lobbying activity against Storting since it follows a structured policy process. The committee's responsibility is to prepare matters that will be deliberated by the Storting and all the issues they handle to follow a schedule to which both the SCEE members and the lobbyists relate. Thus, when I was conducting the semi-structured interviews and participant observation, it was easy for me to double check specific proposals or issues lobbyists debated with the committee and how these eventually ended up since "a recommendation of a committee generally determines the outcome of the measure in the Storting" (Stortinget, 2020).

Second, some of the research questions deal with how lobbyists decide their timing (kairos) and relate to lobbying as a rhetorical situation. Hence, studying the lobbying activity in a committee over a longer time span makes it possible to assess how lobbyists relate to changes in their rhetorical situations. Governments come and go, and members of the committee are replaced. Therefore, the study was designed to create variance in the rhetorical situations that lobbyists face.

Third, the policy area of energy and the environment has a high level of conflict and engagement, where some of the most influential lobbyists in the Norwegian political system clash (Klausen & Rommetvedt, 1996; Tjernshaugen, Aardal, & Gullberg, 2011). Consequently, the policy area of energy and the environment was a good case when the aim was to identify and describe the rhetorical strategies lobbyists use when they want to convince decision makers.

Why a mixed-methods design?

The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the rhetorical strategies that lobbyists employ when they want to convince decision makers. The reason for choosing a mixed-methods approach is both theoretical and empirical. In the theory chapter, I argued that the concept of identification can function as an expert concept for the study of the rhetoric of lobbyists. If we follow Burke´s lead, identification concerns how we use rhetoric in all kinds of situations to create shared meanings (Day, 1960). Thus, this calls for a broad understanding of the concept of identification, and one should be careful to limit the study of identification to one type of situation and one type of data. Furthermore, identification is a process that affects both the rhetor and the audience, and identification cannot succeed unless the rhetor is willing to adapt to the needs of the audience. Consequently, in the study of identification, it is important to understand the perspective of both the rhetor and the audience. This accords with the idea of rhetorical perspectivism, which I discussed in the theory chapter. Hence, like Nothhaft (2017), J. C. Scott (2015), and Grose et al. (2022), I argue for the need to surpass the study of scheduled meetings in parliament and assess more informal situations where lobbyists and politicians interact. In summary, there are good theoretical and empirical reasons for studying the communication of lobbyists from several perspectives simultaneously.

Mixed methods can be defined as "research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or a program of inquiry" (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2016, p. 4). The combination of quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed-methods design highlights the tension between induction and deduction. Qualitative methods are often connected to an inductive design in which the researcher tries to uncover new patterns. Meanwhile, deduction connects with quantitative methods by which the goal is to test hypotheses based on general rules or theoretical propositions (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The dichotomy between induction and deduction has been criticized for being too simplistic and giving an

unrealistic depiction of the research processes in the social sciences. Thus, abduction has been launched as an alternative; "abduction starts from an empirical basis, just like induction, but it does not reject theoretical preconceptualizations and is in that respect closer to deduction" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 4). Consequently, in an abductive research process, the empirical material is developed and refined. In addition, the theory is adjusted and developed during the research process.

Abduction is an appropriate label for the research process in this study and can be understood as a process with inductive and deductive elements. Correspondingly, this study is inspired by previous studies in both lobbying and rhetoric. Simultaneously, theoretical concepts and research questions have been refined and adjusted as new empirical data have been analyzed. This tension between induction and deduction is most pronounced in the coding process, which will be explained in more detail later in the chapter.

Data

Table 3.1 illustrates the research questions for the study, the type of data, and how they are analyzed. In the following, the data will be presented in more detail.

Table 3.1 Overview of the study and the applied methods

Research question	**Type of data**	**Method**
RQ1: How do lobbyists construct and strengthen their ethos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?	Semi-structured interviews Field notes from seminars Survey of MPs	Coding of interviews and field notes Descriptive statistics from the survey
RQ2: How do the resources and type of organization impact the ethos strategies in which lobbyists engage?	Semi-structured interviews Field notes from seminars	Coding of interviews and field notes
RQ3: What constitutes the lobbying meeting with SCEE as a rhetorical situation?	Semi-structured interviews	Coding of interviews Descriptive statistics from the survey
RQ4: What is the role of kairos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?	Semi-structured interviews	Coding of interviews
RQ5: How did the COVID-19 pandemic change the rhetorical situation for the Norwegian oil industry, and how did they exploit the kairotic openings of the crisis?	Semi-structured interviews and media material	Case study based on semi-structured interviews and media material

RQ6: What forms of appeal to the public interest are common in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?	Semi-structured interviews Field notes from seminars	Coding of interviews and field notes
RQ7: How do politicians evaluate the public interest claims of lobbyists?	Semi-structured interviews Survey of MPs	Coding of interviews Descriptive statistics from the survey
RQ8: What kinds of conceptualization of the public interest do politicians adhere to, and what does the politicians' conceptualization of the public interest mean for the influence of lobbyists?	Semi-structured interviews Survey of MPs	Coding of interviews Descriptive statistics from the survey

The semi-structured interviews are the most comprehensive and important source of data. They consist of 17 interviews with lobbyists working against the SCEE and 13 politicians in the SCEE from June 2017 until June 2020. The time frame here is significant since the study covers two parliamentary periods and the interviews cover members from 2013−2017 and 2017−2021. The field notes were taken during a series of seminars that were arranged by interest organizations working toward the SCEE in 2018 and 2019.

Furthermore, the survey of MPs was sent out in October 2019 and closed in January 2020. As the table shows, most data in this study is qualitative in the form of semi-structured interviews and field notes from participant observation. Therefore, in this study, the qualitative data is prioritized, while the quantitative data will be used mostly to supplement the qualitative findings. In the following, these three kinds of data will be presented in more detail.

Semi-structured interviews

Appendix B shows the SCEE members in the two parliamentary periods from 2013−2107 and 2017−2021. There were 17 members of the committee in each of the periods, and a total of 11 members were interviewed. Of the SCEE members interviewed, five were members from 2013−2017, while six were members from 2017−2021. In addition to these SCEE members, one political advisor who worked for the SCEE from 2013−2017 was interviewed. Furthermore, the Minister of Oil and Energy from 2013−2017 was interviewed.

The sample of politicians interviewed represented all the political parties in parliament except the Christian Democrats, the Green Party, and the Red Party. The Green Party and the Red Party were

excluded mainly because they played a minor political role during this study. The Green Party and the Red Party were not represented in the parliamentary period from 2013−2017. However, after the election in 2017, they ended up with one parliament member each because none of the parties crossed the election threshold of four percent. Hence, these two parties had a very limited impact on the work of the SCEE and the parliament in general during this study.

The sample of politicians from the SCEE was quite experienced and influential within their political parties. Of the 13 politicians interviewed, 10 had either held positions as ministers or state secretaries before the interview or took up these positions during this study.

In addition to SCEE members, 17 lobbyists who worked against the committee representing interest organizations were interviewed. The interviewees were chosen based on the background of survey questions and interviews with SCEE members. Some research questions concern how the type of organization affects the rhetorical strategies on which lobbyists rely. Hence, it was important to include assorted types of interest organizations in the sample of lobbyists. In the first interviews I held with SCEE members in 2017, they identified four clusters of organizations that dominated the lobbying activity against the committee and with which they had frequent contact. These were the energy industry, environmental organizations, the oil industry, and unions.

Thus, the 17 lobbyists I interviewed for this study were drawn from types of interest organizations, which are business associations, trade unions, and environmental organizations. Accordingly, both the energy and oil industries are dominated by different forms of business associations. This classification leans on a behavioral understanding of interest groups, according to which groups are classified based on their observable policy-related activities (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Berry, 1977).

Appendix A presents an overview of both lobbyists and politicians interviewed for the study. In total, 13 politicians and 17 lobbyists were interviewed from June 2017 until May 2020. Hence, in total, I conducted 30 semi-structured interviews, which lasted from 30 minutes to two hours. In total, there were 60 hours and 14 minutes of recording. All interviews were transcribed and approved by the participants. This resulted in 320 single-spaced pages of transcribed interviews. Most interviews of the politicians were performed at their offices at Stortinget. Interviews with the lobbyists were often conducted during field observations at seminars or at the office of the interest organization in Oslo. Furthermore, Appendix D illustrates the written consent form for

both semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The form was sent to and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) before participant observation and semi-structured interviews started.

All the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, and the transcripts of the interviews are available upon request. I translated all the quotes in this study from Norwegian to English. In qualitative research, the question of translation is often not discussed, but translation always raises issues regarding how concepts and descriptions can travel across languages (Temple & Young, 2004). Lobbying is a local practice, and lobbyists have intimate knowledge of the political system and the political culture in the country where it is practiced (Kanol, 2015). Therefore, in the interviews, lobbyists and politicians sometimes refer to events or contexts that assume quite detailed knowledge of Norwegian politics. In these instances, I have added contextual information in brackets to make references or concepts understandable to a foreign reader. Furthermore, in each instance, I first ran the quote in Google Translate to obtain a rough translation, which sometimes was quite accurate. However, in most instances, I had to add changes to the suggestions from Google Translate. That is why there is a certain risk that nuances and contextual meaning are lost in my translations.

Of the 17 lobbyists I interviewed, nine can be considered business lobbyists in that they either represent business associations or individual companies working for the oil industry or the energy industry. From the energy industry, I interviewed two lobbyists from Energy Norway and three lobbyists from Statkraft, while from the oil industry, I interviewed two lobbyists from Equinor, one from Norwegian Oil and Gas, and one from the Norwegian Petroleum Association.

Energy Norway represents about 300 companies involved in the production, distribution, and trading of electricity in Norway, while Norwegian Oil and Gas represents more than 100 companies associated with oil and gas activities on the Norwegian shelf. Both Equinor and Statkraft have a dominant position within each industry and are members of their respective industry associations. Equinor has about 70 percent of the oil production on the Norwegian shelf, while Statkraft is the largest producer of hydropower in Norway (Statkraft, 2021; Tollaksen, Ryggvik, & Smith-Solbakken, 2021). In this study, these business lobbyists will be called either *oil lobbyists* or *energy lobbyists*. They both represent profit-driven interests. However, as the study will demonstrate, the energy industry is struggling to get out of the shadow of the more dominant oil industry.

It should be mentioned that, until 2018, Equinor was known as Statoil, which was founded in 1972 as the oil company of the Norwegian state. In 2007, Statoil merged with the oil and gas division of Hydro for a short period during which it was called StatoilHydro but changed to Statoil ASA in 2009 (Tollaksen et al., 2021). In the quotes from respondents, Equinor is sometimes referred to as Statoil, which means that the respondents are talking about Equinor in a historical context before the name change in 2018.

The five environmental lobbyists who were interviewed came from Zero, the Norwegian Climate Foundation, and Friends of the Earth Norway. Both Zero and the Norwegian Climate Foundation are examples of modern and professionalized environmental organizations that are partly financed by business interests and are not member based (Klausen & Rommetvedt, 1996). Friends of the Earth Norway, however, is membership based and democratic, and it consists of more than 35,000 members divided between approximately 100 local groups across the country (Naturvernforbundet, 2021).

Finally, of the three union lobbyists, one of them represented Industry and Energy, which organizes 56,000 members who work within the oil industry and the onshore energy-intensive industry. Industry and Energy are members of Norway´s peak labor organization LO (Landsorganisasjonen), which represents about 950,000 workers (E. H. Allern, 2010). The two other union lobbyists who were interviewed worked for the LO.

Even though the lobbyists I interviewed came from various organizations, they share important commonalities. Over 80 percent had higher education at the university level. Most had a master's degree, and one had a PhD. In particular, the business lobbyists stand out with prominent master's degrees from universities abroad, such as the London School of Economics, Princeton, and Cambridge. Furthermore, 12 of 17 (approximately 70%) lobbyists had held positions or been employed by a political party at the national level before they became lobbyists. To further illustrate the revolving door between politics and lobbying, three lobbyists I interviewed went from lobbying to political positions during this study. Two of them became state secretaries in government, while one became a member of parliament.

For the semi-structured interviews, I developed two interview guides: one for the lobbyists and one for the politicians. Abridged versions of the interview guides can be found in Appendix C.

The interview guides were designed to illuminate the research questions and took a broad approach to how lobbyists work against the SCEE and how they find and invent arguments. To simplify the coding and categorize the results, the interview guide was separated into four parts: "general questions on lobbying," "informal lobbying," "rhetoric and arguments of lobbyists," and "the public interest dilemma."

Illustrative case study

In addition to the qualitative interviews, I conducted a short case study of the oil industry's campaign for reduced taxes in the aftermath of COVID-19. The case study is supported with semi-structured interviews I conducted with oil lobbyists and environmental lobbyists in the spring of 2020 in addition to an analysis of media coverage of the lobbying campaign. I use the label *illustrative* to describe the case study since the main aim is to demonstrate the heuristic value of a revised model of the rhetorical situation, which is presented in Chapter 5 (Yin, 2018).

Qualitative case studies are suitable when the aim is to understand a phenomenon and the interrelationship between variables (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). The central variables here are the rhetor, the audience, the exigence, and the situational constraints. The objective is to display how lobbyists can exploit the kairotic openings of a rhetorical situation when situational constraints change. Again, I am not claiming that the limited amount of semi-structured interviews and analysis of media material count as a full-scale case study. However, I will argue that the illustrative case study is useful to demonstrate the usefulness of the revised model of the rhetorical situation.

The illustrative case study also has a comparative element in that the successful lobbying campaign of the oil industry in 2020 is compared to a failed lobbying campaign for a tax amendment in 2003−2004 (Ihlen & Berntzen, 2007). Hence, I argue that the failure of the campaign in 2003−2004 and the success of the campaign in 2020 can be explained by how the COVID-19 epidemic changed the situational constraints and the oil lobbyists' ability to use rhetoric to exploit these changes for their own advantage.

Parliament survey

The most important quantitative data in this study is a survey of Norwegian MPs conducted in 2019. The parliament survey was based on a lobbying survey first administered in 1995 regarding

a larger study of historical lobbying activity against the Storting (Espeli, 1999). The 1995 survey consisted of 10 questions related to the frequency of contact between different interest groups and MPs and the MPs' assessment of the impact and consequences of lobbying. Two questions from the 1995 survey were also repeated in a larger survey of MPs in 2012. Therefore, the questions from 1995 laid the basis for the survey of MPs in this study, and the questionnaire was developed in cooperation with Hilmar Rommetvedt from the Norwegian Research Centre AS, NORCE. The survey had two parts: The first focused on the role of the parliamentary committees in the work of the Storting, and the second targeted lobbying. The survey part on the parliamentary committees is part of an international project led by the Research Committee of Legislative Specialists in the International Political Science Association (Rommetvedt, Forthcoming).

The general conclusion from the 1995 survey was that the intensity of the lobbying of the Storting was quite high, but generally, the MPs were very positive toward lobbying and saw the process as a form of "quality insurance" of the decisions of the Storting (Espeli, 1999, p. 242). Furthermore, even though business organizations and unions were considered the most powerful interest organizations, a clear majority of the MPs said that the impact of the lobbyists was quite limited and only seldom led to major changes in government proposals. The full-time series shows that these trends have not changed considerably from 1995 to 2019 (Rommetvedt & Raknes, 2021).

In total, 69 of 169 MPs finished the whole survey, a response rate of 40%. This is considerably lower than the response rates in 1995 and 2012, which were 70% and 69%, respectively. The somewhat lower response rate is probably because the surveys in 1995 and 2012 were part of larger research projects that were approved by the Storting. However, the response rate is satisfactory for comparing overall trends between the three surveys. Regarding consent, Appendix D displays the consent form with which the participants in the survey had to agree before they started the survey. The consent form was approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD) before the collection of data started.

For the purposes of this study, the questions that deal with the information value of different forms of contact and how lobbying contributes to the public interest are the most interesting, while the questions on the frequency of contact with interest groups and the impact on lobbying are used to add context and nuance to the study. Notably, the data from the parliament survey focuses on MPs generally and not specifically on members of the SCCE. The reason is that the number of responses is quite low when analyzed at the committee level. A preliminary analysis

revealed there were no statistically significant differences between the disparate committees in how they experienced lobbying against the Storting.

Participant observation

As mentioned in the theory chapter, lobbyists engage in a great deal of "backstage work" and often meet politicians in informal settings such as dinners, seminars, and receptions (Groll & McKinley, 2015; Grose et al., 2022; Nothhaft, 2017). Hence, the only way to gain access to and study these settings is through participant observation. Several rhetorical scholars have also argued that the study of rhetoric relies too much on official texts, and urges rhetorical scholars to engage in fieldwork to get closer to the everyday rhetorical experience (Endres, Hess, Senda-Cook, & Middleton, 2016; Middleton, Senda-Cook, & Endres, 2011).

Methods that rely on participant observation are often labeled *ethnographic methods*. Ethnographic methods are often employed when the goal of the research is to understand the nature of a phenomenon and interpretation of the meanings and functions of human interactions are central (Aktinson & Hammersley, 1998). Furthermore, the focus is often a few cases that are described in rich detail, and quantification and statistics play a minor role. The sociologist Herbert Gans (1962/1982) once noted that "participant-observation is the only method I know that enables the researcher to get close to the realities of social life. Its deficiencies in producing quantitative data are more than made up for by its ability to minimize distance between the researcher and his subject of the study" (p. 350).

However, in the ethnographic literature, there is no clear agreement on what it means to "participate." In this study, I follow Gans' (1962/1982) idea of the three kinds of roles in which researchers can engage during participant observation. According to Gans, the researcher can merely observe, participate as a researcher, or participate as a "native." During the fieldwork, I engaged in all three roles. Sometimes, I just observed and did not participate; at other times, I engaged myself as a researcher. Particularly at dinners and meetings in the pub late at night, I just blended in as a "native" and reflected on my experiences later.

Similar to Gans (1962/1982), I found participation as a researcher the simplest and most constructive. Thus, at all the seminars I attended, I usually introduced myself as a researcher and explained that participant observation was part of my method. I experienced that this kind of

participation allowed me to steer conversations in productive directions and ask for clarification and follow-up interviews simultaneously, as I was open about my role and motives.

Since some of the research questions deal with how different types of organizations affect the rhetorical strategies in which lobbyists engage, I decided to participate in seminars arranged by oil lobbyists, energy lobbyists, union lobbyists, and environmental lobbyists. The most important criteria for choosing a seminar were that SCEE members were present and interacted with lobbyists.

Table 3.2 Participant observation of seminars

Name of conference	Date and place	Types of interaction	Participants
Oil Industrial Conference 2018	Sandefjord, 16−17 of January	Coffee breaks, lunch, dinner, and reception in the evening	337 participants, mainly from oil companies, the Ministry of Oil and Energy, and Stortinget
Zero conference 2018	Oslo, 7−8 of November	Coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner in the evening	780 participants. Private companies, interest organizations, politicians, and administrative officials
LOs Oil and Gas Seminar 2018	Bergen, 13−14 of November	Coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner in the evening	160 participants. Mainly shop stewards from oil companies and shipyards, along with politicians
Equinor Autumn Conference 2018	Oslo, 20th of November	Coffee breaks and lunch	Approximately 800 prominent members from media, politics, academia, and the oil industry.
Winter Conference Energy Norway 2019	Malmø, Sweden, 27−29 of March	Coffee breaks, lunch, dinner, and receptions in the evening	300 participants. Mostly local power companies, but also lawyer firms and consulting companies, along with politicians

Table 3.2 summarizes the five seminars I attended in 2018 and 2019, the type of interaction I engaged in, and the participants who were present. Overall, I spent approximately 10 days doing fieldwork. The seminars varied in terms of how long they lasted and how much informal interaction they opened up. The Winter Conference of Energy Norway lasted three days and involved an excursion, two official dinners, and a cocktail party, while Equinor's Autumn Conference just lasted three hours and was followed by a lunch.

The participant observation of the seminars was classic "yo-yo fieldwork," where I repeatedly went back and forth from the field (Wulff, 2002). During the fieldwork, I took field notes, wrote a daily research diary, and performed more than 30 small interviews with actors. Most interviews emerged spontaneously as I met participants during breaks and I asked them about why they were there and what they hoped to achieve by being there. These interviews were not taped and transcribed, and quotes from these interviews are based on my own recollection of them.

For all seminars, except Equinor's Autumn Conference, the organizers gave me access to the list of participants so I could plan which lobbyists and politicians I wanted to observe and follow during the seminars. Even though the organizers of the seminars approved my presence and I

could freely observe and interview people, I was careful to ask people I interviewed extensively to sign the consent form. This was a bit harder for the conversations I participated in during dinners, coffee breaks, or at the bar in the evening where I sometimes participated and sometimes just listened in. None of these conversations was recorded, but I often took notes after conversations that I later transcribed in my research diary. It was nearly impossible to track down all the persons who participated in the conversations I heard and the social settings I observed. The lack of approval from all the persons I heard and observed naturally raises ethical questions. I have resolved this by recounting episodes and using quotes from more informal encounters so it is not possible to identify who said what and when.

The research diary was an important tool for my own reflections on what I observed and how I observed it. Hence, every day when I participated at conferences, I sat down in the evening and wrote a summary of my experiences from a more personal perspective. The inspiration for the diary was taken from Kleis-Nielsen's (2012) fieldwork in U.S. political campaigns. I will share some excerpts from the research diary in this chapter because they can help illuminate some of the methodological challenges I faced when doing fieldwork.

From data to categories and strategies

While the quantitative data was analyzed in SPSS, the qualitative data was imported into the computer program NVivo for analysis. Interviews and field notes can be analyzed with a host of various coding procedures, depending on the theory and the research questions the data is meant to illuminate (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Coding qualitative data always involves difficult methodological choices concerning how one should categorize given empirical material (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This study is based on three waves of coding, providing the basis for each of the empirical chapters. Thus, the same material was analyzed several times with assorted code books.

Coding can be conceptually driven or data driven. Conceptual coding is based on predefined theoretical categories, while in data-driven coding, new categories are constructed by working through the material. In this study, both these strategies were utilized in the coding of the material, which is a common strategy in qualitative research projects (Richards, 2020). The starting point for the coding process in each of the empirical chapters was the rhetorical concepts presented in the theoretical chapter. In the following section, the procedures for the coding of the empirical chapters will be presented in detail.

Coding of ethos

The first code book dealt with the research question concerning ethos and was based on McCroskey and Teven (1999) three-dimensional model of ethos, which was presented in the theory chapter. Notably, the coding of ethos is not based on textual analysis but on how lobbyists and politicians describe these strategies based on semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

In the table below, I have presented the keywords for the coding of ethos and added examples on quotes from respondents coded in different categories. I have deliberately used quotes that are not used in the empirical chapters simply to illustrate the richness of the material. In most cases, there were several quotes that could illustrate the same category. After each quote, I have indicated the subcategory the quote was attributed to in the second round of coding, which was data-driven in that I created new categories within the quotes that belonged to the different conceptual categories. In the analysis, I labeled these as ethos strategies, meaning that I interpreted them as distinct discursive actions meant to strengthen a specific dimension of ethos.

Table 3.3 Coding of the three dimensions of ethos

	Competence	**Character**	**Goodwill**
Coding keywords	Intelligent, trained expert, informed, competent, bright	Honest, trustworthy, honorable, moral, ethical, genuine	Cares about me, has my interest at heart, not-self-centered, sensitive, understanding
Example of quotes	1. "The fact that we share knowledge and can explain technical and difficult things in an understandable way: I have the impression that these things are well received." (*policy expertise*, Energy Lobbyist 1) 2. "Incredibly strong on facts, analysis, and argumentation that is not only perceived as a partisan contribution, but as an authority in the area." (*policy expertise*, Energy Lobbyist 3) 3. "The ability to understand where in the policy process a topic is	1. "I think it's, to be honest, that people can trust you" (*honesty,* SCCE Member 3) 2. "I think it's always best with companies that are honest. People who try to pretend that they are promoting this proposal in terms of completely different interests than their own can be very embarrassing" (*honesty,* SCEE Member 6) 3. "Then we work closely with Zero, WWF, and the Red Cross are our partners in addition to the Norwegian Climate Foundation. We	1. "It is vital to start by thinking about what the people you want to meet are concerned about. We often ask them in advance what they are interested in, and then we have some perspectives we would like to share." (*not self-centered,* Oil Lobbyist 3) 2. "Politicians have to take a stand on an incredible number of issues every single day, and then it helps if you devise a proposal that helps to pull something in the right direction" (*political solutions,* Oil Lobbyist 2)

	and intervene early enough so one can shape how people think about the issue and not only the conclusion" (*politic intelligence*, Energy Lobbyist 5)	do it at the partner level where we develop common ideas and find analyses. We do the same with Bloomberg and other external actors also because we perceive that facts and analysis are in short supply in some discussions" (*alliances*, Energy Lobbyist 5)	3. "If it is a good proposal that has been presented or a good committee remark, a good media report or a good debate performance, then I am careful to give feedback." (*recognize good work,* Energy Lobbyist 2)

In the table above, I have exemplified the coding process with three quotes in each category that can be attributed to competence, character, and goodwill. It illustrates some of the methodological challenges with which I struggled. The first and most obvious challenge is that quotes can often fit into several categories simultaneously. One could, for example, argue that quote 2 in the goodwill category also speaks to competence because, here, the respondent talks about the ability to craft a policy proposal. The reason the quote is placed in the goodwill category is that the respondent talks about the policy proposal as a form of "help," which is dependent upon understanding the situation from the politicians' perspective. Consequently, one needs policy expertise to craft a political solution, but simultaneously, a fitting political solution is dependent on the lobbyist caring about how the solution fits into the political program of the politician. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, these kinds of issues would be better resolved if more coders were involved in the project who could fine tune the coding book and perform inter-coder reliability tests. However, in the empirical chapters, I have been generous with the inclusion of quotes so external reviewers can make their own assessment of the accuracy and appropriateness of the coding.

The challenges of coding lead back to the theoretical tension that is inherent in many rhetorical concepts that are central to this study. In the theoretical chapter, I discussed how researchers have disagreed on how many dimensions of ethos there are and how these should be separated (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; McCroskey & Teven, 1999; O'Keefe, 2015). In my view, the disparate dimensions of ethos are not mutually exclusive, and they can mutually reinforce each other. Hence, in a concrete situation, several dimensions of ethos and the ethos-enhancing strategies will be in play simultaneously. For example, the competence strategies of "policy expertise" and "political intelligence" would be a prerequisite for exploiting goodwill strategies such as "not being self-centered" or helping with "political solutions." An experienced lobbyist would have higher policy expertise and political intelligence, which makes it easier for him or her to understand the needs of politicians and appear helpful and considerate.

As mentioned, the data-driven coding started after quotes and field notes were coded according to the dimensions of ethos. Therefore, this was a form of hierarchical coding in which I created new nodes as subcategories within the categories of competence, character, and goodwill. In the table below, I have included the full codebook for the ethos chapter with guidelines for the various categories.

Table 3.4 Codebook for the three dimensions of ethos

Name of node	Description
Character	References to being honest, trustworthy, honorable, moral, ethical, and genuine
Alliances	All forms of cooperation with other interest organizations for lobbying purposes
Honesty	References to the value of honesty, the importance of accurate information, or the openness of motives
Liked by authority	References to other authorities (both persons and organizations) that somehow strengthen the arguments of the interest organization
Listen to critics	References to invitations, dialogue, or understanding for critics of the interest organization
Competence	References to being intelligent, trained, expert, informed, competent, and bright
Policy expertise	References to technical expertise and political expertise
Political intelligence	References to knowledge about "the game of politics" such as policy processes, decision-making procedures, and internal party dynamics
Goodwill	References to caring about politicians, having the politicians' interest at heart, not being self-centered, sensitive, and understanding
Access to network	References to how the organization can help politicians connect to other interesting people
Caring	References to using charm and connecting with people on a more personal level
Not self-centered	References to public interest arguments or seeing the world from the perspective of the politicians
Platform to speak	References to how the interest organization can create interesting venues for politicians to convey their message
Political solutions	References to adapting to the needs of the politicians by constructing suitable political solutions
Praise and respect	References to praise, positive feedback, and showing respect for politicians
Short and simple	References to how information presented in meetings should be packaged to suit the needs of the politicians
Understanding constraints	References to understanding or adapting to the structural constraints under which politicians operate

With 350 pages of interview transcripts and 50 pages of field notes, I had rich material to work with, and the data-driven coding was a question of moving back and forth between the construction of categories and the data. Consequently, the logic of inquiry was abductive; I moved back and forth between inductive and deductive strategies. As mentioned in the theory chapter, an

abductive research process enables the researcher to stay attuned to existing theories while remaining open to surprises in the data (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

When performing data-driven coding, there is always the danger of "the coding trap," in which one steadily creates new categories and subcategories that are only loosely related to the research questions (Richards, 2020). There is also the question of the correspondence of the analytical levels of the subcategories and how categories differ. Hence, an abductive coding process does not produce "clean" categories, and there will always be certain trade-offs. As mentioned in the theory chapter, ethos is a multi-faceted concept. Even though the different dimensions of ethos are theoretically distinct, the empirical data is often more ambiguous.

Table 3.4 depicts the coding book for the assorted dimensions of ethos. The coding of character illustrates the tension in which some strategies can affect several dimensions of ethos simultaneously. One could argue that building "alliances" or being "liked by authority" could be strategies for increasing "competence," since these authorities or alliances could sometimes be researchers or organizations with superior policy expertise. However, they are still placed in the category of "character," since the reason lobbyists gave in the interviews for using these kinds of strategies were to convey themselves as more trustworthy, moral, or honest. Hence, there is a difference between delivering policy expertise (competence) and trying to be perceived as an independent policy expert (character).

Another tension in the coding process, which affects all the dimensions of ethos, is the difference between generic ethos strategies and more policy-specific ethos strategies. Obviously, "competence" could be more about "policy expertise" and "political intelligence," and these forms of competence are particularly valuable in the world of lobbying. This is also true for the coding of goodwill, where some of the ethos strategies like "caring," "praise and respect," "not self-centered," and "honesty" are generic strategies that could work for any rhetor who wants to influence an audience. Meanwhile, categories such as "understanding constraints" and presenting "political solutions" are more directly related to the political sphere (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022).

This refers to my discussion in the theory chapter about how contextual factors impact what is considered credible and the lack of a general theory of credibility (Kjeldsen, 2006; O'Keefe, 2015; Pornpitakpan, 2004). Thus, the coding reflects the context, since my research questions focus on how lobbyists, not people in general, construct and strengthen their ethos. Perhaps some

of these ethos strategies can work outside the domain of lobbying, while some are intimately tied to the context in which they appear.

The type of data will also affect the coding and the categories that occur. There are, for example, many more subcategories on the coding of goodwill, which is interesting, given that goodwill is often described as the "lost" dimension of ethos (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). This might be an effect of the data, itself, since participatory observation was crucial to determining many ethos-related strategies often overlooked in classical studies of lobbying.

Coding of kairos and the rhetorical situation

The second code book deals with the research questions concerning the rhetorical situation and the role of kairos. Regarding the rhetorical situation, I first coded the interviews with the lobbyists to identify the constraints that lobbyists must overcome. *Constraints* are operationalized elements that have "the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 8). In the next round of coding, categorical "constraints" were split into "organizational constraints" and "systemic constraints." This resulted in a list of two organizational constraints and three systemic constraints. I also constructed a category of exigence in line with Bitzer's description of what comprises an exigence. As discussed in the theoretical chapter, exigence is a complicated concept that involves the perspective of both the rhetor and the audience (Garret & Xiao, 1993). The multi-faceted nature of exigence will be discussed further in Chapter 5. Again, the coding process reveals the abductive research process during which theoretical constructs are refined and developed further when the empirical material is analyzed (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

The coding of kairos corroborated the description in the theoretical section, where kairos has a temporal dimension, spatial dimension, and dimension of proper measure. Thus, kairos is about finding the right timing, identifying the correct problem space, and creating the appropriate message. Hence, the first round of coding was based on identifying these three dimensions in the material. While the temporal and spatial dimensions of kairos pointed to new and undetected dimensions in the material, the coding of decorum or the appropriate message was nearly identical to the coding of goodwill and produced the same categories. Therefore, I decided to collapse these two categories. The coding of kairos was then cross-checked with the coding of rhetorical constraints to tease out the relationship between the kairotic dimensions and the constraints of the rhetorical situation.

The table below shows the detailed code book for the coding of kairos and the rhetorical situation that will be analyzed in Chapter 5. The same challenges are evident here as in the coding of kairos regarding quotes that can fit into several categories simultaneously.

Table 3.5 Codebook for kairos and the rhetorical situation

Name of node	***Description***	***Coding example***
Constraints	*References to things or processes that can constrain decisions and modify the exigence of both politicians and lobbyists*	
Organizational constraints	*References to constraints that stem from the organization of the lobbyist*	
Financial resources	*References to how financial constraints affect the lobbyist*	*"It is not so easy to find those who are good at both policy and politics. There is a certain layer of people we do not get because they get jobs for private businesses." (Environmental Lobbyist 3)*
Type of organization	*References to how the type of organization can be a constraint for the lobbyist*	*"For us, it is the case that every time we have had a meeting with politicians, we publish stories about it to show that we work for the things they care about." (Environmental Lobbyist 5)*
Systemic constraints	*References to constraints outside the organization of the lobbyist*	
Ministry of Finance	*References directly to the Ministry of Finance or the importance of cost-effectiveness in lobbying proposals*	*"Then you always have the Ministry of Finance, who has their views. For them, it is always cost-effectiveness, which is important." (Environmental Lobbyist 2)*
Minority−majority government	*References to the importance of the type of government in constraining political decisions*	*"In a situation with a minority government, there is so much uncertainty, and suddenly someone can push a proposal against us, so you must be alert all the time." (Oil Lobbyist 2)*
Political documents	*References to the importance of party programs, government platforms, or other political documents*	*"As a starting point, I will always be governed by the party program and always rely on that." (SCEE Member 13)*

Name of node	*Description*	*Coding example*
Exigence	*References to what politicians or lobbyists perceive to be the pressing problem that needs to be resolved*	*"In our field, you won´t find a single lobbyist who does not claim that what they are proposing is also good for the climate, and I think that kind of argumentation has increased in strength each of the six last years." (SCEE Member 7)*
Kairos	*References to what is "the right time to act," the size of "the problem space," and "the right message," given the constraints of the situation*	
Temporal	*References to timing of policy proposals or the subject of time and timing in lobbying*	*"You need the ability to understand where in the policy process an issue is and get into the process early enough so you can influence." (Energy Lobbyist 4)*
Spatial	*References to understanding or evaluating the "the problem space"*	*"The best are those who relate to the political framework and have a realistic understanding of what is possible to achieve." (SCCE Member 12)*
Decorum	*References to what is "the right thing to say" in a lobbying meeting, given the situational constraints*	*"But then I think you also succeed if you manage to think a little further ahead than your problems and look at solutions." (Oil Lobbyist 4)*

Significantly, the coding of the rhetorical situation reflects a more generic approach to the lobbying situation for lobbyists working toward the SCEE. The lobbying questions about lobbying in the interview guide asked about the general impression of both lobbyists and politicians regarding how they experienced the lobbying situation (See Appendix 3). Thus, the list of constraints is meant to be a starting point and is not exhaustive; if I had examined, for example, a specific policy proposal within a policy area, other constraints might have emerged.

Coding of topos

Finally, the chapter on the role of the public interest in lobbying campaigns concentrated on coding the questions in the interview guide that dealt explicitly with the public interest problem

(see Appendix C). The code book for topos had three parts related to the research questions. First, the interviews were coded according to what kind of theoretical understanding of topos they related to based on Gabrielsen (2008) topical typology. Second, the coding focused on how different types of organizations launch different public interest claims and what countertopics these claims meet. Third, I coded the public interest questions according to what kind of conceptualization of the public interest, particularly politicians, referred to in line with the typology of Bitonti (2019).

The table below shows the coding book for the chapter on topos. The coding book illustrates how the coding process in this chapter was more conceptually driven than data driven. The categories on the notions of the public interest and the coding of the topical typology of Gabrielsen (2008) were conceptually driven, and the data here fit quite nicely into the theoretical categories I had constructed. On the public interest dilemmas, however, there was more going back and forth between deductive and inductive strategies. I constructed the new category "counter-topics" to separate the counterclaims lobbyists often meet when they argue in public interest terms.

Table 3.6 Codebook for topos and the public interest

Name of node	***Description***	***Coding example***
Public interest conceptualization	*References to how the public interest can be defined and understood*	
Aggregative conceptualization	*References to a vision of the public interest that can be discovered through listening to competing views or balancing interests*	*"For the question of energy and the environment, it is about creating as many jobs as possible with the least possible emissions." (SCEE Member 2)*
Procedural conceptualization	*References to a vision of the public interest as a deliberative process*	*"I am open to good arguments from the wrong side, and if those arguments are so good that they are worth pursuing, then I do it." (SCEE Member 9)*
Realist conceptualization	*References to the public interest as only a rhetorical label*	
Public interest dilemmas		
Energy industry dilemmas		

Name of node	*Description*	*Coding example*
Public interest topics	*References to typical public interest arguments for the energy industry*	*"Everybody agrees that the electrification of Norway is a good idea." (Energy Lobbyist 2)*
Counter-topics	*References to typical counter-topics the energy industry encounters*	*"The classic conflict dimension for the energy industry is the relationship between the industry and the counties that own the hydropower plants." (Energy Lobbyist 1)*
Environmental organization dilemmas		
Counter-topics	*References to typical counter-topics the environmental organizations meet*	*"When it comes to the environment, it is a sad fact that climate and nature are not good enough arguments because other societal interests weigh more heavily." (Environmental Lobbyist 5)*
Public interest topic	*References to typical public interest arguments for environmental organizations*	*"Sometimes our only argument is that this is good for the climate." (Environmental Lobbyist 3)*
Oil industry dilemmas		
Counter-topics	*References to typical counter-topics the oil industry encounters*	*"The local effects are extremely important when we present projects, but often the answer is that this is not good enough." (Oil Lobbyist 5)*
Public interest topics	*References to typical public interest arguments for the oil industry*	*"The most important things are jobs and the cash revenue for the state. That is our license to operate." (Oil Lobbyist 2)*
Union dilemmas		
Counter-topics	*References to typical counter-topics the unions meet*	*"You have to explain that it is ok to do national measures in climate policy, but they cannot be so good that they affect our clean industry (energy-intensive industry)." (Union lobbyist 2)*
Public interest topos	*References to typical public interest topics for the unions*	*"The thing that is important is the creation of value that is the revenue for society, if you are thinking about oil." (Union Lobbyist 1)*
Public interest topos	*References to topos in line with Gabrielsen's conceptualization*	
Topos as commonplace	*References to topos as loci communes, or ways of arguing that can be used in any kind of situation*	*"To do what is good for Norway." (Oil Lobbyist 4)*

Name of node	*Description*	*Coding example*
Topos as doxa	*References to topos as taken-for-granted views and opinions in a society*	*"In our field, you will not find a single lobbyist who does not claim that what they are proposing is also good for the climate." (SCEE Member 7)*
Topos as a heuristic	*References to topos as a heuristic for locating and inventing relevant arguments*	*"It can be about securing jobs, making more money, or saving valuable nature." (Environmental Lobbyist 5)*

The methodological challenges of elite studies

Thus far, I have presented how the data for this study was collected and analyzed. However, lobbying research at the national level involves the study of political elites and how they behave. *Elites* can be defined as "those with close proximity to power or policymaking" (Lilleker, 2003, p. 207). Both the parliament members in the SCEE and the lobbyists working against the committee can be considered political elites. A central methodological challenge regarding a qualitative study of elites is getting close to and understanding them (Harvey, 2011). Hence, the study of political elites addresses some challenges concerning access, the self-awareness of political elites, and the challenges of getting approval of quotes that do not portray the political elites in a favorable light (Aberbach & Rockman, 2003; Berry, 2003; Lilleker, 2003; Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007).

In my case, conducting elite interviews involves a double challenge because I am a former member of the political elite I am interviewing and observing in this study. Before I became an academic, I spent approximately 15 years in Norwegian politics, and I held various positions in parliament and in government for the Socialist Left Party. From 2007−2008, I worked as a professional lobbyist for the public relations firm Burson−Marsteller. In 2008, I became a political advisor in the Ministry of Education. After the election in 2009, I became a political advisor for the parliamentary leader of the Socialist Left Party and held this position until April 2012. From 2009−2012, I had short stints as a political advisor for the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, the Standing Committee of Local Government and Public Administration, and the Standing Committee on Justice.

In April 2012, I became a state secretary in the Ministry of the Environment and held this position until the administration I was part of lost the election in September 2013. I did not have a specific political portfolio in the ministry since I was assigned to serve as the state secretary for the party

leader of the Socialist Left Party. In general, my job was as a press secretary or spin doctor, where I tried to sell positive news stories, handled crises, quarreled with journalists, wrote speeches, and prepared television debates. However, I followed the policy area of the Ministry quite closely and usually participated in the meetings the minister conducted with the SCEE members each Thursday. Consequently, the inner workings of the SCEE, which is central to this study, is something with which I have firsthand experience.

I was also part of the "government information committee," which met each week at the Prime Minister's Office. Here, we coordinated difficult issues in which the coalition partners in government sometimes disagreed and planned the media management of larger governmental issues. I left this position in September 2013 and started to work as an academic at Kristiania University College in 2014.

The world of lobbying is something that I followed closely during my years in politics. I was engaged in crafting policy proposals for how lobbying should be regulated, but I was also involved in the yearly lobbying seminar, which was arranged by the Socialist Left Party. The background for the seminar was the debate about how the growing PR industry gave advantages to resourceful actors with the financial resources to pay for lobbying advice (Glomnes, 2009). Therefore, the lobbying seminar of the Socialist Left Party was free of charge and trendy among less resourceful idealistic-interest organizations. The work with this seminar was the basis for a book called *Jakta på Makta—12 råd for effektiv påvirkning* (*Pursuing Power—12 Tips for Effective Influence*), which I published along with Bård Vegar Solhjell in 2018. I worked with Solhjell both when he was Minister of Education from 2008−2009 and Minister of the Environment from 2012−2013. When we worked with the book, we contacted many lobbyists we knew from different interest organizations and asked for their best lobbying advice and examples of lobbying successes and lobbying failures. Some insights I made and contacts I gained from this work have been important for this study, both on the empirical and theoretical levels.

My background is a challenge in that I know and have worked with several of the people I have surveyed, observed, and interviewed in this study. The best way to handle this dilemma is to be as open and transparent as possible about the methods I have used and how I have reached the conclusions in this study. My political background can lead to two kinds of biases. First, I have spent many years defending politicians against criticism from the media, academics, and voters, and I still think some of the criticism that politicians face is undeserved. Furthermore, some

people I interviewed for this study are people I both like and respect, even though I would consider only one of them a friend. This could lead to a positivity bias in which I unconsciously perceive my findings in a more positive light to defend the political system in which I have invested a large part of my career.

Another challenge is that my background hampers my ability to analyze the data with an "outsider's" view. When performing fieldwork in one's own culture, there is a certain danger one might develop cultural blindness and fail to question phenomena one considers obvious (Wadel, 1991). In my case, I study a culture I have been an integral part of, and this could make it harder for me to obtain the necessary critical distance. During the participant observation, this was a challenge that I often encountered. At the Oil Industrial Conference in Sandefjord, I wrote the following in my research diary:

> I really must work on distancing myself from what I participate in. The advantage of past relationships is that they give me access; I know who people are and can use them to put me in touch with others. Simultaneously, I am colored by my own past and the role people knew me from before. (*Research Diary*, January 18, 2018)

As the quote from the research diary indicates, my background was a disadvantage regarding distancing myself from the people I was researching. However, it was an advantage in gaining access to and obtaining the trust of the political elites I studied. Thus, my previous political network was important when it came to recruiting MPs to answer the survey, getting appointments for semi-structured interviews, and securing access to seminars. If I had a previous relationship with the people I interviewed, I contacted them directly, but in a great many instances, I approached people indirectly through contacting people I knew were close to the persons I wanted to interview and had them help me set up an appointment. Furthermore, in those instances where I did not have contacts, the conferences I attended were fertile grounds to recruit new interview subjects using many of the same strategies as the people I studied:

> The irony is that at these conferences I become my own lobbyist. I am desperately looking for common meeting points with those I meet and using the contact to make future appointments for interviews. I study lobbying using lobbyists' own methods. (*Research Diary*, January 19, 2018)

Importantly, Norway is a very open and transparent democracy, and elites are generally positive to researchers and seldom refuse to be interviewed. In Norwegian political culture, the sense of not being an elite and somehow close to ordinary people is significant for the legitimacy of Norwegian politicians (Ihlen, Skogerbø, & Allern, 2015). Sometimes, I just exploited this trait of

Norwegian political culture to approach potential interview objects with whom I had no previous relationships. The informal atmosphere at the Winter Conference of Energy Norway in Malmø provided good opportunities to make new contacts just by being at the right place at the right time.

> In the evening, we went to a large hall down in the center of Malmö to have dinner. I saw that there were a couple of members there from SCEE, so I quickly secured a place beside them. A nice and simple thing about Norwegian politics is that politicians are available, and it is always possible to start a conversation. During dinner, I recruited two new interview objects and got valuable input on my research project. The top lobbyists from Statkraft also sat at the same table as me, and it was clear that it was not a random choice; it is their job to have contact with the SCCE. (*Research Diary*, March 27, 2019)

However, much like for lobbyists, an existing network gives one a place to start when one is dependent on building trust and credibility to gain access. I do not think the level of access and confidentiality from the people I spent time with in this study would have been possible without my previous network. I often experienced those old acquaintances showing up in new roles that were very useful to me.

> On the airport train from Copenhagen to Malmø, I met Severin Roald, whom I used to work with at Burson–Marsteller. He has just been hired as the new communications director at Statkraft, and we had a nice chat about the communications profession and the energy industry's challenges. Håvard Vaggen Malvik from Statkraft was also there, and I used the opportunity to present my project and that I would like to interview him. Again, it struck me how my past life is of great help when I try to build new relationships. (*Research Diary*, March 27, 2019)

Similar incidents occurred in most of the seminars I attended where I met old acquaintances in new roles, and I often used their advice or contacts to guide me in the direction of the persons I wanted to talk to and spend time with. Previous contacts were particularly valuable to gain access to the seminars. Here, I needed both the organizers to approve of my presence as a researcher and give me a special price. Some seminars I attended had a rather steep price. The Oil Industrial Seminar cost approximately 2,100 EUR, while the price for Energy Norway's Winter Conference was 2,000 EUR in addition to the flight back and forth from Malmø. The entrance fee at Zero´s conference was 1,200 EUR. In all these instances, I used my contacts both to secure access and pay a greatly reduced fee for my presence. Both Equinor's Autumn Conference and the Oil Industrial Seminar in Sandefjord was by invitation only, and I gained access by contacting people I knew on the inside of these organizations. At the Oil Industrial Seminar in Sandefjord, I was saved by the fact that the leader of the seminar used to work as a press secretary for the Socialist Left Party and could negotiate a special deal for me.

My political background also influenced the way I behaved when I wanted to contact people and recruit interview objects. I was acutely aware of the tendency of powerful people to lose interest in conversation partners that do not seem to have much to offer. Hence, I used my background as a trump card when I felt it could help me get closer to the people with whom I talked.

> The oil industrial seminar is a meeting place for people with power and influence who want to meet others with power and influence. At the time being, I have neither power nor influence. Therefore, I brought up my political background quite early in conversations with people to even out the power differences and to send a signal that I have intimate knowledge of the policy field. People become more talkative when I mention specific policy proposals and policy challenges. I can only say that I feel that this strategy is effective, although it may well be to the detriment of my independence as a researcher. (*Research Diary*, January 19, 2018)

This quote in the research diary cuts to the heart of the challenge to my independence that I faced when studying a policy area in which I used to be engaged as a practitioner. Even though I always introduced myself as a researcher, showing my political background and familiarity with the policy field made people more talkative. This led to some respondents reminding me of previous policy proposals of the Socialist Left Party that they approved or disliked. Even though I always tried to cut these conversations short and said that I was not there to defend any political positions, it might have affected what certain respondents said to me and why they said it.

Observing and interviewing elites

As discussed, gaining access to elites can be challenging. However, once access is granted, interviewing and observing political elites can pose new methodological challenges. First, elites can be highly self-aware and trained in pushing their own agendas. Second, one only gets as close as they allow. When elites read through interviews and descriptions of themselves, it often happens that "a degree of self-serving, self-important defensiveness creeps in" (Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007, p. 209). This is particularly true for remarks that can be said when the tape recorder is turned off and the respondent reflects on how situations "really are" (Lilleker, 2003). In this respect, ethnographic research on elites "forces researchers to come to terms with the challenge of their research roles and the limitations of their data. … The frailty of elite research cannot be hidden when one begs for access to the corridors of power" (Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007). In the following, the challenge of conducting interviews with elites and getting their approval of quotes will be addressed.

Regarding interviews, elite respondents can be challenging because "interviewees often frame their accounts in a politically conscious manner" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 292). The strategies that can be employed to overcome this challenge are being highly knowledgeable about a subject and showing empathy and interest in how the world appears from the perspective of the interviewee (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007). My ambition was that the respondents could tell their own story in their own terms, and I tried to be as unobtrusive as possible (McCracken, 1988). My own assessment is that my political background was an advantage during the interviews because it was easy for me to follow the respondents when they explained the intricacies of the policy process. I could easily relate to the challenges they faced because I had experienced many of them myself. This was helpful in getting the respondents to open up.

Lobbying is a controversial subject, and it could be challenging for sources to go on record and tell it as it is. Most of the politicians I interviewed had few problems with being quoted on the record, though for the lobbyists, this issue was more complicated. As this study demonstrates, lobbyists are engaged in quite advanced rhetorical role play in their efforts to create identification with politicians. They can offer politicians policy expertise, political intelligence, and personal caring, and they can argue in public interest terms to convey their message. They seek common ground and agreement, try their best to avoid conflict, and position themselves as trusted advisors and committed partners. Thus, it can be challenging to criticize and challenge the very people one is seeking to influence. Furthermore, lobbyists are not supposed to brag about their influence and achievements, because the politicians are the ones who should shine and obtain the credit.

Correspondingly, it is not surprising that some of the interviewees for this study were sometimes both hesitant and surprised when they read their interviews. One oil lobbyist told me that the interview was excellent but would probably lead to his/her resignation if it was quoted on the record. Therefore, to guarantee anonymity, it was crucial to keep the interview in the sample. Furthermore, participant observation can "get below and behind the surface of official accounts by providing texture, depth, and nuance" (Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007). Hence, in more informal settings, people can say things they would not say in a semi-structured interview with the recorder running. This applies particularly to instances where lobbyists gave more colorful descriptions of what they thought about the politicians they were trying to influence and when they talked about their own lobbying failures. Thus, several lobbyists I interviewed felt it was

easier for them to speak freely if they could speak on the condition of anonymity. The arguments listed above are the main reason I chose to quote the subjects anonymously.

Reliability, validity, and generalization

In this chapter, I have tried to explain my methodological choices in this study. However, all research projects struggle with questions of reliability, validity, and generalizability. Accordingly,, some concluding thoughts on these matters are warranted.

Reliability refers to whether the results can be trusted and if other researchers can replicate the results. According to Bryman (2016), *external reliability* means that it should be possible for others to replicate the study, while *internal reliability* refers to whether what I have observed during this research would be observed by someone else. Again, the challenge with a mixed-methods design is that quantitative and qualitative approaches have a somewhat different approach to the questions of reliability and validity.

From a quantitative perspective, reliability is more about the risk of measurement error. One could argue that the result from the parliament survey is quite reliable since the same questions have been repeated in 1995, 2012, and 2019. From a qualitative perspective, the question of reliability is more complicated (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). For the semi-structured interviews, I decided to use open-ended questions with probes, and I left the conversation open for pursuing angles I found interesting. This corroborates the recommendations for elite interviewing, where "excellent interviewers are excellent conversationalists. They make interviews seem like a good talk among old friends" (Berry, 2003, p. 679). Hence, in qualitative interviews, there is often a trade-off between validity and reliability because open-ended questions give "greater opportunity for respondents to organize their answers within their own frameworks. This increases the validity of the responses, … but it makes coding and then analysis more difficult" (Aberbach & Rockman, 2003, p. 674). However, for the questions that concerned the rhetorical strategies of lobbyists and the public interest dilemma, I was careful to ask all the respondents the same question with the same wording to simplify the coding process.

The greatest weakness regarding the reliability of the qualitative data in this study related to the coding. Even though I developed a coding book for the analysis of ethos, kairos, and topos, I have not conducted any inter-coder reliability test. Therefore, it is not given that other researchers

would group and categorize the material the same way I did. However, I would argue that the detailed coding process presented in this chapter makes the conclusions of the study more reliable and easier for other researchers to follow. Furthermore, coding makes the analysis more structured and increases the ability to detect underlying patterns than a more hermeneutic approach.

For the ethnographic part of the study and the coding of the field notes, the problem of reliability is even more complicated. In this chapter, I have tried to describe where I went and what kind of observations I conducted. However, there are no certain standards for how to write field notes or to transform these field notes into analytic categories. That is why ethnography has been criticized for its lack of methodological transparency, and "the analytic processes from which ethnographies are constructed often are vague, intuitive, and personalistic" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 40). Van Maanen (2011) separates between what he labels *realist* and *confessional tales*. *Realist tales* are third-person accounts of everyday life; *confessional tales* are often written from a personal perspective and tell the story of a fieldworker and a culture who come to understand each other better (Aktinson & Hammersley, 1998).

The field notes I wrote were in the realist style, which is close to journalistic reporting, in which the researcher takes the role of the third-person documentarist. Hence, most of my notes described episodes or conversations that I found interesting and thought could illuminate the research questions I had chosen. My research diary, conversely, was closer to the confessional tale in which I reflected on my own participation as a researcher and how my former life as a political professional affected what I saw and how I saw it. In the coding process, I tried to place the field notes with my realist tales according to the coding scheme I had chosen, while some of my confessional tales are mostly relevant for this chapter on methodology.

The question of validity

Validity refers to the extent to which "conclusions effectively represent empirical reality and assessing whether constructs devised by researchers represent or measure the categories of human experience that occur" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32). In general, a mixed-methods design can be said to improve both the validity and reliability of a study. This study used the methodological techniques of triangulation and complementarity to heighten the validity of the study. *Triangulation* refers to "the use of more than one approach to the investigation of a research question to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings" (Bryman, 2004, p. 1), while *complementarity* can be defined as "to measure overlapping but also diverse facets of a

phenomenon, yielding an enriched, elaborated understanding of that phenomenon" (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989, p. 258). The difference between complementarity and triangulation is that triangulation seeks to tap into the same phenomenon, while complementarity measures different or overlapping facets of the same phenomenon.

In the empirical chapters, triangulation between semi-structured interviews, survey questions, and participant observation is often used to confirm, add nuance to, and contextualize findings. For example, in the chapter on how lobbyists work with their ethos, I identify the ethos strategy called *we care about people* in which lobbyists exploit their social skills to create relationships with politicians. In the semi-structured interviews, this came up frequently. However, in participant observation, I was able to perceive how lobbyists use this strategy in social settings such as dinners and receptions. Furthermore, this finding is corroborated by the survey of MPs, where a clear majority answered that "personal conversations" with lobbyists have the highest informational value for them. Thus, in this instance, three sources of data could illuminate the ethos strategy "we care about people."

The role of complementarity is particularly important in Chapter 6, which deals with how lobbyists construct public interest arguments and how politicians evaluate these arguments. Here, having the perspective of both the politicians and the lobbyists gives an enhanced understanding of how the concept is used and understood in everyday politics as well as underscores the ambiguity and uncertainty that surround the concept.

One way to assess qualitative validity is through the concept of saturation, which means that adding new qualitative data does not add much value to the analysis. Hennink, Kaiser, and Marconi (2017) distinguish between *code saturation* and *meaning saturation*. *Code saturation* indicates that one has captured the range of issues in the data, while *meaning saturation* implies a deep and nuanced understanding of the data. According to their meta-study, nine in-depth interviews are sufficient to reach code saturation, while 16−24 interviews are necessary for meaning saturation.

With 30 semi-structured interviews and 50 pages of field notes, I felt that I reached both "code saturation" and "meaning saturation" in the material. Indeed, I ended up with coded material that was both rich and comprehensive. This is reflected in the empirical chapters, where I often use several quotes to illustrate the same concept or categorization of the data. However, for the sake

of clarity and analytical rigor, I have tried to single out the best and shortest quotes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Finally, *external validity* refers to the extent to which the results of the study are generalizable and can say anything about the rhetoric of lobbyists generally. Again, there is a difference between how quantitative and qualitative researchers relate to the issue of generalization. From a quantitative viewpoint, generalization is a sampling issue, and one could argue that the results from the parliament survey are representative of what Norwegian MPs think about lobbyists and the effects of their work. Therefore, the survey fulfils the criteria for statistical generalization.

Conversely, the qualitative data in this study are not based on random sampling and are closely tied to the policy area of energy and the environment. The question is, then, how typical are the seminars I attended and the people I interviewed? It is only the quantitative survey of the MPs that moves across policy areas, while the qualitative data is tied to the policy area of energy and the environment. Thus, it would be premature to conclude that the rhetorical strategies described in this study are typical of Norwegian lobbyists across policy areas. To answer this question satisfactorily would require a thorough comparative design that included lobbyists working in various policy areas. However, respecting the use of public interest strategies, this seems to be a trend that crosses policy areas (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020).

The question of generalization is also a question of the case that Norway presents. Even though Norway is a small country in Northern Europe, it also shares institutional similarities with other consensual democracies such as Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, and Austria (Lijphart, 1984, 2012). Hence, the consensual and identification-seeking lobbying style identified in this study might represent a larger cluster of countries with similar political institutions. Again, there are caveats to such a conclusion. Most of the existing studies we have of lobbying in Europe are studies of lobbying in the EU, while studies of lobbying on the national level are rare (Bitonti & Harris, 2017; Mahoney & Baumgartner, 2009; Woll, 2012). Consequently, the extent to which the rhetorical strategies identified in this study can travel across borders would be a fruitful area for future comparative research.

4 Ethos in modern lobbying

A central communicative challenge for lobbyists is the question of credibility. When they meet decision makers, they need to convince them that they are not self-centered actors pursuing their private interests. As mentioned in the theory chapter, ethos is a multi-faceted concept that relies on competence, character, and goodwill. In this chapter, I will explore how lobbyists construct and strengthen their ethos when they are lobbying against the SCEE. Thus, I will focus on the following research questions:

RQ1: *What kinds of strategies do lobbyists use to construct and strengthen their ethos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE*?

RQ2: *How do resources and the type of organization influence what kind of ethos strategies lobbyists engage in?*

The analysis is based on the coding of semi-structured interviews with lobbyists and politicians as well as field notes from five seminars arranged by interest groups where SCEE members were present. Some of the findings will also be displayed with some of the survey questions from the parliament survey, which asked about the consequences and effects of lobbying on Norwegian MPs. The field notes depict that lobbying also takes place in more informal and less obvious arenas such as seminars, dinners, and coffee breaks (Groll & McKinley, 2015; Grose et al., 2022; Nothhaft, 2017). As I will illustrate in the chapter, some goodwill strategies are closely tied to how lobbyists interact with politicians in more informal arenas.

The coding process is described in the methodological chapter, and the analysis of the dimensions of ethos will follow the structure of the code book presented in the methodological chapter. For each of the ethos strategies I describe, I will start with the perspective of the lobbyist and then complement it with the perspective of the members of the SCCE, survey data, and observational data for the sake of triangulation, nuance, and context. In contrast to chapters 5 and 6, this chapter makes extensive use of field notes. Therefore, it is a bit longer than the two next empirical chapters.

Competence

Competence deals with the rhetors' ability to convey themselves as knowledgeable and informed, with a full mastery of the topic being discussed (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; McCroskey & Young, 1981). As mentioned in the previous chapter, competence was operationalized as references to

lobbyists being "intelligent, trained, expert, informed, competent, bright" (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). This resulted in two categories in which lobbyists built their competence through enhancing their role as policy experts and providing political intelligence.

We have policy expertise

Policy expertise is often referred to as the most important thing interest groups can provide policy makers (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Esterling, 2009). This strategy is also acknowledged in the trade literature, where lobbyists are advised to move away from the role of the pressure group and into the role of the policy expert within their policy domain. This way, they can build credibility by becoming the "go-to source" for policy expertise for both journalists and political decision makers (Hegelund & Mose, 2013; Raknes & Solhjell, 2018).

When lobbyists working with the SCEE were asked what kind of information politicians appreciated the most, they usually returned to the role of being the policy expert who could provide timely, accurate policy expertise. Hence, assuming the role of a policy expert is a central strategy for building the lobbyists' ethos.

> They need facts and arguments that can help them in an ongoing case, but also help them to be visible in the media and look good within their own party. So, part of it is to build politicians and help them along. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

> We work a lot to become trusted partners with facts and knowledge. We are trying to not only say what is good for us, but to bring facts about what is happening, how things look, and what are the likely scenarios for the future. (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

As Energy Lobbyist 5 underscores, the aim is to become a "trusted partner," which SCEE members rely on when they need help on issues on which they are working. Oil Lobbyist 2 points to how delivering relevant policy expertise is also a way of helping politicians advance while they take care of the agenda of the lobbyist. Thus, lobbyists sometimes measure their level of success on whether they are the preferred provider of policy expertise because this is perceived as the start of a mutually beneficial relationship:

> I really felt we had succeeded when a politician who was an opponent of the oil and gas industry called us because he wanted some facts before a debate. Then I thought we really had succeeded because, when they come to us for the facts, it is easy to get other messages through as well. (Oil and Gas Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

As mentioned by Oil and Gas Lobbyist 1, being a trusted provider of facts is key to conveying other messages to politicians. Consequently, establishing themselves as policy experts is the

starting point for a relationship that can be expanded. Later in this chapter, I will demonstrate how the effective use of goodwill strategies depends on being approved as a policy expert in the first place. Similarly, SCEE members will build a network of providers of policy expertise whom they can trust.

> If I have issues, then I know which people I can obtain answers from and who I can call. You meet informally and get a relationship. It has nothing to do with friendship, and you often know what knowledge people have. Then it happens that you need some numbers, and then you know where to turn. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

By offering relevant policy expertise, lobbyists try to maneuver away from being a representative of narrow interest to becoming an independent expert. Both parties strive to portray this relationship as purely professional and instrumental. Therefore, it is interesting that SCEE Member 9 emphasized that the relationship with lobbyists "has nothing to do with friendship." Friendship gives the relationship an aura of unprofessional closeness and quid pro quo, while the role of the policy expert is more unassailable. One lobbyist claimed that his goal was to "be incredibly strong on facts, analysis, and argumentation that is not only perceived as a biased contribution, but also as an authority in the area." (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

The lobbyists' urge to be considered policy experts is mirrored by the members of the SCCE. When the SCEE members were asked what kind of information they valued from lobbyists, most pointed out the importance of facts and scientific evidence. Many SCEE members explicitly pointed out that they were not influenced by emotions and biased information.

> For my part, it is all about the facts. When I ask for information, I ask for facts. Some decide on emotions, but I'm not there. But for my own part, it is important to know what the consequences are, and if they can talk about the consequences in a credible way, then it is good. (SCEE member 1, author's translation)

> I like facts. Numbers and figures and what they specifically plan and will do. (SCEE Member 1, author's translation)

> Now, I am probably a politician who is very driven by facts, and emotions do not influence me. (SCCE Member 13, author's translation)

Interestingly, both politicians and lobbyists describe lobbying as an exchange of facts and scientific evidence, and both sides try to play down their own partisan motives in this process. Lobbyists try to build their ethos as honest brokers of policy expertise, while politicians portray themselves as driven by facts, not ideology and emotions. Even though SCEE members were representing members from the Socialist Left Party to the right-wing populist Progress Party, they

still emphasized that facts and solid evidence were what they wanted from lobbyists. This is in line with the findings of E. H. Allern (2010), who in a study of the links between Norwegian interest organizations and political parties concluded that "facts and know-how seem to be the most common type of content" (p. 249).

To succeed with the transfer of expert knowledge, lobbyists also need to adapt the information to politicians who are not as expert as the lobbyists. The policy field of energy and the environment is complicated and permeated with the languages of engineering, natural science, and economics. To make the expert knowledge accessible to the SCEE members, the lobbyists must find illustrative examples and even design basic training courses for new SCEE members.

> They need vetted facts that are pedagogically explained. It could be information like "if we do close down all our cable connections to other countries, we will have to build hydropower that equals 25 large hydropower plants" or "we can replace so many coal power plants in Europa with this cable." … We have an extreme number of facts, and if we only can make these facts tell a story they are extremely valuable; we are not always able to do that. (Energy Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

> The last years, we have had a "power school" with members and advisers from the SCEE. … Then we bring them to our headquarters and have a three- to four-hour seminar where we teach them how the power market works, and they can ask all the questions they fear are stupid and our top experts are there to answer them. Then we can explain how the price of power is decided and how wind, weather, and prices on carbon influence the price each of us pays. We also explain how important our power storage is and why we need power cables to other countries. … Our hope is that the politicians will have a better foundation for the complicated debates they participate in. (Energy Lobbyist 4, author's translation)

Energy Lobbyist 2's mention of "if we can only make these facts tell a story" points to the important challenge lobbyists face in making expert knowledge understandable to decision makers. However, the fact that interest organizations provide training to new SCEE members does not mean that SCEE members are unschooled on a more general level. Much like the situation for MPs in other countries, the members of the Norwegian Storting have undergone strong professionalization throughout the last 40 years. From 1965 to 2013, the share of MPs with higher education increased from 34% to 76%. Moreover, about one-third of the MPs worked in paid political positions before they became MPs (E. H. Allern, Karlsen, & Narud, 2014). However, unlike lobbyists, MPs are typically generalists, and when they move between policy areas, they must obtain an overview of the policy field. Lobbyists are key to that process. Many SCEE members described their first period in the committee as very hectic, as interest organizations lined up their lobbyists to introduce them to how they perceive the policy area.

In this respect, the seminars I attended where SCEE members were present could be perceived as an extension of the "schooling" strategy, in which interest groups try to educate SCEE members on which expert knowledge has value. Furthermore, the expert knowledge they provide in the seminars is designed to recommend specific policy solutions. One energy lobbyist explained the purpose of the Winter Conference of Energy Norway as follows:

> We think we could do much more with our vision of a fully electrified Norway and operationalize that vision. The Winter Conference is about that vision, and we would like to show the politicians that the whole industry agrees on that vision and wants to move forward. ... Then there are some political regulations that hamper that vision, such as the absurd high tax on the production of hydropower. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The fact that the lobbyists are "schooling" the politician points to an interesting asymmetry in the level of expertise between the politicians and the lobbyists. This might be connected to the fact that the policy area of energy and the environment is extremely complicated. However, a more plausible explanation is that while lobbyists tend to work with one policy area throughout their career, politicians are mainly generalists. When MPs are assigned to their different committees, previous work experience and expert knowledge are part of the equation. However, they usually do not get the committee that is first on their list. According to my interviews with SCEE members, they consider their assigned committee attractive, but after one time period, they want to move on to other committees to build competence and advance their political career. Hence, politicians must move from policy area to policy area to progress in their careers.

Table 4.1 Percentage of MPs re-elected to the same committee as at the start of the previous election period (four years earlier; (Rommetvedt, Forthcoming)[1]

Year	% re-elected
1977	33.5
1981	27.1
1985	29.9
1989	13.9
1993[2]	-
1997	18.8
2001	24.2

[1] Most MPs serve on the same committee throughout a four-year period, but some changes occur during the election period. MPs appointed a government minister must leave their seats in parliament, but if they leave their post in government, they return to parliament. Such shifts are not considered in the table.
[2] Not calculated due to the establishment of several new committees with crosscutting jurisdictions compared to the period before.

2005[3]	7.7/13.0
2009	17.8
2013	13.6
2017	18.6

Table 4.1 shows the percentage of MPs re-elected to the same committee after the previous election (Rommetvedt, Forthcoming). The table demonstrates that the long-lasting membership of a committee is quite rare and has decreased since 1977. Generally, Norwegian politicians are generalists and tend to move between policy areas (Christensen & Holst, 2020). This trend is also evident for SCEE. After the election in 2017, only three of 17, or approximately 17 percent of the members in the SCEE, continued in the committee while others moved to other committees. The high turnover and limited expert knowledge among the members of the SCEE mean that lobbyists must continually build new relationships and start the transfer of expert knowledge as SCEE members come and go. A lobbyist interviewed close to the election in 2017 described the last year of a parliament session as the best:

> This year, everything is perfect. I know everyone, and all is good. We have a good relationship with the SCEE, and they are easy to talk to. It won´t get better than just now, but when the autumn comes, we have to start all over again. (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

Generally, the status of SCEE has increased as the question of energy and the environment has increased in visibility and prestige. One energy lobbyist commented, "The level of knowledge there [the SCEE] has increased over time. It seems to be a popular committee where relatively well-known and -profiled politicians sit" (Energy Lobbyist 4, author's translation). However, the Storting has 169 members, and the SCCE has 19 members. Accordingly, the quality of the politicians who come and go will vary.

The challenge to constantly "re-educate" SCEE members can cause frustration and irritation among lobbyists. At one of the dinners I attended, an environmental lobbyist and an energy lobbyist discussed the SCEE. Both agreed that several members were "weak" and simply did not understand the complicated policy challenges they were trying to explain to them. Furthermore, one energy lobbyist described the minister of oil as "politically weak and lacks political directions, and his political advisor looks like he comes straight from high school." The word "weak" here refers to both political expertise and the ability to get things done. During the

[3] 7.7 percent excludes committees with changes in jurisdictions, while 13.0 percent includes committees with jurisdictions that are fairly similar to previous committees.

participant observation, it was often obvious that many of the lobbyists I followed considered themselves more skilled and knowledgeable than the politicians they were trying to influence. This view of politicians as quite mediocre is typical for policy professionals who admire politicians for their stamina but are not impressed by their intellectual abilities. Indeed, lobbyists feel intellectually superior to politicians (C. Garsten et al., 2015).

This asymmetric relationship regarding expertise and knowledge has certain similarities with the relationship between public administrators and elected politicians. Here, public administrators are often more skilled and experienced than the politicians they are serving and can use this knowledge to influence decisions in the direction they prefer (Alford, Hartley, Yates, & Hughes, 2017; Christensen & Holst, 2020).

There is also a deeper democratic reason that SCEE members are open to receiving policy expertise from lobbyists. For many SCEE members, the policy expertise of lobbyists is a welcome addition to all the information they receive from the government on diverse proposals. Political parties that are in opposition often need arguments that could build a counter-narrative to the policy proposals of the government.

> We get the formal answers when you ask the government, but that is the bureaucratic answer. Often, you need counter-expertise against this story that they present. We have an investigative section in the Storting, which is ok, but what we often need is counter-expertise from other sources. Whether you call it lobbyists or interest groups, I think both we and others are dependent on them. Then, it becomes our task to evaluate what we can use and what we cannot use so we do not just become a mouthpiece for someone. (SCEE Member 14, author's translation)

The view that policy expertise from interest groups represents a valuable counter-expertise to the evaluations of the government is widely shared among MPs. In the parliament survey in 1995, 2012, and 2019, MPs were asked about the consequences of lobbying. Table 4.2 shows the percentage of MPs who either totally agree or somewhat agree with claims about the value of policy expertise from lobbyists. The table illustrates that nearly 90 percent agree that they obtain better access to better information, and over 80 percent think it improves their options to control the government and government agencies. Thus, the general perception of the MPs is that the policy expertise of lobbyists is a welcome and necessary contribution to the policy process. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the number of respondents from each committee varied from four to 12. There were only minor variations in the answer to the questions across

committees. Therefore, on the survey questions, I report the numbers for all MPs across committees.

Table 4.2 Consequences of lobbying, percentage of MPs who agree/somewhat agree with various statements

Consequences of lobbying	1995	2012	2019
Parliament members obtain better access to alternative information and counter-expertise in relation to government/ministries.	91	91	89
The parliament gets better options to ensure that the government and government agencies follow the parliament's decisions or intentions.	81	83	88

Interestingly, a great many MPs find the policy expertise of lobbyists a valuable contribution to making better decisions. As SCEE Member 14 mentions, the Storting has a limited possibility of commissioning their own studies and background checks of government proposals. Compared to the EU and U.S., for example, the Norwegian Storting has rather limited possibilities to commission their own research (Christensen & Holst, 2020). Consequently, the interest organization is where they go for "counter-expertise." The challenge is the tendency of interest organizations to cherry pick their expertise, and advocates are "looking for scientific data to provide a compelling justification for his political, societal, environmental, or business goal" (Pielke, 2002, p. 368). This dilemma will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, where I look closer at how lobbyists construct public interest arguments and how politicians evaluate these arguments.

We have political intelligence

As mentioned above, policy expertise typically deals with the more technical aspects of politics, such as the consequences of proposals and their feasibility (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Nownes & Newmark, 2016). However, for lobbyists to succeed, policy expertise is not enough. Lobbyists need information on where issues stand, when issues will be decided, where public opinion is heading, and who their potential friends and enemies are (De Bruycker, 2019). Both forms of knowledge are vital for lobbyists to convey themselves as competent, bright, and informed, which are key terms McCroskey and Teven (1999) use to operationalize the competence of a rhetor.

A classic example of the role of political intelligence is a debate I witnessed during the oil industrial seminar in 2018 at Park Hotel in Sandefjord. The minister of oil and energy was standing in the bar with several other SCEE members. I was standing in a corner along with some

lobbyists from Equinor whom I used to work with when I was a PR consultant in Burson-Marsteller. Suddenly, a debate emerged on the future of the oil industry. The lobbyists from Equinor were worried about the development of the parliament groups of the Labour Party and the Conservative Party. The ties to the oil industry seemed weaker among the younger generation. Two SCEE members joined the conversation and gave their perspectives on the development of the oil industry and how political parties were handling the increased tension between the oil industry and the environmental movement. A lobbyist from Equinor tried to summarize their view of the situation after conversing with all the political parties at Stortinget. For an outsider, the conversation was quite revealing. Both the politicians and the lobbyists shared and collected political intelligence.

As discussed in the theory chapter, U.S. lobbying research separates "hacks" and "wonks" when discussing the competence of lobbyists. "Hacks" are considered specialists in policy processes and often have political backgrounds themselves, whereas "wonks" are often policy experts with more technical mastery of the policy area (LaPira & Thomas, 2017). Hence, the discussion in the bar at the Park Hotel was typically *hackish* in its attempt to analyze the political leverage for the oil industry in an age in which environmental concerns are increasing. Thus, *hackish knowledge* deals with "knowing the political game: to know where in the complex political system decisions are really made, when you must act in the policy process, and how political actors think and act" (Svallfors, 2016b, p. 9). Political intelligence is typically context dependent and politically useful. During the participant observation, the question of political intelligence came up repeatedly wherever there was an informal atmosphere. At the oil industrial seminar in Sandefjord, there was an ongoing conversation of how the industry should relate to the Storting and the political intelligence the lobbyists had gathered, giving them various answers. The lobbyists from Norwegian Oil and Gas seemed confident that the "iron alliance" between the Labor and the Conservative parties would protect them from harmful political changes.

The lobbyists from Equinor, however, read the situation differently. During one of the coffee breaks at the seminar in Sandefjord, I asked one of Equinor's lobbyists how bad they thought the situation was, and I was invited into a room where we could talk more candidly. I was told that the "iron alliance" was already cracking and that the oil industry was now at the crossroads. The lobbyist then listed several younger MPs from the Labor Party and the Conservative Party, which were more radical concerning environmental questions. The conclusion was that "the deepest fear of this industry is that their grip on the Labor Party and the Conservative Party will disappear; the

problem is that this is already happening. Statoil has no other chance than to become a low-emission company" (Equinor lobbyist, author's translation). Two months later, on the 15th of March 2018, Statoil held a press conference where they announced that they had changed their name to Equinor because "reflecting on the global energy transition and how we are developing as a broad energy company, it has become natural to change our name" (Equinor, 2018).

Consequently, a competent and informed lobbyist not only possesses policy expertise but also has political intelligence and can access valuable information on how political actors think about ongoing issues. Therefore, lobbyists with a wide network of sources could be a valuable provider of political intelligence for politicians because "good intelligence is not to be found through widely available published sources but by speaking directly with politicians, officials, or other informed players involved in an issue" (Mack, 2005, p. 341).

Political intelligence is typically not exchanged at formal meetings but in more informal arenas, such as seminars and dinners. Several SCEE members expressed that they used these occasions to exchange political intelligence with lobbyists.

> That is how they think the government will land in an issue, especially if it is an issue that has not landed yet. You can also obtain an impression of the intensity of an issue and how important the issue is when you talk to a person you know informally, rather than four at an official meeting. (SCEE Member 7, author's translation)

> You get to hear what is moving and what they are thinking about in the energy companies, but then, it is also an opportunity for us politicians to give some signals that are not in the form of written documents on the committee. (SCEE Member 2, author's translation)

Like the conversation in the bar at the Park Hotel, these exchanges are not one-sided. In exchange for a lobbyist's view, a member of the SCEE can send "signals," according to SCEE Member 2. Much like ordinary intelligence, political intelligence has value because it is shared with few people, and trust is a precondition for sharing. According to one member of SCEE, "signals" are typically "a slightly more honest assessment of how you look at the matter because it is easier to give to one or two people with whom you have a certain amount of trust. You can also give a more honest picture of how the issue is in the party, who to contact, and where the challenge is. So, it's something you do not do in a meeting, but which you do informally" (SCEE Member 7, author's translation).

Political intelligence is not a form of expertise that can be acquired in a university course. It is a highly practical form of expertise where both former experience and network size play a crucial role (Svallfors, 2016a, 2016b). In this respect, political intelligence is close to Aristotle's original understanding of competence as practical wisdom (phronesis), while policy expertise seems like scientific knowledge (episteme) and the knowledge of scientific and technical principles (techne; (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Hartelius, 2011). According to Flyvbjerg (2001), true expertise always has an element of phronesis since it always involves judgment and intuition that originate from long practical experience. Thus, experienced political players have a form of competence that can only be obtained through practical experience and involves an element of tacit skills, such as knowing when to move forward on a political issue and understanding party dynamics (C. Garsten et al., 2015; Svallfors, 2016a).

The importance of political intelligence in lobbying explains why former politicians are becoming increasingly popular as lobbyists (S. Allern, 2011; S. Allern & Pollack, 2018). In fact, 10 of the 14, or approximately 70 percent of the lobbyists interviewed for this study, had held political jobs or positions before they became lobbyists. Many of them indicated that a background in politics made it easier to understand the game of politics and to use their network to gather political intelligence. One lobbyist who previously held a higher position in government explained:

> I think it is important that you know a great many people and that the threshold for making contact is very much lower. This means that politicians contact you to a greater extent because they know who you are, how you can help them, and so on. So, I would think that it helps to bring down the threshold for contact. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Generally, both policy expertise and political intelligence are classic examples of insider resources where lobbyists seek to influence political decisions directly and are typical for more resourceful political actors (Binderkrantz, 2005; Kollman, 1998). Furthermore, to be effective in their lobbying efforts, interest organizations need both "hacks" and "wonks" in their ranks. Hacks typically obtain positions as lobbyists and become contact points toward politicians because of their ability to read the political landscape and understand what kind of information the politicians need. They must take into consideration that the politicians they are influencing are generalists, not skilled experts.

However, they are highly dependent on the "wonks," which are typically lawyers, economists, or engineers who can work out the details of their policy proposals and give them expert credibility.

One oil lobbyist explained lobbying as a complicated process of cooperation between the "hacks" and the "wonks" in the organization.

> The key to success there is to put together the people ... that is, the scientists, the social scientists, and the communications people. The key is to take quite complicated scientific arguments and translate them in such a way that ordinary people can understand them. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The major point to be made is that the two types of competence analyzed here, which I have labeled *policy expertise* and *political intelligence*, are closely interwoven, and organizations need both to succeed with their lobbying efforts. Even though LaPira and Thomas (2017) describe "hacks" and "wonks" as two ideal types of lobbyists, it is obvious that we are talking more about a continuum than separate categories. Some of the lobbyists I interviewed were clearly leaning toward one of the ideal types, while others had deep technical policy expertise combined with a keen sense for policy processes. Hence, these categories often overlap. However, a strong organizational ethos does not only consist of competence, but one also needs character and goodwill. In the following, I will describe the ethos strategies lobbyists against the SCEE use to portray themselves as honest and trustworthy.

Character

Character deals with rhetors' moral capabilities, such as being honest, trustworthy, and ethical (Hartelius, 2011; C. R. Smith, 2004). The coding process described in the methodological chapter revealed that lobbyists build their character through being embraced by people with authority, building coalitions, listening to their critics, and presenting themselves as honest and open about their motives.

We are liked by people with authority

At Equinor's Autumn Conference in 2018, more than 800 people were assembled in the Norwegian Theater. The conference was by invitation only, and people were carefully chosen from a list of influential people in Norwegian society, such as politicians, media leaders, academics, union leaders, and industrialists. All the SCEE members were there, along with Prime Minister Erna Solberg and Minister of Oil and Energy Kjell Børge Freiberg. Even though the prime minister, the CEO of Equinor, and Patricia Espinosa from the United Nations were on the speakers list, the main attraction of the day was Dr. Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA). Upon entrance, all the participants received a little leaflet

with a summary of IEA predictions for the global energy market, and Birol's predictions received wide media coverage. According to one of Equinor's lobbyists, the idea behind the seminar was "to provide a factual and realistic background for the Norwegian debate on energy and climate, and this seminar has been a resounding success" (Oil Lobbyist, author's translation).

The seminar in 2018 was the 10th time in a row that Birol was invited to Oslo by Equinor to present the IEA's forecast for the global energy market. An environmental lobbyist I talked to during the break explained that, for Equinor, attaching themselves to the policy expertise of the IEA has been an effective way of increasing their credibility in the general debate on energy and the environment.

> What they achieve is that all the people who are there, no matter if they work in the bureaucracy or the oil industry, share Equinor's version on what is the truth about how the energy and climate field develops. There are so many numbers, data, and graphs that what they are saying appears to be true. … The story is always supporting the notion that we need oil and gas for a long time and that Norwegian gas is important for the green conversion of Europe. (Environmental Lobbyist 4, author's translation)

Equinor's attachment to IEA is a typical example of the ethos strategy I have labeled *we are liked by people with authority*. People who boast about themselves often come across as uncredible and self-serving. Therefore, the rhetoricians of antiquity recommended the "third-person strategy," where a respected authority vouched for the character of the speaker (Aristotle, Trans. 2007; Cicero, Trans. 1949). This strategy is similar to the strategy Hartelius (2011) labels *expert networks* in her study of the rhetoric of expertise. Here, experts increase their ethos by associating themselves strategically "with other experts as well as with other areas of expertise" (Hartelius, 2011, p. 18). Consequently, much the same way academics improve their ethos by referring to more prestigious scholars than themselves, lobbyists can strengthen their character as experts by associating themselves with experts who have a higher standing in the public than themselves.

Since lobbyists build part of their credibility through the image of being policy experts, the approval of other more "independent" policy experts is of great value. This is where the consulting agencies, research institutes, and think tanks enter the picture. As one lobbyist put it, "[V]ery often, we ask consultants and others to make some reports if we perceive there are any numbers that are missing or an angle we are concerned about that is omitted" (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation).

As mentioned by Energy Lobbyist 1, consulting reports often have a double purpose. They help build the interest organization's character as honorable and trustworthy, but they also pave the way for specific policy solutions. Equinor uses the IEA report as a sounding board for the message that Norway can still extract oil and gas and reach its climate targets. Similarly, the energy industry uses reports to pave the way for its own growth. At the Winter Conference of Energy Norway 2019, lobbyists commissioned a report from DNV GL. The report explained the consequences of the IPCC scenario of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees in a Norwegian context. The conclusion was that electrification was key to reaching Norway's climate targets and that "electricity consumption in Norway will increase with 18 TWh by 2030." The message to the attending politicians from the SCEE was that Norway needs enormous investments in the production of renewable energy over the next 10 years.

Moreover, seminars are an important arena to showcase for decision makers that the interest organizations who work toward the SCEE are liked and respected by people with authority. In all five seminars I attended, the lobbyists either presented a report from a third party or invited a distinguished speaker who somehow vouched for the relevance and accuracy of the policy expertise of the interest organization.

In particular, the environmental organization Zero has used this strategy at the yearly Zero conference, which has featured speakers such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Kofi Annan, Bob Geldof, and Chelsea Clinton. However, in interviews, they acknowledged that this strategy was quite expensive and did not really help them in their lobbying efforts. Furthermore, their evaluations showed that the audience wanted policy expertise, not celebrities. Thus, when I attended the Zero seminar in 2018, the opening speaker was the chair of the IPCC, Hoesung Lee, who could tell the audience that he was "happy to perceive the word 'zero' everywhere" and stated that the IPCC report "also could be called the Zero report." Hence, in the end, Zero wants "more voices that say the same thing as us with a certain weight and higher credibility" (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation).

The approval of people with authority can also be achieved by mobilizing resources from lobbyists' own organizations. Resourceful business organizations such as Energy Norway, Statkraft, Equinor, and Norwegian Oil and Gas have a large pool of economists, lawyers, and engineers they can use in direct meetings with politicians to increase their organizational ethos. Toward the end of the chapter, I will discuss in more detail how resources impact what kind of

ethos strategies lobbyists engage in. The point to be made here is that lobbyists can bring in policy experts from their own organizations to improve their character.

> They experience not just having met a lobbyist and a big talker, but someone who knows something about the things they are interested in. So, we include the tax experts when we talk about tax and not just someone who has heard of it. Or we could include the guy who has built power plants for 30 years and even better-built power plants in the neighborhood they come from [the SCEE members]. (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

This "boots on the ground" strategy is quite like what Naurin (2007) observes in his study of professional industry lobbyists in the EU. According to Naurin (2007), politicians have a certain fascination for experts who are close to the reality of the areas they are lobbying for, and "representatives of reality have more authority when they speak" (p. 97). In her study of expertise as a rhetorical genre, Hartelius (2011) argues that being a successful expert "requires locating one's experience at the center—not the periphery—of everyday life. The more relevant an expert seems to the public, the more powerful she will be" (p. 29). In this respect, member-based interest organizations have a kind of expertise in "knowing where the problem is" and can strengthen the credibility of these claims by associating themselves with the expertise of their members (Christensen & Holst, 2020). Consequently, business associations can bring in CEOs who explain the consequences of a tax proposal, unions can bring in local union leaders to explain the effect of local job losses, and environmental organizations can bring in local activists to talk about the local effect of a planned wind power plant.

We are not alone

Seeking approval from people with authority is one way of increasing the credibility of the rhetor. As mentioned above, this strategy is often connected to seeking the approval of independent consultants or research institutes that produce more unbiased knowledge than the interest organizations, themselves. A related and quite prominent lobbying strategy is to enter into lobbying coalitions with other interest organizations (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Nownes, 2006). Coalitions are powerful ways of strengthening ethos because "a coalition can indicate the overall strength and diversity of support for a policy proposal to policy makers, thus 'signaling' the political importance of the coalition" (Junk & Rasmussen, 2019, p. 661).

All the interest organizations interviewed for this study worked with developing coalitions in some form. Statkraft, for example, was partnering with both NGOs and environmental organizations:

> We work closely with Zero, World Wildlife Fund, and the Red Cross are our partners in addition to the Norwegian Climate Foundation. We do it at the partner level where we develop common ideas and find analyses. We do the same with Bloomberg and other external actors because we perceive those facts and analysis are in short supply in some discussions. (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Friends of the Earth Norway, however, is more concerned with cooperation with smaller business organizations who often share their wish for the conservation of nature, such as the Norwegian Fishermen's Association and the Norwegian Small Farmer's Association, but work on a case-to-case basis. The environmental organization Zero, however, has taken this line of thinking a step further and uses business alliances as a standard lobbying strategy.

> We always choose those business organizations that have something to gain from the issue we are working on. We choose the issue first, and then we look at which business actors have something to gain from succeeding with the issue. Sometimes, we cooperate directly, while at other times, they support us economically. (Environmental Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

> The oil industry, represented by Norwegian Oil and Gas and Equinor, has established a permanent lobbying coalition called Konkraft, which coordinates their lobbying efforts: "We have a collaboration called Konkraft together with the Norwegian Shipowners' Association, Norwegian Industry, LO, Industry, and Energy and Fellesforbundet. It is about coordinating them in our cases, and it is an example of an indirect way of working. The trade union movement is, among other things, vital in setting the framework for where the Labor Party goes. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Environmental organizations teaming up with business organizations and the oil industry teaming up with unions are both examples of diverse coalitions considered more effective because a coalition of "strange bedfellows" signals broader support (Beyers & De Bruycker, 2018; Holyoke, 2009). This point is also acknowledged in the trade literature, which advises interest organizations to find surprising coalition partners who are different from themselves (Hegelund & Mose, 2013; Raknes & Solhjell, 2018). However, I will argue that coalitions not only strengthen the ethos of the lobbyist but are also crucial to putting into play diverse public interest arguments and helping lobbyists to resolve the public interest dilemmas with which they are struggling. This will be elaborated in Chapter 6, which delves into how lobbyists construct public interest arguments.

Finally, in a Norwegian context, forming alliances with regional actors and interest groups has proven a highly effective strategy to increase the organizational ethos of interest organizations. Historically, Norway has been a country with a strong divide between the center and the periphery, where the peripheral forces resisted the forces of nationalization and secularization in

defense of regional identities (Rokkan & Valen, 1964). Even though the cultural dimension of the conflict has been weakened, its territorial dimension is still strong and can be mobilized by political actors (Stein, Buck, & Bjørnå, 2019). Accordingly, "jobs in the district are a trump card in many Norwegian political discussions" (Ihlen, Binderkrantz, & Öberg, 2021, p. 316). As I will reveal in the next chapter, regional alliances were crucial for the oil industry in its struggle for tax relief in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this strategy is also important for lobbyists in search of a public interest argument that is difficult to match.

We listen to our critics

At the Zero conference in 2018, the then-CEO of Equinor, Eldar Sætre, was onstage. "You may be wondering what the boss of Equinor is doing here today, and if you had asked me a few years ago, I would have wondered myself." However, he told the audience that climate change affects us all and argued that "IPCC is totally right when they tell us that the world is running out of time to combat climate changes." During the speech, I was standing beside the Equinor lobbyist who was following him to the conference and had worked on the speech. He leaned over and told me, "It is vital for us to be here, even though we will face tough questions. This is the only way forward for us."

An oil company that argues for the Paris Agreement and admits that the production of oil and gas must be reduced is arguing against what most people would perceive as their immediate self-interest. This is an effective strategy to strengthen the character of the rhetor because we find people to "be more credible when arguing for a position opposed to his [sic] own best interests than when arguing for changes obviously in his [sic] own interests" (Walster, Aronson, & Abrahams, 1966, p. 327).

Sætre's speech is a classic example of the ethos strategy I have labeled *we listen to our critics*. The lobbyists working toward the SCEE achieve this effect either by incorporating the views of their critics into their own arguments or by simply inviting their critics to their arrangements to acknowledge that they value critical views. Sætre's speech at the Zero conference is an example of the first version of the strategy, which in rhetorical theory is labeled *prolepsis*. In prolepsis, a rhetor "is responding to the anticipated objections of one's opponents" (Jasinski, 2001, p. 554).

The use of prolepsis is quite common in direct meetings with politicians. Since there always are counter-arguments and two sides to an issue, seasoned lobbyists bring up the counter-arguments

themselves. One environmental lobbyist mentioned that "it is your job also to know what the counter-arguments are and be able to answer them well. … Politicians will always ask questions" (Environmental Lobbyist 1, author's translation). Similarly, SCEE members mentioned that they sometimes became suspicious when proposals were presented in a very positive light and objections were kept out of the presentations: "You should as far as possible include the whole picture, and aggressive self-promotion is rarely anything particularly enlightening. It always, it triggers questions like ok, what's the other side of the coin here?" (SCEE Member 2, author's translation).

This is in line with McGrath (2006), who in his interviews with lobbyists in Brussels, Washington, and London noted that "lobbyists, themselves, often say that it is important, when making their position clear to a policy maker, that they also deal with any contrary arguments" (p. 75). Thus, ethos building for lobbyists working against the SCEE includes acknowledging that there are other interests involved in the issues that do not necessarily share their perspective.

The second variant of the "we listen to our critics" strategy is when interest groups invite critical voices into the arenas they control themselves, such as seminars and breakfast meetings. In particular, the oil industry is concerned with what they label "reflection" and "dialogue" and perceive this attitude as central to securing their future existence:

> I am concerned that we have a dialogue, not a monologue, that we listen and acknowledge the views of others, and that we are reflective. We should reflect on the company in a future where we do not have all the answers. … If you want reflection, you need someone who can reflect back with other points of view. So, we have had several environmental organizations, including Silje Lundberg [Leader of Friends of the Earth Norway], at two events, and they do not say anything else because they are invited by us. We are not just talking to our existing allies. (Oil Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

This strategy was evident in all the seminars I attended. Even though the interest organizations could have chosen to keep the critics at bay and celebrate their own unity, they chose to invite the critics in. At the Zero seminar, then-Minister of Finance and leader of the Progressive Party, Siv Jensen, was invited to talk about her views on the climate crisis even though she represents a party who has members who sometimes question the existence of climate change and strongly oppose higher taxes and fees to change people's habits and attitudes in a more climate-friendly direction. At the conference, Siv Jensen was interviewed with former minister of finance and now-director of Cicero (Center for International Climate Research) Kristin Halvorsen, who to a large extent represents the same views on these issues as Zero.

Inviting in critics can be a risky strategy if the goal is to increase credibility. An interest organization opening up for criticism and public debate must be able to handle the rhetorical challenges that follow. At the Winter Conference of Energy Norway, the political highlight was a debate with members from the SCEE, the board leader of Energy Norway, and Frode Alfheim from the union Industry and Energy. During the debate, Energy Norway could not give a credible answer to challenges from both the union and the SCEE members. One SCEE member told the audience that "the energy industry is dependent on the support from the public, and now they are experiencing a loss of reputation."

After the debate, an energy lobbyist tied the poor performance in the debate to the inability of the industry to engage with its critics. "You saw it on the stage there that Eimund, who is chairman of the board of Energy Norway, was picked apart by Alfheim; there was nothing left. So, we are not trained debaters, and we do not know how to play the game of politics. We are not an industry that has fought for anything" (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation). Similarly, the unions that organize oil workers like to invite their critics but struggle with how to engage them. At LO's oil and gas seminar, only two SCEE members were present, and one of them told the audience that they had to step up their engagement with their critics: "You must not accept the critique against you. You are not zealots. … I want to hear and perceive more of you and that you say that this industry is future oriented!"

In summary, being liked by people with authority, listening to critics, and building alliances are examples of a rhetorical strategy that Hartelius (2011) labels *expert networks*. Lobbyists increase their ethos by showing politicians that "their expertise is linked to other forms of expertise for which the public has a high regard" (Hartelius, 2011, p. 18). In particular, building alliances with other experts gives the politician the impression that the arguments lobbyists are pursuing are not self-serving but have broad support. Consequently, the oil industry's close relationship with the IEA and open engagement with the environmental movement strengthens their character because they associate themselves with other experts and other areas of expertise (Hartelius, 2011).

We are open and honest

Being liked by people with authority, listening to critics, and building alliances can all be considered "third-party" strategies in which lobbyists align themselves with other credible characters to strengthen their own character. However, lobbyists also use more direct strategies to

strengthen their ethos in their direct interactions with politicians. In his classic study of the communication of lobbyists, Milbrath (1960) asked both lobbyists and members of Congress about the character traits of effective lobbyists and concluded that "the qualities most frequently mentioned by both lobbyists and congressmen were honesty and integrity. Many, especially in Congress, went as far as to say that if a lobbyist did not possess these qualities, he [sic] was completely ineffective" (pp. 140−141).

This study illustrates that Milbrath's insight is still valid. The most important character trait that emerged during the interviews and participant observation was honesty. Both SCEE members and lobbyists emphasized honesty as key to building a meaningful relationship, and any breach of this norm could lead to a crisis of credibility for the lobbyist.

> I think it's to be honest and that people can trust you [a good lobbyist]. (Oil Lobbyist 1, author's translation)
>
> If you try to bluff and are imprecise on the wrong things, then you are completely dead. (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)
>
> If you want me to do something good for your business, then you are dependent on finding some more general arguments, but it is perfectly fine to say that it is good for you. Honesty is vital in such contexts. (SCEE Member 6, author's translation)
>
> I think he [sic] is someone who does not try at all to hide what he is doing, that he is open [a good lobbyist]. If you get straight into an issue and he [sic] makes you aware of what they want done, then that is fine. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

When lobbyists working toward the SCEE talk about honesty, they often refer to the accuracy of the information they provide. If the information they provide is too biased or simply wrong, this could lead to a crisis of credibility. The reason for this is obvious: Politicians do not have time to double-check every position paper and memo they receive from lobbyists, and often this information ends up in recommendations from the SCEE, private members' bills, interpellations, or in the speeches of MPs. In the interviews with lobbyists working toward the SCEE, they often expressed that the worst thing that could happen was if they provided wrong or highly inaccurate information. Thus, for political professionals, "providing fast and correct information is a game with little tolerance for even the smallest mistake" (Svallfors, 2016a, p. 11).

Even though lobbyists often mention the word *honesty* in interviews, it is obvious that they are not thinking of honesty in the more colloquial sense, which means that a person is always telling the truth. Hence, a lobbyist can be a reliable provider of accurate information, but still package the

information so it strengthens the case of the interest organization and does not disclose the true intentions behind why they provide this service. Therefore, lobbyists want to "always be seen as honest, and they would invest incredible energy into preserving a reputation for honesty" (Groll & McKinley, 2015, p. 19). Thus, having "a reputation for honesty" is different from being honest on a more philosophical level.

The relentless focus on accurate information is in line with Chalmers (2013) who argues that in a world of information abundance, "new information loses its value," and "reliable information becomes invaluable" (p. 491). Hence, quality information retrieved from lobbyists helps to build a trusting relationship. Thus, policy expertise, itself, is not enough to gain a working relationship with SCEE members and for lobbyists to position themselves as honest brokers of this expertise to obtain permanent access to politicians. One energy lobbyist concluded, "I do not go around and know everything about everything, but I know a little about everything, and I know who to contact to obtain the exact information quickly. If you manage to serve politicians over time, you build trust either by being able to respond directly or quickly find someone else who can respond" (Energy Lobbyist 4, author's translation).

Politicians in SCEE are also concerned with honesty concerning the motives of lobbyists and the interests they represent. As SCEE Member 6 mentions, a private company that pretends it is not interested in profit and only cares about the public interest is not being honest about its motives. Furthermore, SCEE Member 9 addresses the problem of being dishonest about the interests the lobbyist represents. The SCEE members were extremely negative about what they labeled "indirect" attempts to influence them, such as when interest organizations hired PR agents to represent them and contact them on behalf of their clients. One member of the SCCE commented that "when our old friends in the PR industry get in touch, I say, 'Why can't we just meet these organizations directly then?'" (SCEE Member 11, author's translation).

Honesty is also about being open to the political parties you have met and what kind of information you have given them. Several lobbyists working toward the SCEE admitted that they sometimes sent the same policy proposals to several parties simultaneously and ended up with assorted political parties adopting the same proposal without knowing about each another. This was seen as a clear breach of confidence and could be quite embarrassing for both the politician and the lobbyist. One environmental lobbyist commented, "If you have sent something to everyone, it is important that you are clear that it has been sent to everyone. Sometimes, it can be

so ridiculously clear that lobbyists are behind the proposal, so we are meticulous there" (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation).

The assessment of Environmental Lobbyist 3 shows the paradoxical nature of lobbying and why it is hard for lobbyists to talk on record about their achievements. Lobbyists are seeking influence, but they cannot brag about their victories publicly because that would be a breach of the rules of the game, in which one side is presumably not dominating the other (Nothhaft, 2017). Furthermore, when lobbyists succeed, they are expected to praise politicians, not themselves (Trapp & Laursen, 2017). Therefore, when the level of influence is sometimes exposed, it creates an awkward situation for both the lobbyist and the politician.

Goodwill

Goodwill is about having the listener's best interests at heart and being responsive to the needs of the audience (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Lobbyists build goodwill through caring about people, providing political solutions, understanding political constraints, not being self-centered, recognizing good work and showing respect, offering politicians a platform to speak, and expanding the politicians' network.

We care about people

Rosenthal (2000) has noted that "few lobbyists can survive without a sense of and enjoyment in dealing with people" (p. 64). Furthermore, a Brussels lobbyist has suggested that "there are three important things to know about lobbying: contacts, contacts, contacts" (Thomas & Hrebenar, 2000). During the fieldwork, I was often struck by the strong social skills of the lobbyists with whom I spent time. They are not only highly knowledgeable about the issues with which they work, but they also convey themselves as good listeners and skilled conversationalists. They can easily switch topics between politics and more personal topics and often have a keen sense of humor. It is difficult to form relationships on a purely instrumental basis, and several of the lobbyists working against the SCEE underscored that a genuine interest in other people was important for their job:

> You must like to walk around and talk to a lot of different people in one night. Some people are a little introverted and do not like that, but I think it's very nice and fun. Because when people are relaxed, you get to hear funny stories, and you kind of get to know them on a more personal basis, and I enjoy that. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

> I do not think introverted people fit into this type of job. You must love living a social life and enjoy getting to know new people. If you are afraid of getting to know new people, then this is not the job for you. (Energy Lobbyist 4, author's translation)
>
> I have worked with different people, and I've seen who succeeds best: those who are social and do not take themselves too seriously. Self-assurance does not go well with lobbying. (Oil Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

The importance of charm and a talent for socializing seems to be a general trait that is appreciated for lobbyists across political systems, much like the need to be honest and open (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022; McGrath, 2006). The fact that lobbyists like to socialize with politicians and are interested in them on a more personal level can appear both genuine and strategic simultaneously (Nothhaft, 2017). On the one hand, as one environmental lobbyist argued, "A great deal of it comes very naturally. These are people you want to hang out with [the politicians] because you think it's fun" (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation). In particular, during dinners and more informal situations, I often observed that lobbyists and politicians have a great deal in common and enjoy each other's company. At the dinners I attended, the two most popular topics were analyses of what was happening in Norwegian politics and "tales from the trenches," where both lobbyists and politicians shared stories about success and failures. This same form of intimacy was noted by Nothhaft (2017) in her study of lobbyists and politicians in Brussels.

On the other hand, doing what is natural can also be strategic even though the lobbyists do not reflect much on it themselves. All the lobbyists I spent time with had a background in professions in which they were used to spending time close to people with power as political journalists, top public officials, and political advisors in political parties or in the government. Hence, it was natural for them to approach MPs and even ministers, and in social situations, they had a clear tendency to be drawn toward the most powerful people in the room.

In McCroskey and Teven's (1999), framework "empathy" is a common strategy for creating goodwill, and this involves an element of identification because you are willing to perceive the world from other people´s perspectives. However, it would be wrong to describe lobbyists' social work as a generalized form of empathy. Consequently, caring about people does not involve a general love for humankind, but a more specific ability to get close to and create relationships with people in power. Thus, the networking of lobbyists shares many similarities with other policy professionals such as PR consultants and employees in think tanks, where being close to power and exercising power are a central motivation (C. Garsten et al., 2015, p. 171).

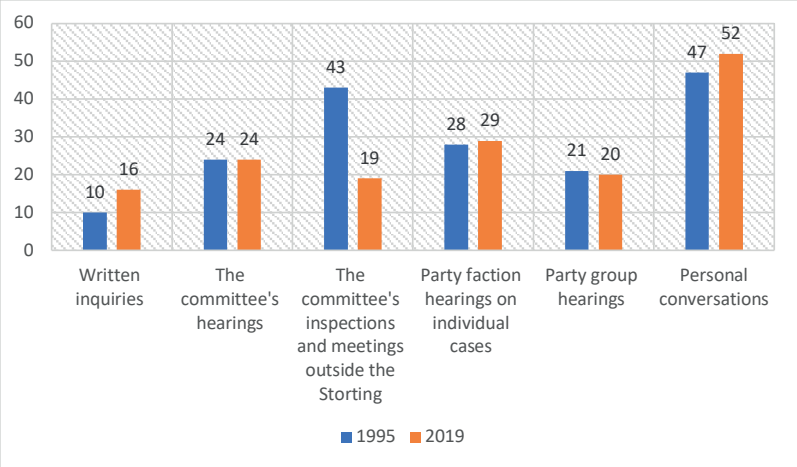
Caring about people and being social is important for lobbyists because it is seen as a prerequisite for developing a working relationship. Seminars with their dinners, lunches, and coffee breaks are an important arena for establishing contact. In these situations, lobbyists often avoid direct lobbying, but instead try to establish a relationship that they can develop later. As mentioned above, the high turnover for MPs in committees means that lobbyists must constantly build relationships with members from the SCEE. Informal arenas are often the natural starting point.

> I would say that the most important thing is that they know who you are; they have had a beer with you. Then, it is easier to follow up. Whether they want to do what you want in environmental politics is another matter, and it is much more complicated, but that's where you have to start. (Environmental Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

> You get more information and get to know them better [from being in seminars]. It is not like you convince someone over a beer or a coffee. The informal encounters are often about getting to know new people, getting some information about what is happening, and simply lowering the threshold for making contact again. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

As Environmental Lobbyist 1 and Oil Lobbyist 2 mention, the rationale behind developing a more personal relationship is to increase the frequency of contact. Furthermore, the personal relationships that lobbyists build with politicians seem to have value. In the parliament surveys from 1995 and 2019, there was a question about the value of information that members of the Stortinget got from organized interests in different situations. Interestingly, "personal conversations" by far are the most important form of contact that had the highest value for MPs in both 1995 and 2019.

Figure 4.1 How much information value will you say that the following forms of contact with organized interests have for you? (Percentage who answered "very large").



Caring about someone is also about understanding when someone is in the mood for something. For lobbyists, it is important to respect that politicians need time off and do not want to be lobbied all the time. During Energy Norway´s Winter Seminar, an energy lobbyist provided an interesting example of this delicate balance:

> Today, I saw [member of the SCEE] in the breakfast room, and then I just ask if it is ok that I sit down there. Then, I do not spend time talking about specific issues they will look at in the SCEE, but then you talk a little loosely. It is a bit tiring for them to be bombarded with lobbying messages all the time; we can have our own meetings for that. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The same lobbyist later acknowledged that it was very important that the SCEE members show up at the Winter Conference because this created a venue where lobbyists use their social skills to connect with politicians on a more personal level.

> Here you get the opportunity to get to know each other better. My experience of talking to politicians is that it is best to meet them as human beings. It's like you're a politician and I'm a lobbyist but given that the politician is a father of two, we can talk a little about it. I also have two children. You will find that they are not just a suit with a political party program. They are also ordinary people, and if they notice that you are, too, it will be much easier. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The quote is a good example of how lobbyists are constantly seeking identification and common ground in their interactions with politicians. When they are talking politics, they try to depict that they have relevant policy expertise and that they share the same policy goals. However, when they are personal, they are searching for common ground through conversations about family life and

common interests. This is what Burke called the simplest form of identification, in which the rhetor merely says, "I am like you" (Day, 1960).

Finally, the personal closeness between politicians and lobbyists is a tricky balance. A great deal of the critique against modern lobbying emphasizes how the tight relationship between lobbyists and politicians creates an aura of corruption and elitism. In particular, the revolving door between PR, lobbying, and politics creates an impression of elites who undermine the norms of representative democracy (S. Allern, 2011; S. Allern & Pollack, 2018; Falasca & Helgesson, 2020). Thus, there are limits to how close a relationship can be before it becomes uncomfortable for both the lobbyist and the politician:

> There are some limits to how you can socialize with politicians. To sit and talk or stand in the bar at the Winter Conference with a beer with the minister of oil and energy is acceptable because it is in a public setting, while having a lot of contact with private or secretive closed meetings would be more difficult. (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Hence, seminars play an important role because they provide an acceptable venue for lobbyists to socialize with politicians without being accused of being secretive or overly close to politicians. Getting close to power and spending time with politicians in more informal settings is a prerequisite for building a strong ethos because building trust depends on repeated interactions at several venues (Godwin et al., 2012; J. C. Scott, 2015).

We keep it short and simple

Caring for someone and being sensitive to their needs also means having an idea of how they schedule their days and how they allocate their time. Politicians have a hectic schedule in which they receive enormous amounts of information they must digest. A major challenge for politicians is that their attention is scarce, and they are overwhelmed with problems (Zahariadis, 2014). As discussed earlier in the chapter, SCEE members are not policy experts and need to attain complex policy information in a format that is possible for them to digest. Thus, to get through to politicians on complex policy issues, lobbyists must work to make their messages as simple as possible.

> I always think, "Keep it simple." The most important task is to present the case. … This is the case, and these are the arguments, as short and simple as possible. (Environmental Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

> Don't ask for a meeting with politicians unless you really have something relevant and important to say. They are pressed for time, and their time is valuable. So, if you ask for a

> meeting, you need a very clear idea of what you are going to say, and they will remember two or a maximum of three messages after the meeting. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The necessity of being short and concise is frequently mentioned in the trade literature on lobbying (Nicolle, 2019; Raknes & Solhjell, 2018). Therefore, it is surprising that many of the skilled lobbyists in the sample mentioned this goodwill strategy. However, this strategy is also about identification in that lobbyists recognize constraints that politicians operate under and see the world from their perspective (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022).

For the lobbying amateurs, the lack of this crucial goodwill strategy has consequences. SCEE members frequently mentioned "information overload" as one of the classical errors lobbyists make. The professionals bring a "one-pager" to the meetings, while the amateurs bring too much information and cannot prioritize their demands.

> You can't bring a 10-page paper with lots of facts because we never have time to read that. You need a one-pager with your main message, and talk around that. If you have 10 topics, you have to ask for several meetings because we never agree to more than 30 minutes. (SCEE Member 3, author's translation)

> I have experienced everything from a brilliant one-pager with all relevant information to a binder that weighs one and a half kilo. ... Everybody who has been in this game knows that you have to be short, concise, and effective in meetings. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

Again, it is interesting to note how the SCEE members look at the world of lobbying through professional eyes and expect the people they meet to understand what kind of information they want and how they want it packaged. Hence, the triangulation of the data where I ask lobbyists and politicians the same question reveals a pattern that lobbyists are constantly trying to catch up with and understand the demands of the politicians they are trying to influence. Politicians tend to get annoyed when lobbyists do not live up to their expectations (Nothhaft, 2017).

We provide political solutions

In the trade literature, lobbying amateurs are portrayed as emotional, self-centered, and aggressive while the professionals are looking for constructive solutions to practical political problems (Hegelund & Mose, 2013; Zetter, 2014). Thus, they try to perceive the world from the perspective of the politicians and adapt their policy proposals to the political agenda of the politicians they are lobbying.

Several lobbyists working toward the SCEE emphasized the need for not just providing policy expertise but leaving behind a political proposal that coincides with the agenda of the politicians they are meeting. Consequently, the policy expertise that lobbyists possess must be packaged in a way that is appealing to politicians. One oil lobbyist emphasized that "you need solutions that suit them. If it fits their party program or personal agenda, it is easier for them to do something about it" (Oil Lobbyist 1, author's translation). Another oil lobbyist said, "You have to leave something concrete that they can use. Things that give them a starting point and can be part of their political program" (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation). This description fits well with Naurin (2007), who in his study of professional lobbyists in Brussels concluded that professional lobbyists come to a lobbying meeting with a goal "to contribute to workable political solutions" (p. 123).

In a recent study of 58 interest organizations, nearly 50 percent mentioned "workable political solutions" as a strategy for creating goodwill among decision makers (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022) Contributing to political solutions is also a sign of professionalism, whereas amateurs just complain and professionals solve problems. According to SCEE members, the need for workable political solutions is a rather mundane expectation that many lobbyists often fail to meet. A great many lobbyists expect that their job is to address a problem, and then the politicians must devise a solution.

> There is always someone lobbying us, and when we ask them what to do, they do not have any answer! It is a bit like when someone says, "This should be easier to do," and we say, "Ok, what should we do?" But they haven´t thought about that (laughter). This happens quite often. These diffuse appeals about a policy area really have no value. (SCEE Member 11, author's translation)

The fact that the politicians, themselves, criticize lobbyists for being problem oriented, vague, and having general wishes just underscores how important political intelligence and insider knowledge is to lobbying success. Consequently, the politicians in the SCEE expect lobbyists to devise workable political solutions. Meanwhile, it is obvious that this is a goodwill strategy only the most competent lobbyists can use. I will return to this problem at the end of the chapter when I discuss how resources impact the ability of interest organizations to utilize the ethos strategies described in this section.

We understand constraints

Lobbying is about influencing the policy process, and lobbyists try to identify policy windows where their proposals have a better chance of being realized (Godwin et al., 2012). To exploit the

policy process to their own advantage, lobbyists working toward the SCEE need to understand the constraints the politicians operate under and adapt their proposals to these constraints. This goodwill strategy is clearly related to the previous goodwill strategy of providing political solutions, according to which several lobbyists working to influence the SCCE mentioned that they needed political solutions that "suit them" and can "be part of their political program." Consequently, understanding constraints also depends on the quality of the political intelligence that a lobbyist can collect. The more a lobbyist knows about a politician, the more he or she can adapt to the needs of the politician.

Thus, this goodwill strategy clearly depends on the level of competence of the lobbyist regarding crafting policy proposals that fit the decision makers they are trying to influence and collecting high-quality political intelligence that enables him or her to influence the politician at the right moment of the policy process. One lobbyist described this as a process in which they constantly must monitor the activities of the SCEE and adapt to the agenda they are pursuing:

> I think a lot in the life of politics is about timing. You have to be on and pay attention. If you are meeting with SCEE members, you have to know exactly what issues they are working on. When the proposal is delivered, it is too late. You have to know exactly when things are going to be delivered and the possible room for persuasion.
> (Energy Lobbyist 4, author's translation)

The assessment of Energy Lobbyist 4 shows that understanding constraints is a complicated political operation and requires a detailed understanding of how the world looks from the perspective of the politician (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022). The question of both "timing" and "the possible room of persuasion" indicates that rhetoric always plays out in a context and the context affects what is persuasive (Herrick, 2017; Kjeldsen, 2014). Therefore, the goodwill strategy of "understanding constraints" calls for a more elaborate rhetorical analysis by bringing in contextual variables. Hence, the next chapter (Chapter 5) will delve deeper into the challenges lobbyists working toward the SCEE face concerning timing and deciding how to deal with opportunities and constraints through bringing in the classical concept of kairos and Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation. However, for the purposes of the ethos analysis in this chapter, it is important to note that "understanding constraints" is an important strategy for showing goodwill toward decision makers.

We are not self-centered

Both the trade literature and the academic literature on lobbying have pointed to how lobbyists package their policy proposals in public interest rhetoric (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Nicolle, 2019; Uhre & Rommetvedt, 2019; Zetter, 2014). This discursive strategy can be seen as a form of goodwill since lobbyists use public interest rhetoric as an act of kindness and understanding toward the decision makers they are trying to convince (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022). One energy lobbyist described it as a process of identification in which lobbyists try to rise above their self-interest and instead have the politician's interests at heart and overcome the divisions that separate them.

> All politicians have some overarching goals they would like to reach, and I think it is wise to build a narrative from these goals to the concrete proposal you are pursuing. You have to think about what politicians are trying to achieve. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Similarly, an oil lobbyist argued that understanding and not being self-centered are important for lobbying success because "it is about understanding what the politician and the party want and understanding what you can offer and how you can help that person (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation).

These sentiments were mirrored by SCEE members. When asked about effective arguments in lobbying, the ability to create identification and align their interest with the interests of the politicians frequently came up:

> It is natural to illustrate how their proposal is important for the greater good. This is in line with the things that I want. This can be important for me. (SCEE Member 6, author's translation)

Another SCCE member described a *successful lobbyist* as "a person who can familiarize themselves with the situation to the person you are talking to, that the focus is not on your own organization" (SCEE Member 3, author's translation).

Consequently, skilled lobbyists are not self-centered and try to relate to how the world looks from the perspective of the decision maker. However, as mentioned in the theoretical section, the public interest is a flexible concept, and different political parties have different ideas of how the public interest can best be achieved. Thus, the lobbyist must discern how the public interest can play out in the issue on which he or she is working:

> I think this is the most exciting part. To find out why the case is interesting from a political perspective, to find out which arguments we have. This is both about getting the attention of politicians and being able to influence them. Politics is often a battle of morality. So, the question is, in what moral corner are we now? Is it welfare, economy, or efficiency? (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

As mentioned in the theory chapter, a rhetor who is trying to "find out which arguments we have" is engaging in a search for topos. How lobbyists construct and politicians evaluate public interest arguments will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 through the rhetorical lens of topos. There, I will also delve deeper into how lobbyists deal with the challenge that different political parties have different conceptualizations of how the public interest can be achieved.

We recognize good work and show respect

Goodwill is about being understanding and empathetic. Thus, several lobbying studies have pointed out the value of giving politicians credit and praise (Figenschou & Fredheim, 2019; Trapp & Laursen, 2017). The lobbyists working toward the SCEE frequently mentioned the value of not only criticizing and making demands, but also giving praise and recognizing good work. One environmental lobbyist highlighted the goodwill strategy of "recognizing good work" as key to building trust and credibility among politicians.

> You might be clear that this and this was not good, but this and this was good because then they understand that you recognize their achievements. I might say that is my best tip. Then you build trust with the politicians and recognize what they have achieved, but you challenge them to get more done. They understand that very well. But if you only get blame and critique, it does something with the motivation for prioritizing your policy area. (Environmental Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Furthermore, some lobbyists working toward SCEE followed the activity of the members very closely and were careful to give praise and recognition to all the work that was going their way: "If it is a good proposal that has been presented and if it is a good comment, if it is a good media report or a good debate performance, then I am careful to give feedback. I have the impression that it works and that they appreciate being seen and getting feedback." (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

SCEE members acknowledged that praise was effective and recognized that lobbyists often used this goodwill strategy quite deliberately in direct meetings:

> For example, they can say things like, "It was very wise what you said in that debate" or that "this issue your party has worked very well with and a natural continuation of that is to do this." And yes, it is wise to brag about politicians in meetings with them (laughter). (SCEE Member 7, author's translation)

Similarly, another member of the SCEE acknowledged that "I really do like it [praise] because it happens so seldom (laughter). For each message with praise, there are hundreds of messages with shit, so praise is pretty smart" (SCCE Member 3, author's translation).

Acknowledging good work and giving praise underscore the importance of a constructive and respectful tone and not dressing down politicians. Unlike electoral politics, where politicians are often mired in critiques from voters and the media, lobbyists must be careful not to be too harsh in their criticism of politicians. In particular, environmental lobbyists have learned a lesson about using a respectful tone and praising politicians.

> Generally, I think that scolding works very poorly, and we have received direct feedback from the committee that it does not work. Stefan [Stefan Heggelund, member of the SCEE 2017−2021 from the Conservative Party] was here and told us that it does not really help when we just yell at them. We still criticize a lot, but not so much in meetings and after a final decision is made. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Instead, the interest organization of this environmental lobbyist has moved on to more respectful and understanding ways of getting the attention of politicians:

> When we win cases, we run big celebrations and invite politicians. Every time we have salvaged a watercourse in recent years, we have invited the minister of petroleum and energy and the minister of climate and environmental protection to eat cake. When we got to protect the Øystese watercourse, we had a cake celebration in the hall of the Storting where all the SCEE members were invited. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Lobbyists showering politicians with praise and bringing them cake is an intriguing example of the complicated rhetorical role play in which lobbyists engage. For lobbyists trying to influence the SCCE, praise is also a way of building trust since they signal to the politicians that they acknowledge good work and understand the constraints under which they operate, even though they often disagree with their priorities.

We provide a platform to speak

The core of goodwill is understanding and empathy. Therefore, it challenges the rhetor's sense of seeing the world from the perspective of the audience. Politicians have tight schedules and have little time to sit in seminars to listen to others. Lobbyists adjust to this constraint by making

politicians the main attractions at their conferences and providing them with a platform to speak. One member of the SCEE to whom I talked at one of the conferences explained, “I am only here because I'm invited to a debate. If I had not been invited to a debate, I would not have been here. So, I have no interest beyond participating in the debate” (SCEE Member 9, author’s translation). Inviting politicians to a debate is also among the free advice that SCEE members offer lobbyists. “My advice is always that if you want us involved, the easiest thing is to make a seminar near the Storting, and then you make a political debate at the end, preferably with a conclusion before 10 o'clock” (SCEE Member 14, author’s translation). One member of the SCEE expressed this nearly as a quid pro quo whereby the organizations give them a platform to speak, and in exchange, the SCEE members accept that they are being lobbied against:

> At most conferences, we also have a role in a debate or on stage. I do not have time for conferences where I have no role. But I’ve experienced that we are lobbied quite actively at these conferences. I have no illusion that they are interested in me because I am me, but because of the role I have. (SCEE Member 3, author’s translation)

The lobbyists are keenly aware of this effect, and one environmental lobbyist emphasized that “we often give them a lectern in the form of them participating in panel discussions, and that is what it takes for politicians to come. They love it. You build a relationship with a politician by giving them a rostrum; there is no doubt about that [laughter]” (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author’s translation). For lobbyists, there is a further advantage with having politicians come to the seminars they arrange themselves, because they expose them to their own political ideas and get them to answer political challenges that concern them. At the Zero conference, each major section was followed by a political debate because “we want to get them to listen to professionals and get them to say more or less binding things. We always try to have a politician from both sides of the political aisle, both to politicize the program and make sure they [the politicians] are present” (Environmental Lobbyist 1, author’s translation). Hence, lobbyists try to strike a balance between giving the politician a platform to speak and the need for the interest organization to relate to their agenda.

Table 4.3 Seminars giving members of SCEE a platform to speak

	Members of SCEE present	Government officials present	Number of SCEE members in the debate
Zero Conference 2018	7	Prime minister, minister of trade, industry and fisheries, minister of finance, minister of oil and environment	5 members in panel debates
Oil Industrial Conference 2018	11	Minister of oil and energy	3 members in panel debates
Equinor Autumn Conference 2018	13	Prime minister Minister of oil and energy	0 members in panel debates
Winter Conference Energy Norway 2019	5	Minister of oil and energy	4 members in panel debates
LOs oil and gas seminar 2018	2	Minister of oil and energy Minister of labor and social affairs	2 members in panel debates

Given the relational and political advantages of giving politicians a platform to speak, it is not surprising that, at four of the five seminars I attended, there were panels at which SCEE members were invited to speak. Table 4.3 shows the number of members from the SCEE who were present at the seminars and how many SCEE members participated in debates. It also illustrates the number of government officials invited to speak or participate in a debate at the conference. Equinor's Autumn Conference stands out as the arena where members of SCEE were not given a place on the stage. However, this conference was much shorter than the others and had a very high-profile slot of speakers, which favored the more established players such as the minister of oil and energy and the prime minister.

The permanent presence of the minister of oil and energy and, in some instances, even the prime minister highlights the double role politicians play for lobbyists. They want them there to build relationships and expose them to their message, but they also need high-profile politicians to attract an audience. Hence, one environmental lobbyist concluded, "It is important in relation to one purpose that we want to influence them precisely by hearing our messages and being inspired. But it is also important for the conference that there are politicians there, because then people come there to listen to them" (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation).

We give informal access to our network

Giving politicians a platform to speak is an important explanation for why members of the SCCE turn up at conferences. However, lobbyists have more than a slot on the program to offer. The lobbyists who arrange the conferences are acutely aware that politicians have limited time. By gathering all the important players in an industry at the same place, they make their job simpler.

During the Winter Conference in Malmø, I interviewed two SCEE members, and both had a hard time fitting me into an already tight schedule with energy lobbyists from all over Norway. Thus, through these conferences, interest organizations offer SCEE members access to their network as an act of goodwill.

The Zero Conference is also worried about creating a platform where networking between decision makers and lobbyists is crucial for what they offer: "We want sufficient time and space to build networks with other participants. This is something we have considered to an increasing degree in the five years I have been involved" (Environmental Lobbyist 2, author's translation).

One SCEE member described the Zero Conference as something close to a matching bureau between lobbyists and politicians.

> They select people. They both see people they think are useful to lobby against, and then they connect them especially to the business community. They very much have a business focus; they connect people in the business world to politicians and other decision makers. So, when they bring in big, heavy players, they make lobby meetings for the business community with them. (SCEE Member 3, author's translation)

Similarly, the oil industrial seminar in Sandefjord measures its success and importance according to its ability to attract all the people with power and influence over the Norwegian oil industry and gather them for three days in the same place.

> It has an extreme value for everything that happens besides what goes on at the podium. There are many who want to talk to politicians, but there are many politicians who want to talk to many of the companies as well. So, what goes on outside the podium is just as important. If this arena does not become a network arena, then oil industry policy seminars are no longer so important. There are lots of conferences you can attend. (Oil Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

> It is rare that something new happens there. ... For me, it is just an informal arena. The most important things there are the breaks, the evening, and the lunch and talking to the politicians who are always there. For me, it is a network conference where the content is not so important. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The high value that oil lobbyists 1 and 2 attach to the informal atmosphere of the conferences demonstrates how traditional lobbying research underestimates the role of the social lobby (Grose et al., 2022; Nothhaft, 2017). What transpires at the podium is less important than creating an arena where politicians can interact with politicians in an informal atmosphere and work to create identification.

As mentioned above, the goodwill strategy of "giving a platform to speak" is important for making politicians show up at a conference. However, as Table 4.2 demonstrates, the oil industrial seminar in Sandefjord and the autumn conference of Equinor are the only two conferences I attended where a great many SCEE members also attended without having a role as speakers. Thus, for many of these members, the network the oil industry could provide seemed to have a value of its own. This bias was also acknowledged in particular by the energy industry, which frequently complained about the heavy presence of SCEE members at the oil conferences compared to their own conferences.

> There are, like, eight arenas every year that are about oil, and everybody is there because you have to be there. We are not there, but we wish we were. The market value of oil is great, and for the SCEE, it is natural that they come to the large gathering places for oil. It is not like that for renewable energy at all. (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

This situation could partly be explained by a lack of goodwill and understanding from the energy industry when it comes to the tough time constraints under which politicians operate. The SCEE members were clear that the closer the conference was to the Stortinget, the easier it was for them to participate. Therefore, Equinor's Autumn Conference was in downtown Oslo, and for the Oil Industrial Seminar in Sandefjord, there were buses leaving directly from the Stortinget to bring MPs back and forth from the seminar. Similarly, the Zero Conference was held downtown in Oslo while Energy Norway's winter seminar required a trip to Malmø. During the winter seminar of Energy Norway, one energy lobbyist from Statkraft complained loudly about how the energy industry failed to identify with the needs of decision makers.

> This seminar illustrates everything that is wrong with the energy industry. We are sitting at a hotel in Sweden and have an internal debate about the renewable future. What we should have had is a large seminar for Norwegian politicians and other important stakeholders somewhere downtown in Oslo (Energy lobbyist, author's translation)

However, some SCCE members with a more critical view of the oil industry also pointed out that the SCEE was given much more opportunity to network and engage with the oil industry than other industries. SCEE members described the Oil Industrial Seminar as something that other interest organizations could not match.

> We are dipped in oil ... great dinner, free drinks, and all that. There are no other industries in Norway that the SCEE is so exposed to and where we meet them on their grounds. (SCEE Member 6, author's translation)

> You reach a great many decision makers every single year. The minister is there every single year, as well as the entire SCEE. Then, it gives that part of the industry an opportunity to talk to everyone who is there so that they can convey their message. (SCEE Member 7, author's translation)

The closeness of the SCEE and the oil industry was particularly striking during dinner at the Oil Industrial Conference in Sandefjord. Here, all the SCEE members were placed in front right around the stage together with the Minister of Oil and Energy and were frequently addressed by the toastmaster as the "guests of honor." During the dinner, I was seated beside two veterans from the oil industry who told me that "this is the highlight of the year. It is a ritual. Everyone is here; the politicians are here, too." One of them also added that "there are enormous opportunities to build networks here, also politically." As if to emphasize their point, the committee leader for the SCEE held a speech in which he praised Norway's ability to extract its oil revenues for the best of society and explained how other countries with large oil revenues had spiraled into overspending and corruption. Part of this success was due to "a close and trusting relationship between the politicians and the oil industry."

How do the type of organization and financial resources affect the ethos strategies lobbyists use?

As I have demonstrated, lobbyists have a rich array of ethos-enhancing strategies from which they can choose. In this section, I will more closely examine how the type of organization and organizational resources impact the kind of ethos strategies lobbyists use. In this section, I move on to RQ2: *How do the type of organization and resources influence what kind of ethos strategies in which lobbyists engage*? I start to assess whether some organizations are better equipped to win the ethos battle or if different types of organizations are just pursuing different ethos strategies.

Type of organization and ethos strategies

As discussed in the literature review, the type of organization influences what kind of arguments lobbyists rely on (Boräng et al., 2014; Klüver et al., 2015). In this study, unions and membership-based environmental organizations stand out as types of organizations that struggle to change their organizational ethos in line with the expectations of politicians. When SCEE members were asked whether there were certain lobbyists they thought stood out as particularly competent in their work against the committee, the environmental organization Zero, along with the oil lobbyists from Equinor and Norwegian Oil and Gas, were frequently mentioned. The union lobbyists or more traditional environmental lobbyists never came up, and when they did, SCEE members often commented they were too combative and did not deliver the kind of policy expertise that members

of the committee expected. Consequently, the oil industry and a professionalized environmental organization like Zero are better positioned to create identification. Generally, these organizations were described as better at understanding the needs of politicians and acting accordingly.

> They [Norwegian Oil and Gas] have Karl Eirik Schjøtt-Pedersen [former minister of Finance and then-leader of Norwegian Oil and Gas], who has a great deal of political experience, so he understands how to talk to politicians. So, they are much more coordinated. They invite us out on oil platforms, and they talk about jobs. They humanize that side of oil and gas and depict the positive consequences it has. (SCEE Member 3, author's translation)

> But I think Zero is clever. I think they are good at being constructive contributors in many situations. They prefer to talk about what they are for and have been good at positioning themselves as partners in many different areas. (Oil Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

From a methodological perspective, intriguingly, the members of the SCCE always refer to the name of the organization and use the pronoun "they" when they refer to the organization. This goes back to the discussion in the theoretical section between individual ethos and organizational ethos. Unlike professional lobbyists in the EU, the in-house lobbyists in this study are bound to the ethos of the organizations for which they work, and they cannot use the strategy of mixing roles between distinct clients when they, for example, feel that the client acts unprofessionally (Nothhaft, 2017).

The assessment of SCEE Member 3 and Oil Lobbyist 3 demonstrate that the lobby winners can play on the diverse dimensions of ethos, which was described earlier in the chapter, such as providing political solutions, caring about people, talking in public interest terms, and understanding political constraints. This portrays lobbyists more as potential partners than antagonists. This somewhat contrasts with the unions, described as "unable to relate to another political agenda than their own" (SCEE Member 2, author's translation) and "sometimes just not providing relevant political information for the cases we are working on" (SCEE Member 4, author's translation).

This situation for unions can probably be explained by the internal constraints that union lobbyists face. A *union* is, by definition, a combative organization that works for the self-interest of its members (Coxall, 2014). Hence, goodwill strategies such as caring, showing respect, and not-being self-centered are by definition tougher for unions since the members expect them to fight for their interests and not cozy up to politicians. The same dilemma is faced by membership-based environmental organizations such as Friends of the Earth Norway, which also must illustrate to its

members that it stands by its demands and does not give in to politicians. Hence, for membership-based organizations, the use of goodwill strategies to strengthen their ethos is challenging because they need a certain level of conflict and distance from the decision makers they are seeking to influence. One environmental lobbyist for Friends of the Earth Norway explained:

> For us, it is the case that every time we have had a meeting with politicians, we publish stories about it to show that we work with the things they [our members] care about, while the number of times Eldar Sætre [CEO of Equinor] has meetings with someone in the Stortinget, we do not know much about it. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

As a highly democratic environmental organization, Friends of the Earth always must prove to its members that it is looking after their interests. Interestingly, Zero's high standing among members of the SCCE probably connects to their lack of internal democracy. As a professionalized environmental organization, Zero can freely choose areas of engagement and alliance partners, depending on what they find appropriate. Thus, interest organizations that have individual members are constrained by their democratic structures, which limits the policy position they can take and how much goodwill they can give policy makers. This corroborates previous research from both Klüver et al. (2015) and Raknes and Ihlen (2020), who argue that unions in particular are caught between the logic of membership and the logic of influence. Consequently, the type of organization gives lobbyists a different starting point when formulating arguments, and it can particularly affect their ability not to leave the impression that they are self-centered and to formulate effective public interest arguments (Boräng et al., 2014; Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Ihlen et al., 2018; Junk & Rasmussen, 2019; Raknes & Ihlen, 2020). I will return to the challenge of the type of organization and public interest arguments in Chapter 6.

Furthermore, membership-based organizations could face repercussions when trying to professionalize their lobbying work and create arenas where they could get closer to decision makers. Arranging a costly seminar with the prime minister and prominent international guests would probably not go down well with the members of a union or an idealistic environmental organization. The same applies to the relationship to the PR industry. In 2014, the leader of LO told the media that they do not use PR firms for lobbying purposes and that the PR industry "creates the impression that politicians and politics are in a, sort of, way for sale. It is dangerous for people's trust in our democracy" (Haugan, 2021).

Business organizations such as Norwegian Oil and Gas and Energy Norway are also member organizations in that they organize companies within the same industry. This could be a major source of strength when companies have shared interests that pull in the same direction. At the Oil Industrial Seminar in Sandefjord, it was obvious that Konkraft managed to pull all the actors in the industry in the same direction. During the seminar, Konkraft launched a report in which they gave recommendations for the future of the industry and emphasized the importance of "predictable and stable regulatory conditions for the Norwegian continental shelf's attractiveness" (Konkraft, 2018, p. 7).

The situation for the energy industry is the opposite because the policy field, itself, is fraught with conflicting interests (Gullberg, 2013). There are tensions between assorted forms of renewable energy, such as water, wind, and hydrogen, between large and small producers of renewable energy, and between the energy companies and the counties and municipalities that often own them. These internal constraints make it difficult for the industry to devise clear policy positions and hamper their lobbying efforts.

> For people like us, it is always simplest if the enemy are the others. The most difficult thing for us is if the energy industry has an important issue, but the industry is split into two. Then we are just going around in circles, and everybody looks at us and thinks it is strange that we don't say anything. (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

> When we first can agree on something, it is often close to being uninteresting. (Energy Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

In Chapter 6 on how lobbyists construct public interest arguments, I will depict how these internal constraints make it harder for the energy industry to devise effective alliances and build a credible public interest platform.

As mentioned in the analysis above, the oil industry builds its ethos through character-strengthening strategies, such as listening to their critics, seeking the approval of other policy experts, and joining alliances. Furthermore, they are well versed in goodwill strategies such as providing solutions, caring, and providing politicians with a network and a platform to speak at their conferences. Both at Equinor's Autumn Conference and the Oil Industrial Seminar, the environmental movement was never scolded, but the oil industry invited them to a dialogue. The same applies to political parties that are critical toward the oil industry, such as the Socialist Left Party, the Green Party, and the Liberal Party, who were invited to panel discussions. Thus, the oil industry seeks cooperation and mutual understanding instead of controversy and conflict.

The oil industry's use of ethos strategies that create identification and consensus is in stark contrast to the rhetoric of the unions. At LO's Oil and Gas Seminar, the political rhetoric was much more combative. Neither the environmental movement nor the politicians were spared of critique. Thus, the union is closer to the picture of the classic pressure group, which makes demands and seeks confrontation.

For the union members in the oil industry, the conflict with the environmental movement and the parties close to them seems much more existential and bitter. Several union members to whom I talked at LO's Oil and Gas Seminar told me that they hated, in particular, the Socialist Left Party and the Green Party because they threatened their jobs. For some of the union members, these questions were highly personal. One union member told me that "I have two daughters, and they say to me that they hate oil. Then, I tell them, 'What is the alternative?' The youth is turning on us" (union member, author's translation). A recent focus group study with 41 shop stewards in the oil industry confirms the picture of the increased polarization of the unions related to the oil industry and the environmental movement (Jordhus-Lier & Houeland, 2021). This polarization between the environmental movement and the unions is most pronounced concerning the public-interest conflict between creating jobs and taking care of the environment. However, there is also a strong internal tension within the union movement, itself. At the congress of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, the public sector unions and the private sector unions clashed over the issue of oil exploration around the Lofoten Archipelago. Consequently, this internal tension makes it even more difficult for the union movement to devise a coherent policy for tackling environmental questions (Houeland, Jordhus-Lier, & Angell, 2020). This conflict-ridden environment hampers their ability to build a strong organizational ethos through coalitions with external partners and using goodwill strategies toward decision makers.

Resources and ethos strategies

As mentioned in the literature review, previous research has shown that organizational income and the number of political employees is a strong predictor of the level of access to decision makers (Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Eising, 2007; Wollebæk & Raknes, 2022). However, in classic lobbying studies, bias is most often presented as a result, not a process. What a rhetorical perspective adds is a more nuanced understanding of how bias works and how financial inequalities lead to rhetorical inequalities. Many of the ethos-strengthening strategies described in

this chapter are clearly dependent on the financial resources that the interest organizations can muster. Given the importance of competence in the form of policy expertise and political intelligence in lobbying, it is not surprising that the oil industry is known for cultivating and attracting lobbyists with political experience and political talent. During a conversation at a seminar, one environmental lobbyist listed seven former state secretaries from the Labor Party and Conservative Party who had later joined Equinor: "They systematically hire very good people. It is the governing parties' smartest people who come by. Everyone who follows sees that these are the top guys who stop by and help for a while before they move on to something else. They give credibility" (Environmental Lobbyist 4, author's translation). The same close connection between politics and lobbying is evident at Norwegian Oil and Gas. The two last director generals of Norwegian Oil and Gas held government positions as ministers before they joined the organization.

The probable reason Zero stands out is because of its close cooperation with business organizations, which enables them to hire high-quality lobbyists who are strong in both political expertise and political intelligence. Zero has prioritized hiring lobbyists with strong ties to various political parties, and some have later moved on to become members of parliament or important political advisors. Actually, two former employees of Zero were interviewed as MPs for this study, and they both acknowledged that they still had close ties to the organization. This gave Zero certain advantages in following policy processes and timing their policy proposals correctly. One of Zero's current lobbyists acknowledged, "I think we probably do more than the others here. Many of the others are more campaign organizations and use more energy to influence the debate" (Environmental Lobbyist 4, author's translation).

In a professionalized environment where organizations rely on their paid staff, the level of policy expertise and political intelligence they can deliver depends on the kind of people they can hire. As mentioned in the methodological chapter, the business lobbyists who were interviewed in this study stood out in that they often had political experience combined with an education from a prestigious university abroad. The union lobbyists, however, typically did not have any or had little higher education, while the environmental lobbyists had university degrees from national universities. This aspect was often commented upon, especially by environmental lobbyists who realized that they simply did not have the resources to attract the best talent:

> It is not so easy to find those who are good at both policy and politics. There is a certain layer of people we do not obtain because they obtain jobs for private businesses. … I am talking about the kid who turned out to be the best in industrial economics at NTNU [Norwegian University of Science and Technology] and understands politics. We do not get them, but the business community does. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Again, it is interesting to note that lobbyists need a dual ability to both craft policy and analyze policy processes. He or she must be both a "hack" and a "wonk" (LaPira & Thomas, 2017). Insider knowledge and process competence make "hacks" invaluable because they can perceive when a particular proposal is developing in a threatening direction and when the interest organization should intervene. Consequently, interest organizations with superior financial resources, such as the oil industry, are likelier to line up a competent team of "hacks" and thereby increase their chances of winning (LaPira & Thomas, 2017).

The SCEE is a large committee with 18 members. As mentioned above, about 80−85 percent of the members of the SCEE change every four years, and the lobbyists must start building new relationships. Hence, resources also matter regarding how many people the interest organization can build relationships with and nurture this over time. One environmental lobbyist elaborated that for organizations with limited resources, the "weak" or unreceptive SCEE members could end up being ignored for lobbying purposes:

> We have to prioritize and make choices. Should I use more time on this person who just does not get it, or should I just move to the next one? The oil industry is good at this because they take the time to train each and every one of them [members of SCEE] because they know they might become important one day. Suddenly, there is a faction meeting [meeting with members from the same party in a standing committee], and then four backbenchers suddenly oppose the proposal. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Consequently, lobbyists face challenges in how they should deploy their rhetorical resources in getting SCEE members to understand the policy field from their perspective. It is interesting that Environmental Lobbyist 3 mentions that the oil industry, with its superior resources, "takes the time to train each and every one of them" because it demonstrates how the constant need to "re-educate" and build new relationships with the SCEE members favors resourceful interest organizations.

While the competence dimension of ethos deals with hard currency in lobbying, such as political expertise and political intelligence, the character and goodwill dimension is more concerned with

establishing trust and nurturing relationships. One energy lobbyist summarized the relationship between the dimensions of ethos quite aptly:

> I think a bit about the lobbying work being about both relationships and issues. And you cannot do anything if you do not have both. You need to understand your issue and know why it's important and all that, but that does not help if you do not understand who to talk to and who that person is and such. Similarly, you can be best friends with everyone, but if you do not know what you are doing, you don't get anywhere. In relation to the Storting's work, it is often the case that the relationship side is tougher and takes more time to work out than the issue part. (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

Consequently, in lobbying, the different dimensions of ethos are connected. Policy expertise and political intelligence are prerequisites for influence, but character and goodwill are necessary to get close to decision makers and build trustful relationships. Many goodwill strategies described in this chapter require lobbyists to get close to politicians, and a recent study of Norwegian interest organizations showed that the most resourceful lobbyists frequently use more goodwill strategies (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022).

Therefore, getting close to power is a costly affair, and the seminars I attended in this study underscore this point. If you want the prime minister, the minister of oil and energy, or the SCEE members to show up, you must provide a platform they find attractive and are willing to put into their tight schedules. As I discussed in the chapter on methodology, most of the seminars were costly to attend. Furthermore, except the LO's Oil and Gas Conference, the lists of participants were heavily tilted toward political and organizational elites.

The role of these seminars as an arena for interaction among the resourceful was neatly illustrated during the Zero conference. Even though Zero is an environmental organization, they have been able to make the Zero conference attractive for politicians to attend, much due to their close cooperation and sponsorship from business organizations. During the conference in 2018, several less resourceful environmental organizations voiced their critique that it was impossible for students and ordinary people to attend because of the price of 800 Euros. The leader of Young Friends of the Earth Norway commented to a newspaper: "It is so much important to learn there, and they get hold of people like Solberg and the CEO of Equinor, who tend to say no to other environmental events. When you actually have the opportunity to hear what they say about the climate, it should be open and accessible" (Tollersrud, 2021).

Summary

In this chapter, I have first answered RQ1, which asked, *What kinds of strategies do lobbyists use to construct and strengthen their ethos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE*?

The 14 ethos strategies described in this chapter demonstrate both the richness and flexibility of the concept. The diverse strategies are summarized in the table below. The combination of survey data, interviews, and participant observation demonstrate how lobbyists are working in many arenas with a broad palette of discursive strategies to strengthen their ethos. Traditional research on lobbying and communication emphasizes the competence that lobbyists often can provide in the form of technical expertise and policy expertise and describes these processes as "resource exchange," "political insurance," or "legislative subsidies" (Binderkrantz et al., 2014a; Hall & Deardorff, 2006; LaPira & Thomas, 2017). However, these perspectives tend to ignore the communicative aspects of lobbying (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020, 2022; Ihlen et al., 2018; Nothhaft, 2017; Raknes & Ihlen, 2020; Valentini et al., 2020). What this chapter adds to the communicative perspective on lobbying is a detailed description of the discursive ethos strategies lobbyist use to create identification such as personal closeness, praise, and recognition, third-party support from independent experts, coalition partners, political solutions that fit their political program, a platform to speak on, and the possibility of building a broader network.

Table 4.4 Strategies lobbyists use to strengthen their ethos

	Competence	**Character**	**Goodwill**
Keywords	*Intelligent, trained, expert, informed, competent, bright*	*Honest, trustworthy, honorable, moral, ethical, genuine*	*Cares about me, has my interests at heart, not self-centered, sensitive, understanding.*
	We have policy expertise. We have political intelligence.	We are liked by people with authority. We listen to our critics. We have alliances. We are honest.	We care about people. We keep it short and simple. We provide political solutions. We understand constraints. We are not self-centered. We recognize good work and show respect. We provide a platform to speak. We give access to our network.

In the last section of the chapter, I looked at RQ2, which asked, *How do resources and the type of organization influence what kind of ethos strategies in which lobbyists engage?* Even though the number of interest organizations in this study is limited, the qualitative data suggest that unions

and membership-based environmental organizations struggle to balance “cozying up” to politicians and meeting the demands of their members to defend their interests. Furthermore, resources probably increase the likelihood of employing more advanced ethos strategies, such as suggesting political solutions, sharing political intelligence, and understanding political constraints. This is in line with a recent study of the lobbying strategies of Norwegian lobbyists, which demonstrates a clear connection between resources and the use of goodwill strategies in particular (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022).

The larger democratic implications of the use of the distinct ethos strategies will be discussed toward the end of this study. However, I now address the communicative challenge of timing and finding the right arguments. Thus, these two challenges will be studied more closely in the next two chapters through the rhetorical lens of kairos and the rhetorical situation and topos. Together with the ethos strategies presented in this chapter, this will give a fuller picture of how lobbyists work to achieve identification.

5: Lobbying, the rhetorical situation, and kairos

In the previous chapter, I showed how lobbyists work to strengthen their ethos and identified 14 ethos-strengthening strategies. However, all rhetoric plays out in a context, and the context influences what is considered persuasive. This chapter delves deeper into how lobbyists deal with the challenges of identifying the constraints of the rhetorical situation and how they try to turn these constraints to their own advantage. This is done by bringing in the theory of the rhetorical situation and combining it with the classical concept of kairos. With this theoretical background, this chapter delves into the following three research questions.

RQ3: *What constitutes the lobbying meeting with SCEE as a rhetorical situation?*
RQ4: *What is the role of kairos in lobbying campaigns toward the SCEE?*
RQ5: *How did the COVID-19 pandemic change the rhetorical situation for the Norwegian oil industry, and how did the industry exploit the kairotic openings of the crisis?*

The analysis is based on the coding of the semi-structured interviews of lobbyists working to influence the SCCE and politicians who are members of the committee. As in the previous chapter, the starting point for the analysis is the perspective of the lobbyists, and then the perspective of the SCEE members is brought in for triangulation and clarity. Furthermore, some survey questions from the parliament survey were deemed relevant. Unlike the previous chapter, the field notes are not a part of the analysis of the research questions in this chapter.

Exigence

According to Bitzer (1968), a rhetorical situation has three defining elements: exigence, audience, and constraints. As mentioned in the theory chapter, *exigence* is "an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 6). Bitzer's definition is notoriously vague, which makes it difficult to discuss as a general concept. However, Bitzer argued that some rhetorical situations are rather stable, while others tend to come and go. Regarding the lobbying activity against the SCEE issues, the lobbyists that work toward the committee are mobilized at different points. In this sense, one could argue that each white paper, bill, or private member's bill that flows through the committee is a separate rhetorical situation with its own exigence.

Figure 5.1 The Norwegian policy process

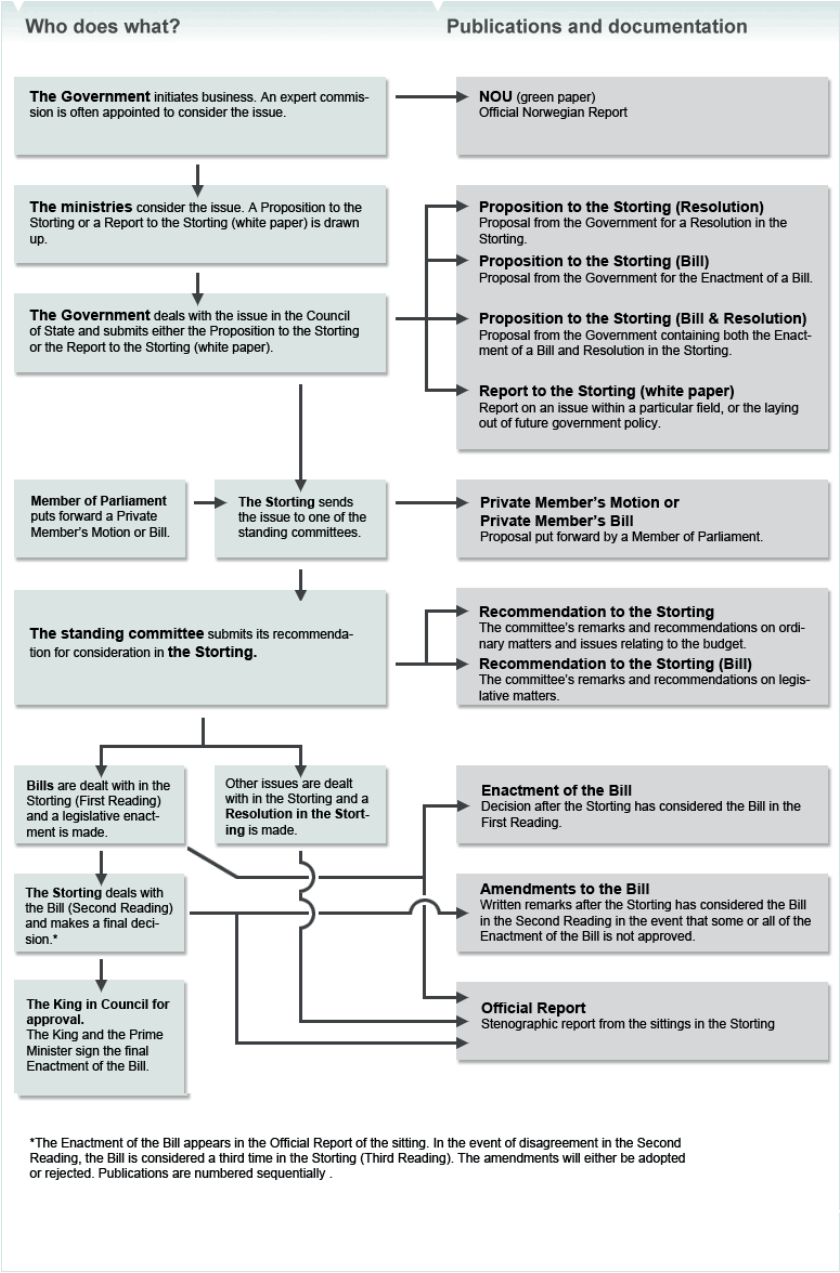


Figure 5.1 gives an overview of the Norwegian policy process for legislative matters. The government initiates legislative processes often through green papers drafted by expert commissions (Official Norwegian Report). These reports are then considered by the ministries,

and a white paper is sent to the relevant standing committee in the Storting, which then sends its recommendation for a final decision in the Storting. The yearly budget process follows the same procedure as the legislative process. As mentioned above, the Storting can also initiate legislation through a Private Member's bill, which is sent directly to the relevant committee. The number of Private Members' bills has increased considerably since the 1990s, which indicates the more powerful role of the Storting in the Norwegian political system (Rommetvedt, 2017a).

The challenge from the lobbyists' perspective is that they do not control the policy process, which makes it hard for them to control the exigency. Therefore, lobbyists, in most instances, do not create the legislative agenda, but they must respond to the legislative agenda (LaPira & Thomas, 2017; Leech, Baumgartner, La Pira, & Semanko, 2005). In this respect, the exigency for lobbyists is audience-centered and would tend to be expressions "of the situational audience's unsolved questions, concerns, anxieties, frustrations, and confusions, which need modification by discourse" (Garret & Xiao, 1993, p. 39). Hence, in a lobbying context, the important question "is whether the audience accepts that an exigency exists" (Garret & Xiao, 1993, p. 39). Hence, a central weakness in Bitzer's theory is the assumption that the exigence of a rhetorical situation is shared by both the audience and the rhetor and exists nearly independently of the audience and the rhetors' perception of the exigence.

In summary, an exigency in a rhetorical situation is not an objective fact but depends on how those who participate in the situation interpret the exigency (C. R. Miller, 1984). A. B. Miller (1972) argues that "the ultimate character of an exigence is a conclusion in the minds of its perceiver" (p. 112). Consequently, as I argued in the methodological chapter, rhetorical perspectivism is a fruitful approach to the study of political rhetoric. Sometimes, politicians and lobbyists agree on the exigence, but often they have diverging interests that lead to diverging exigencies. Most rhetorical situations do not have a "controlling" exigency, but those who participate in the situation can have assorted perceptions of what the exigency is, and the rhetor can have limited control over how the audience perceives the exigence (C. R. Smith & Lybarger, 1996).

If we follow Bitzer and define an *exigency* as "a factual condition plus a relation to some interest," the challenge for the lobbyist is that they often have diverging interests with the politicians, which makes them perceive the exigence of the situation differently. One member of the SCEE remarked, "There are many companies who say that they have some solution that is

very profitable but wonder why no one wants to invest in it. Then I usually answer, 'Why do you need money from me if what you have is so profitable?'" (SCCE Member 7, author's translation). One way of solving this dilemma is to engage in the process of identification, in which they try to make the constraints of the politicians their own constraints and perceive the world from the perspective of the politicians (Burke, 1950/1969). Consequently, to influence politicians, lobbyists need to adapt to the perceived exigency of politicians. A lobbyist who desperately clings to his or her own exigencies and problem definitions is bound to lose. Thus, a typical trait of the lobbying amateur is that he or she clings to his or her own self-centered versions of the political problems he or she encounters (Naurin, 2007).

The audience

According to Bitzer (1968), an audience must be influenced and generate change. Therefore, for the context of this study, the SCEE members are the relevant audience. These are the people the lobbyists are seeking to influence and with whom lobbyists want to create relationships. As discussed in the chapter on ethos, one challenge for lobbyists is that the audience is not stable, and every fourth year, more than 80 percent of the SCEE members are replaced with new members. Furthermore, the election results also influence how many members each political party gets in the committee. From 2013−2017, the Conservative Party had five members, but this was reduced to four members from 2017−2021 because of a weaker election result. An overview of the committee can be found in Appendix A. However, for both the parliamentary periods studied here, the SCEE was represented by all the political parties represented at the Stortinget, except the Red party, which only had one member in parliament from 2017−2021.

For the lobbyists working against the SCEE, the audience is changing every four years, but to what extent can SCEE members be influenced and generate change?

Table 5.1 MPs' assessment of the impacts of lobbyism (percent, "seldom," and "never" excluded).

Lobbyists' enquiries are a contributing factor when:	Year	Very/fairly often	Sometimes
Parliamentary committees/committee members ask government ministries for additional information/comments	1995	59	37
	2019	39	55
Dissent or faction remarks/proposals occur in committee recommendations	1995	44	47
	2019	49	31
	1995	33	42

MPs raise interpellations or question time questions	2019	41	36
MPs submit private members' bills	1995	24	46
	2019	32	45
Minor amendments are made in the government's proposals/guidelines	1995	28	60
	2019	17	64
Major amendments are made in the government's proposals/guidelines	1995	4	40
	2019	7	29

Table 5.1 illustrates the MPs' assessment of the impact of lobbyism in 1995 and 2019 and tells us something about the extent to which "the audience" can be influenced and generate change. The pattern is clearly that lobbying has a considerable impact when it comes to activities such as members of committees asking for additional information, having dissenting remarks, raising interpellations, or submitting private members' bills. The increase in dissenting remarks, interpellations, and private bills from 1995−2019 is in line with the thesis of "the revival of the parliament" where the Stortinget plays an increasingly central role in the policy process (Rommetvedt, 2017a). These kinds of proposals are important for opposition parties to use parliament procedures to produce an alternative policy agenda (Rommetvedt, 2017a). However, when it comes to more substantial changes in government proposals, the influence of lobbying is much more modest. In 2019, only 17 percent of the MPs agreed that minor amendments were done very or fairly often, and only 7 percent agreed that major amendments are done very or fairly often.

Notably, the parliament survey is by no means an objective measure of the impact of lobbying, but tells us something about how effective members of the Storting perceive lobbyists to be. Measuring the influence of lobbyists has proven to be an extremely difficult task (Helboe Pedersen, 2013). The challenges of measuring and finding influence are closely related to the kairotic nature of politics, where unexpected events and sudden changes of government make it difficult to establish casual relationships and reject rival explanations for lobbying success. In their ambitious study of Washington, the lobbyists Heinz, Laumann, and Nelson (1993) conclude that "the absence of strong effects here is not much a methodological failing so much as a reflection of the uncertain and situational nature of influence in national policymaking systems" (p. 407). How lobbyists deal with uncertainty and changing situational conditions will be explored more thoroughly later in this chapter.

Lobbyists and their constraints

The analysis thus far demonstrates that the lobbyists working toward the SCEE are in a tight spot because it is not always possible for them to influence their audience and they have limited control over the exigencies in the rhetorical situations in which they engage. The most important insight from Bitzer is how the context both limits and enables certain rhetorical responses (Herrick, 2017). Studies of lobbying also increasingly pay attention to the context in which interest organizations operate to understand how they affect public policy (Hojnacki, Kimball, Baumgartner, Berry, & Leech, 2012).

The list of constraints presented here is based on a coding of the qualitative interviews with lobbyists and politicians. The idea is to devise a list of the most consequential constraints and tie these constraints to the rhetorical strategies lobbyists use when they try to influence SCEE members. Even though the constraints are chosen based on coding, the researcher, much like a rhetor, needs to make a choice about what parts of the context are consequential enough to be considered constraints. (Grant-Davie, 1997). In the analysis, I will separate between organizational constraints, which mainly affect the lobbyists themselves, and systemic constraints, which affect both the lobbyists and the politicians they are trying to influence. In the last section of the chapter, I will reveal the relevance of these constraints in the analysis of the oil industry's campaign for tax relief in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organizational constraints: Type of organization and financial resources

The coding revealed that the two most important organizational constraints to which lobbyists must relate are the type of organization they represent and the organization's financial resources. These two constraints were analyzed in detail in the previous chapter on ethos. Regarding financial resources, I argued that it is free to invent an argument, but some of the ethos strategies identified in the previous chapter come with a price tag. To understand how decision makers think, previous experience with politics and frequent access to politicians seem to be a prerequisite. Business organizations have an edge in hiring the best lobbying talent with political experience and, therefore, obtain better political intelligence. Furthermore, I argued that membership-based organizations such as unions and environmental organizations faced tougher internal constraints because they had to demonstrate to their members that they stood up for their demands. This hampers their rhetorical repertoire in particular concerning goodwill strategies because there are limits for how close they can get with politicians before their members react.

These two variables can also be considered general constraints in the rhetorical situations that lobbyists face. The type of organization, in particular, gives lobbyists a starting point when they evaluate the exigency and its policy solutions. Thus, the type of organization influences what kind of arguments on which lobbyists rely (Boräng et al., 2014; Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Ihlen et al., 2018; Junk & Rasmussen, 2019; Raknes & Ihlen, 2020). For the Norwegian oil industry, the challenge is to legitimize its activity even though it is harmful for the environment while, for environmental organizations, the exigency is that time is running out and we are losing the struggle against climate change (Ihlen, 2009b, 2011). For the energy industry, the exigency is how we can increase the production of green energy and build profitable green businesses while we reach our climate goals. Finally, unions are concerned with creating and maintaining safe jobs without doing too much harm to the environment. How the type of organization affects the kinds of public interest arguments on which lobbyists rely will be analyzed in more detail in the next chapter.

As discussed in the theoretical chapter, Bitzer's (1968) conceptualization of constraints is very broad. Hence, just as with the coding of ethos, there will be a tension between generic and more issue-specific constraints. In the abductive coding process, where I moved back and forth between the categories and the empirical data, I tried to identify the generic or systemic constraints with which lobbyists against the SCEE were struggling. This process identified three important systemic constraints that seemed to be important no matter what kind of policy proposal on which the lobbyists were working. Unlike the organizational and financial constraints, these systemic constraints also affect the SCEE members. First, there is the party program of the political party to which the politicians belong, but also other political documents to which the party has agreed to adhere. Second, whether there is a majority or minority government decides the room for legislative maneuvering in the Storting. Third, the Ministry of Finance affects all decisions on public spending, and its resistance must be defeated if the lobbyist is seeking tax relief or increased spending.

Political documents as a constraint

When lobbyists meet members of the SCCE, they do not meet a blank slate, but MPs who already have a rather clear idea of their policy position on most issues. The Norwegian political system has strong political parties, and the parties base their parliamentary positions on the party program, which is decided at their party conferences (E. H. Allern, Saglie, & Østerud, 2019).

When asked about how they reason when they are evaluating policy proposals from lobbyists, the SCEE members constantly returned to the party program:

> In most cases, the political parties have a primary position. Lobbying is not necessary about changing the policy of a political party, but whether the party should devote time to an issue or not. (SCEE Member 5, author's translation)

> As a starting point, I will always be governed by the party program and always rely on that. (SCEE Member 13, author's translation)

> My starting point is always the party program. When I make these evaluations, the party program is my starting point, and lobbyists who go against our party program have small chance for success. (SCEE Member 14, author's translation)

> In our party, the most important thing is where our party will land on the issue. To a certain extent, it is about your own opinions, but also about where the consensus is within the party. (SCEE Member 7, author's translation)

From the perspective of the SCEE members, the party program is the guiding principle for their everyday work. Therefore, for a lobbyist working against the SCEE, the party program is a major constraint they must consider when they craft their arguments. As SCCE Member 14 mentions, a lobbyist who has not read or has a proposal that defies the party program has small chances of success. The importance of the party program also underscores the strong role of party discipline. A single member does not represent his or her own views, but the views of the party, which is why the member is bound to follow the party line.

Even though the party program is the starting point for most MPs, it also produces documents that constrain their decisions. First, when a party decides to go into government, they negotiate a government platform that binds the policy of the party as long as the party is in government. Thus, once in government, several parties must struggle with the distance between their original party program and the compromises in the government platform (McDonnell & Newell, 2011). Second, as a small consensus democracy, Norway has a long tradition of bipartisan cooperation on several policy areas such as defense, economic policy and energy, and the environment (Knutsen, 2017; Lijphart, 2012). Consequently, Norway has conducted two bipartisan climate settlements [*Klimaforlik*] in 2008 and 2012, which were negotiated through the SCEE. These climate settlements set the overall targets for Norwegian reductions in CO2 emissions and describe the measures that must be enacted to reach these goals (Mildenberger, 2020).

The minority–majority constraint

In the Norwegian parliament, there are nine parties, and to win approval for their proposals, lobbyists need a winning coalition behind their proposals (Gullberg & Skodvin, 2011). Under a majority government, a winning coalition means that they must convince all the parties in government, while under a minority government, a winning coalition needs the support of a parliament majority.

Consequently, from the standpoint of the lobbyist, it matters a great deal if it is a majority or minority government. Even though there was a minority government from October 2013 until January 2018, the Progressive Party and the Conservative Party negotiated an agreement with the Liberal Democrats and Christian Democrats, which secured a majority. Therefore, lobbyists could obtain influence through just persuading one party. Since the minority government depended on on their support, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats became important veto players. A *veto player* is understood as "individual or collective actors whose agreement (by majority rule for collective actors) is required for a change in status quo" (Tsebelis, 1995, p. 289). Since the government always had to negotiate with the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party, environmental lobbyists in particular found these parties attractive for lobbying.

> In the period from 2013−2017, we focused a great deal on the Liberal Party, not because we love the Liberal Party, but because they received our lobbying proposals with open arms. … The role they envisioned for themselves was to take government proposals and change them in a greener direction. That was the kind of expertise we could offer, and they had an open door. … The problem is that we used so much time on them that we neglected the other political parties, and with a majority government, we have to regroup. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

> We used an extreme amount of time on the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats [from 2013−2017]. Then we also used a great deal of time on the Labor Party; this is just not only about the issues but also about how the party will develop after the election. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

After the election in 2017, the Conservative Party and the Progressive Party started negotiations with the Liberal Party, which entered the government in January 2018. After a riveting internal debate, the Christian Democrats finally joined the government in January 2019 and made it a majority government. This created a new and challenging situation for lobbyists respecting which parties to target and what messages they should prioritize.

> We really don't have the ability to just push things through, and we have to convince people in a different way. A proposal that gets a majority in the Stortinget does not need to

> be so thorough, since the government just has to discern the consequences afterwards. If you want to convince the government, itself, the threshold is much higher, and your proposals are always tested against the bureaucrats in the ministries. And when they [the government politicians] ask them [the bureaucrats] if this is a smart idea, they always shake their heads [laughter]. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Consequently, majority governments make it more difficult for lobbyists to push through their proposals because much more of the negotiations go on inside the government and the Storting becomes less powerful in the legislative process (Heidar, 2014). For the oil industry, however, the long period of the minority government was stressful, since it made them unable to control the agenda of the Storting and it increased the risk of political surprises.

> In a situation with a minority government, there is so much uncertainty, and suddenly, someone can push a proposal against us, so you have to be alert all the time. With a majority government, the direction is given in the government platform, and we don't have to worry about what the opposition is doing. (Oil and Gas Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

As one can see, the majority–minority constraint plays out differently for distinct interest organizations depending on their political goals. For interest organizations that have particularly strong ties to particular political parties, it also matters which parties are part of the minority or majority governments. Studies depict that Norwegian political parties "tend toward a pattern of not very close and quite wide-ranging relationships with interest groups" (E. H. Allern, 2010, p. 314). However, the Labour Party stands out with a particular strong inter-organizational link with LO. It is common that the leader of LO is part of the Labour Party's executive committee, and the link is formalized with regular meetings in the Co-operation Committee (E. H. Allern, 2010). Hence, when the Labour Party is in the government, LO has unprecedented access to both ministers and the prime minister.

The Ministry of Finance as a constraint

Most policy proposals have a cost, and the Stortinget is the final authority in matters concerning the finances of the State—expenditures as well as revenues. The Stortinget has unlimited power to propose amendments. However, the state budget process ensures that any proposal that imposes costs will be vetted against the expertise of the Ministry of Finance (Anderson, Curristine, & Merk, 2006). For the environmental lobbyists working against the SCCE, the power of the Ministry of Finance was a recurring challenge.

> We are often met with the argument that our measures are expensive, that what we suggest is too radical, and the changes are too large. … Then you always have the Ministry of

> Finance who have their views. For them, cost-effectiveness is always important. (Environmental Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Thus, the environmental organizations are careful to show that the proposals they bring to the Stortinget are cost-effective, and "when we bring our proposals to the state budget, we always make sure that our proposals don't affect the balance in the budget" (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation). Furthermore, lobbyists from the energy industry and the oil industry frequently mentioned how the Ministry of Finance was their fiercest opponent when they tried to change the taxing regime for their industries. One energy lobbyist confided that:

> The worst thing is that it is not the political parties that have anything against taxation; it is the officials in the Ministry of Finance. But it is the politicians at the top who are ultimately responsible, so we cannot just blame a ministry. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The role of the Ministry of Finance as a constraint probably reflects the strong role of the Ministry of Finance in the Norwegian decision-making system (Lie & Venneslan, 2010; Slagstad, 1998). Before the Second World War, experts in law were the dominant group within the Norwegian state administration, but since the 1980s, the economists have taken over as the most powerful group (Christensen & Holst, 2020). In 2019, 10 of 16 secretary generals in Norwegian departments were trained as economists, and Christensen and Holst (2020) describe this group of bureaucrats as self-confident experts who want to protect the Norwegian state against special interests. This is reflected above in the comments of both Environmental Lobbyist 2 and Energy Lobbyist 3, who portray the Ministry of Finance as the most powerful ministry that does not care much about the proposals of lobbyists. Therefore, for lobbyists working toward the SCEE, the Ministry of Finance is a constraint that always must be considered when it crafts its proposals.

The rhetorical situation and the kairos

Thus far, I have tried to answer RQ3 and have shown that the rhetorical situation facing lobbyists working against the SCEE is complicated. First, the SCEE members are often hard to influence, and the exigencies are often defined by the legislative or budgetary processes they are trying to influence. Second, the lobbyist must relate to his or her own organizational and financial constraints and more systemic constraints, such as the party programs of the political parties they are trying to influence and whether they are lobbying against a majority or minority government. According to Bitzer (1968), a lobbyist who knows the exigence, the audience, and the constraints would know what to say since every rhetorical situation "invites a fitting response, a response that fits the situation" (p. 10). However, as discussed in the theoretical section, this perspective

underestimates the role of agency and that the exigency of the rhetorical situation has a subjective dimension (Consigny, 1974; Hunsaker & Smith, 1976; Vatz, 1973).

One way lobbyists can work toward resolving the problem of exigency is to bring their own constraints and the constraints of the politicians into agreement (A. B. Miller, 1972). To do this, they can exploit a rhetorical situation with an unpredictable kairotic element where the constraints of the situation can be turned into an opportunity. Even though (Bitzer, 1968, 1980) acknowledges that constraints also can be seen as possibilities, his theory emphasizes how constraints limit the rhetors' agency (Grant-Davie, 1997).

Thus, in the following, I will try to untangle the complicated question of rhetorical agency by bringing in RQ4, which asks, *what is the role of kairos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?*

The right time—the temporal dimension of kairos

The temporal dimension of kairos relates to the "right time to act." In lobbying, the right time to act is closely related to the various stages of the policy process. The policy process for legislative and budgetary matters in the Storting was presented earlier in this chapter. The question for lobbyists working against the SCEE is: When is the right time to speak up? When does the policy process reach its moment of maturity when rhetorical action is needed? For lobbyists working against the SCEE, the timetable of the SCEE is of utmost importance when deciding when to influence.

> I think a lot in the life of politics is about timing. You must be on and pay attention. If you are meeting with SCEE members, you must know exactly what issues they are working on. When the proposal is delivered, it is too late. You must know exactly when things are going to be delivered and the possible room for persuasion. We closely follow who they nominate as spokespersons and what deadline they obtain [a standing committee appoints a spokesperson for each item of business sent to the committee]. (Energy Lobbyist 4, author's translation)

> You need the ability to understand where in the policy process an issue is and get into the process early enough so you can influence how they think about the topic. … Once they realize that you have something that can be brought directly into the political process, you are onto something. (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

The reference of the energy lobbyists to the "possible room for persuasion" and the important "get into the process early" underscores how the temporal and spatial dimensions of kairos are closely connected. Hence, lobbyists must analyze policy processes to find the right moment to act and identify "windows of opportunity" (Godwin et al., 2012; Kingdon, 1984/2011). The general view

among lobbyists interviewed in this study is that the possible room for influence is greater early in the policy process than at later stages, which is in line with the general recommendations in the trade literature (Hegelund & Mose, 2013; Mathisen, 2019; Zetter, 2014).

Similarly, the SCEE members underscored that effective lobbyists must understand the temporal dimension of kairos. One member emphasized, "I appreciate the information that is concrete and relevant for the cases we are working on" (SCEE Member 2, author's translation), while another argued that "in lobbying, the early phase is the most important phase" (SCEE Member 1, author's translation).

Even though both the budget processes and the legislative process follow a pattern regulated in the Storting's rule of procedure, the majority–minority constraint complicates how lobbyists relate to the temporal dimension of kairos. With a minority government, any government proposal will go to the Storting without a majority, and the fate of the proposals is decided in the standing committees. Therefore, under these circumstances, the SCEE has a great deal of influence over the proposal. With a majority government, however, this situation changes considerably, and the government proposals that come to the Storting will already have a majority behind them. In this situation, the policy process inside the government gets heightened importance, and the stages in the policy process where the issue is prepared by the ministries and debated within the government is the most important arena to influence. The problem with the policy process inside the government is that information about the temporal dimension of kairos is harder to obtain.

> It is always most difficult when the process is inside the government because it is harder to obtain access and information, ... but once the process gets to SCEE, it is quite easy for us to know the policy process because we know who the spokesperson and the deadlines for the committee are. … At the Stortinget, there are set deadlines while the government does not have a set deadline. The only deadline they have to care about is that the Storting needs a certain amount of time to handle the case. But often, they can decide not to give a shit about that deadline. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

The assessment of Environmental Lobbyist 5 illustrates how many of the lobbyists working against the SCEE were in disarray after the change from a minority government to a majority government in January 2019. A central challenge is to determine the temporal dimension of kairos when the policy process is transpiring inside the government. Thus, in the situation of a majority government, political intelligence or "insider information" becomes even more important. One member of the SCEE, who belonged to one of the parties in the majority government, described

how she helped a particular interest organization to position itself for influence after the majority government started in January 2019.

> I have started to use them very consciously by contacting them in advance of things and asking for input. They do not always intend to lobby for what I ask because they do not always have insight into the processes in government and they do not necessarily know where on the trail they are, … so it's often a little easier for me to ask them at the right time than for them to arrive too early or too late with something that is not relevant. (SCEE Member 3, author's translation)

Consequently, lobbyists who do not have good relationships with government parties that can give them political intelligence will have problems discerning the temporal dimension of kairos under a majority government. Therefore, the existing links between interest organizations and political parties play a major role in the lobbyists' ability to resolve the challenges related to the temporal dimension of kairos under both a majority government and a minority government. As discussed above, the environmental organizations could exploit the close ties to the Liberal Party from 2013 until 2017. However, once the Liberal Party joined the government, this strategy did not work anymore, and it was harder for the lobbyists to determine the temporal dimension of the policy process.

The situation that occurred in January 2019 is quite similar to what happened in September 2005 when Norway got its first majority government in 20 years, which lasted until 2013. Subsequently, lobbyists, political reporters, and opposition parties complained that the decision-making process became clouded in secrecy, and the Stortinget was sidelined in the policy process (Alstadheim, 2005). Meanwhile, one MP confided that "democracy moved out of the Stortinget after we got a majority government" (Mathisen, 2019, p. 181).

The spatial dimension of kairos

The spatial dimension of kairos deals with "the problem space," or what is possible to achieve given the constraints in the rhetorical situation. The classical understanding of this dimension of kairos was often equated with finding a weakness in the armor of the opponent (Kjeldsen, 2014). In terms of lobbying, the spatial dimension of kairos refers to figuring out what kind of policy solutions have a chance of surviving the political process. The members of SCEE expect lobbyists to understand the spatial elements of kairos and avoid unrealistic and untimely demands.

> The best lobbyists are those who relate to the political framework and have a realistic understanding of what is possible to achieve. That is the alpha and omega. We might have

> a meeting where we say that this is fine, but it ain't gonna happen. You have not understood the policy space for what is possible to achieve, and you have not understood how the parliament works. (SCEE Member 12, author's translation).
>
> You have to understand the political window of opportunity that is there and be able to exploit and maybe even widen that window. (Environmental Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The quotes from both the lobbyist and the SCEE member are quite close to Otto von Bismarck's old dictum that "politics is the art of the possible, the attainable—the art of the next best" (Steinberg, 2011, p. 8). The challenge with the spatial dimension of kairos is that it is affected by all the constraints discussed above. What is possible to achieve depends on the political documents parties are bound by, the type of coalition government, and the level of cost that can be approved by the Ministry of Finance. Hence, figuring out what is possible to achieve is an extremely complicated task that is dependent on the lobbyists' ability to evaluate the size of the policy window given the rhetorical constraints.

Some constraints, such as the majority–minority constraint and the role of the Ministry of Finance, are difficult for lobbyists to influence. However, the spatial dimension of kairos is an opportunity for lobbyists when it comes to the role of political documents in constraining decisions. The lobbyists can try to influence both party programs and government platforms, but lobbyists can also read these documents carefully and remind decision makers about their earlier positions when these positions are to their own advantage.

> You have to work strategically and make the party work for your interests. Then you don't have to call the members of the Stortinget each day because you have left something in a party platform or a government platform that makes the politicians work for you. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)
>
> Sometimes, the institutional memory in the parties is quite weak; they might not remember what they have said in previous rounds. Then you can just cut that out and ask, "You said this two years ago. Have you changed your opinion now?" … That has happened quite often without me mentioning any names. (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The quotes here are an apt reminder that spatial kairotic openings can be "constructed as well as discovered" (C. R. Miller, 1992, p. 313). Thus, lobbyists use a great deal of time to analyze government platforms, party programs, and policy documents to discover openings for the political positions they are pursuing. Much like the researcher searching for a gap in the literature, the lobbyist is trying to discover a political space that fits the political solutions they are pursuing.

This view on constraints as kairotic opportunities is a reminder that constraints are not necessarily negative. Even Bitzer (1968) "defines constraints more as aids to the rhetor than as handicaps" (Grant-Davie, 1997, p. 272). Thus, it can be useful to talk about positive constraints when the constraints can be harnessed to work for the rhetor's objectives and negative constraints when they hinder it (Grant-Davie, 1997). Therefore, the constraints discussed thus far in this chapter are not one-dimensional, and the temporal and spatial dimensions of kairos illustrate how lobbyists can work with constraints and bend them to his or her advantage. The Ministry of Finance, for example, is an important constraint to lobbying for proposals that involve government spending. However, this constraint is less serious for the lobbyist, who knows the budgetary process extremely well and has carefully analyzed the diverse positions of the political parties on the issue. Then, the lobbyist can craft a realistic proposal that fits "the problem space" and ask for a meeting at the moment when it is still possible to influence the budget.

The unseasonal lobbyist

The complexities of knowing the temporal and spatial dimensions of kairos and their constraints is probably why lobbyists are quite cautious and "are careful to avoid asking for things that will ruffle a large number of feathers or lead to radical changes" (Nownes, 2006, p. 206). Unrealistic demands and untimely inquiries are typical traits of the lobbying amateur (Naurin, 2007). The problem of lobbying amateurs came up frequently during the interviews, and the SCEE members often experience the lobbyists being *akairos,* meaning that their attempts to influence the policy process are "unseasonal" and that they misjudge what is needed at the right time.

> There are so many who have not done their homework. I think they believe that if they just obtain a meeting at the Stortinget, they can influence what we are doing. There is an enormous difference in the quality of the lobbyists who try to influence us. Some come in September and think they can influence the state budget, while some come in December to influence the state budget in two years [the state budget is always presented the sixth day of the session, meaning at the beginning of October]. This means that they know the policy process much better. They have understood how the Storting works. (SCCE Member 9, author's translation)

> The worst are always those who always come at the end of August to lobby on the state budget with a topic that is irrelevant for what we are working on. (SCCE Member 4, author's translation)

These complaints about the unseasonal lobbyists who say the wrong things at the wrong time are interesting from a democratic perspective. In the previous chapter on ethos, I showed how SCEE members expected lobbyists to provide relevant policy expertise and devise workable political

solutions and criticized lobbyists for being problem-oriented, vague, and only having general wishes. In the same vein, the SCEE members expect lobbyists to have kairotic knowledge about when to contact them and what is realistic to achieve and to become irritated when lobbyists have "not done their homework." That the policy processes in which they participate are extremely complicated and seem impenetrable for the political outsider does not seem to matter much.

The right message—the proper measure

Figuring out the timing of the proposal and the possible room for influence are quite complicated matters. However, once the lobbyist finds the right time for a meeting and has evaluated the "problem space," the third dimension of kairos becomes evident. What is appropriate to say? What kinds of arguments are likely to obtain a hearing, and what kinds of arguments will fail?

The short answer to the appropriate message in a lobbying meeting is to adhere to the goodwill strategies presented in the previous chapter. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, these two categories resulted in many of the same sub-categories in the coding process. Consequently, the rhetoric of the decorous lobbyist presents realistic solutions, keeps their messages short and simple, argues in public interest terms, demonstrates respect, praises politicians, and shows understanding for their constraints.

The workable political solution is at the center of the decorous response. Hence, the creative potential of lobbyists hinges on their ability to deliver workable political solutions that can be explained in a short and concise way and be packed in public interest rhetoric and promises of future praise, if enacted. Repeatedly, SCEE members returned to the importance of a political solution or meaningful political action as a prerequisite for a meaningful lobbying meeting.

> I notice when I leave the meeting and know what is expected of me, I feel better about it. If you have been sitting there for 30 minutes, it is not a good sign if you don't know what to do after the meeting. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

> There must be a task for politicians there. I cannot just say, "This is for your orientation," because then they will say, "What do you want me to do now?" (Energy Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Similarly, lobbyists connect failure to sloppy work respecting the political solutions they present.

> I really feel we fail when we haven't really worked through our proposals. …You know when the politicians are sitting there as a bunch of question marks and they say that this

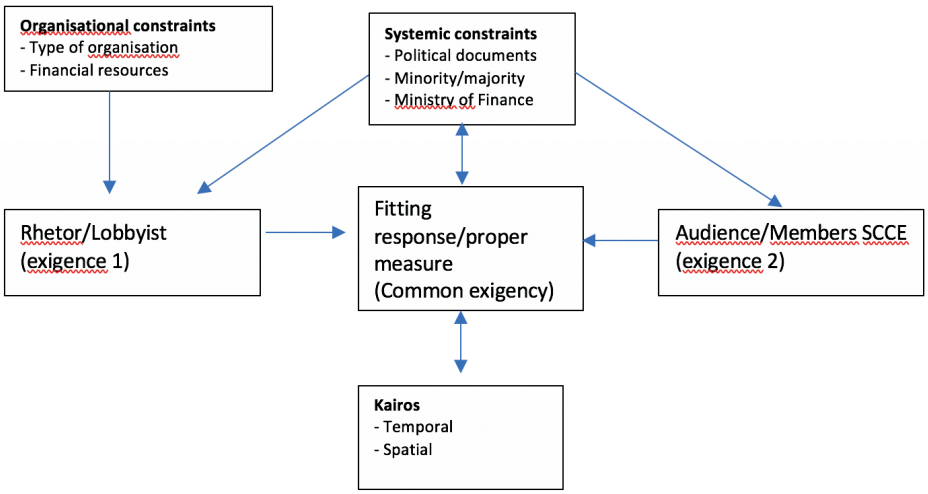
> sounds good, but they really do not have any idea what they should do. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

In summary, a lobbyist who does not have a concrete political solution to bring to the table in a meeting with the SCEE misreads the rhetorical situation of the lobbying meeting. However, devising a workable political solution depends on the lobbyist's understanding of the temporal and spatial elements of kairos. Furthermore, an acceptable solution is also dependent upon the fact that the lobbyists and the politician share the same exigency. An unrealistic solution presented at the wrong time to a problem that politicians do not agree exists has little value. Thus, the elements are now in place to present a revised model of the rhetorical situation.

A revised model of the rhetorical situation

Both kairos and the theory of the rhetorical situation describe a space of rhetorical action that opens up. However, while kairos emphasizes the opportunities in the situation, Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation emphasizes the constraints and how these constraints determine a fitting response (Kjeldsen, 2014). However, it would be wrong to interpret Bitzer's version of constraints as strictly negative (Grant-Davie, 1997). In the analysis above, I have highlighted how the temporal and spatial element of kairos is a way for rhetors to adapt to these constraints and maybe turn negative constraints into positive constraints. Thus, it is not clear how a lobbyist should relate to the constraints and try to change them with the help of rhetoric.

Figure 5.2 A revised model of the rhetorical situation



In Figure 5.2, I have visualized the dynamic relationship between the constraints of the rhetorical situation facing the lobbyists working against the SCEE and the kairotic possibilities for rhetorical action. In the model, I have tried to summarize the answer to RQ3 and RQ4, which focus on what constitutes the rhetorical situation in the lobbying meetings between lobbyists and SCEE members and the role of kairos in this process. In the model, I have tried to solve the two major problems with Bitzer's (1968) model that I identified in the theoretical chapter. The first is "the perception problem," which deals with Bitzer's idea of a singular objective exigence in a rhetorical situation, and the second is "the agency problem," which challenges the determinism of Bitzer's model, leaving little room for the rhetorical creativity of the rhetor.

Concerning the "perception problem," I have distinguished between the exigence of the lobbyist (exigence 1) and the exigence of the SCEE members (exigence 2). As mentioned above, exigence is a challenge for lobbyists because most of the work in the SCCE follows a legislative agenda that lobbyists do not control, and they must try to discern and adapt to the exigency of the politicians they are trying to influence. While Bitzer's original model is close to rhetorical objectivism, in which it is assumed that every rhetorical situation has a pressing problem or exigency that is shared, this revised model argues in line with the principle of rhetorical perspectivism (Cherwitz & Hikins, 1983), which acknowledges that politicians and lobbyists often have assorted aims and perspectives, even though they work on the same political issues. Therefore, it is up to lobbyists to determine how they can use rhetoric to create a shared exigency, and the key to a shared exigency is to both understand and analyze the constraints under which politicians are operating. The model shows that lobbyists working against the SCEE are facing constraints that significantly reduce their room for rhetorical action. They struggle with organizational constraints, such as type of organization and financial resources, and more systemic constraints, such as political documents, the minority−majority situation, and the Ministry of Finance.

To craft a fitting response and create a shared exigency, lobbyists must work with the constraints and try to turn these constraints to their own advantage. This leads us to the solution of "the agency problem," where the success of the lobbyist depends on how well they exploit the room for creative rhetorical action. In particular, the temporal and spatial dimensions of kairos introduce time and space as elements the rhetor can use to dampen the impact of the constraints. By analyzing policy processes and carefully tracking the positions of the political parties, lobbyists try to discern the temporal and spatial element of kairos. The temporal and spatial

element of kairos is affected by the constraints of the rhetorical situation. However, once the temporal and spatial dimension of kairos is analyzed, the lobbyist can decide the proper measure—that is, the rhetoric that gives an appropriate response to the situation given the possibilities and the constraints. According to Bitzer (1968), a *fitting response* is a "response that fits the situation" (p. 10) and is in ways like the kairotic dimension of "proper measure." However, while Bitzer's "fitting response" grows out of the constraints of the situation, the kairotic "proper measure" emphasizes the creative potential of the rhetor. Consequently, I have placed these two concepts at the center of the model to underscore that a "fitting response" or a "proper measure" grows out of the interaction between the constraints and the kairotic openings the rhetorical situation presents.

Consequently, by considering the constraints of politicians, the lobbyists can formulate a more fitting response (A. B. Miller, 1972). However, to exploit the kairotic opportunities the rhetorical situation offers, lobbyists need to utilize many of the ethos-enhancing strategies described in the previous chapter. Deciding the right time to act, the possible room for persuasion is dependent on competence through political intelligence, and a fitting response is in line with goodwill strategies such as providing political solutions and arguing in public interest terms.

The model presented above is not meant to be exhaustive, but I will argue that it can work as a heuristic device when analyzing how lobbyists resolve the rhetorical situations they face. In the following, I will demonstrate the explanatory value of the model through a short case study of the oil industry's lobbying campaign for reduced taxes in the aftermath of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. To increase the explanatory value of the case study, ethos strategies presented in Chapter 4 will also be brought into the analysis. The aim is to illustrate how the theoretical concepts I have introduced in the study thus far can help us better understand lobbying success and lobbying failure. Hence, I now move on to RQ5, which asks *how did the coronavirus crisis change the rhetorical situation for the Norwegian oil industry, and how did they exploit the kairoitic openings of the crisis?*

The oil industry and the rhetorical situation of COVID-19

According to Bitzer, rhetorical situations can be fairly stable over a long period of time, while kairotic situations occur swiftly and can open up new rhetorical possibilities (Kjeldsen, 2014). The challenge for lobbyists working toward the SCEE is that the constraints are not very stable. Governments come and go. Party programs are renewed every four years, and the influence of the

Ministry of Finance depends on how government coalitions play out. However, sometimes, events change the constraints in ways that create new and unforeseen openings for rhetorical action. In the beginning of March 2020, Norway went into lockdown due to the COVID-19-pandemic, and the government started handing out crisis packages to affected industries. In the aftermath of this decision, the oil industry started a massive lobbying campaign for tax relief.

An industry under pressure

Before I delve into how the COVID-19 pandemic changed the rhetorical situation for the oil industry, it is necessary to say something about the rhetorical situation for the oil industry before the COVID-19 pandemic. As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, the oil industry felt that it was increasingly on the defensive from 2017−2020. At the Oil Industrial Seminar in Sandefjord in 2018, worries ran deep that the industry was losing its firm grip on Norwegian politics. The exigence or pressing problem for the industry was how it could claim to combat climate change while it did not curtail its own activity? Unlike the situation a decade ago, arguments such as sustainable oil production and that pollution from oil production was higher elsewhere were not seen as a fitting response to the situation (Ihlen, 2009b). The main reason for this change was the constant flow of IPCC reports over the last 10 years that problematized the continued Norwegian production of fossil fuels. This shift was acknowledged by many of the oil lobbyists I interviewed for this study. Hence, the oil industry feared a political backlash and that its favorable taxing regime would come under pressure.

In the aftermath of the LO Oil and Gas Seminar in Bergen in November 2018, I joined an oil lobbyist on the way to the airport who explained the depth of industry worries. I was told that "all criticism of the oil and gas industry is immediately covered. The industry feels that the factual argumentation does not come through in what becomes an emotional debate" (Oil lobbyist, author's translation). Furthermore, the lobbyist emphasized that "an NOU [Official Norwegian Report] about oil tax is something we fear the most because it will create a great deal of uncertainty. Our big anxiety is if you open that Pandora's box" (Oil lobbyist, author's translation).

This view of the situation was also shared by the environmental organizations that had started lobbying for higher taxes on petroleum companies.

> It turned incredibly fast. What was the discussion before the COVID-19-pandemic was that we would change the oil tax not in favor of the oil companies. … The debate had changed to deal with the conditions for the oil industry generally. What we lobbied for

> together with the rest of the environmental movement was to completely remove the free income of the oil companies. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Consequently, the strategy for the oil industry before the COVID-19 pandemic was to lobby for the status quo and resist negative changes:

> Our message over recent years in all lobby meetings has been that we just want the regulations to be as they are. When people have asked us what we want, we have only said that it is as fine as it is. What we have spent time on is preventing attempts to worsen the tax conditions we have. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The assessment of Oil Lobbyist 2 is a classical illustration of what lobbying researchers label "the power of status quo" (Baumgartner et al., 2009). Since its inception, the Norwegian oil industry has been one of the most powerful lobbying organizations in Norwegian politics (Borchgrevink, 2019; Sejersted, 1999). Consequently, the power of the industry is reflected in the existing regulations, and the industry can fend off proposals for policy change as unnecessary and detrimental for the economy.

Finding the right moment to act

In this chapter, I have described kairos as a multi-dimensional concept. Lobbyists who want to utilize the power of kairos in a lobbying campaign must understand the temporal dimension or the right time to act, the spatial dimension or the possible room for persuasion, and the decorous or appropriate message. Thus, when the COVID-19-pandemic hit Norway, the oil lobbyists acted swiftly and decisively to exploit the momentum. However, they also tried to define the exigency and widen the window of opportunity.

> We were out extremely early; already in the first meeting the Prime Minister had with the business community, we signaled that we needed a tax package to maintain activity in the sector. It took only two weeks before we had a concrete proposal on the table. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The lobbying campaign of the oil industry exemplifies many of the ethos strategies I described in the previous chapter. Instead of waiting for a political initiative from the government, the law firm BA-HR drafted a proposal for tax relief for the industry, and on the 3rd of April, Norwegian Oil and Gas presented the proposal on behalf of the oil industry (Rønning, 2020).

Consequently, the oil lobbyists used the ethos strategy of "being liked by people with authority." A tax proposal made by Norway´s most prominent tax lawyers was deemed a more credible starting point than a tax proposal formulated by the industry, itself. BA-HR is one of the most

expensive law firms in Norway, but for the oil industry, financial resources are not a significant organizational constraint. Furthermore, the goodwill strategy of "presenting political solutions" is evident along with the goodwill strategy of "understanding constraints." The oil industry understood that the COVID-19 pandemic created worries about the future of the Norwegian economy among the politicians, and the tax proposal was their way of saying, "We understand the problem, and we can help."

Finally, the oil industry gambled on how the exigency and the constraints of the rhetorical situation had changed. With the whole country in lockdown, the exigency for the oil industry was: How can we keep support for and activity in the oil industry while we fight the pandemic? Consequently, the three systemic constraints of the rhetorical situation described earlier in this chapter have changed. First, politicians were less bound by their party programs and other political documents. The COVID-19 pandemic was an extraordinary situation that demanded extraordinary measures that no political party or government had foreseen. Second, the doors to the Ministry of Finance were suddenly open, as the government was considering opening up massive COVID-19 relief to workers and various industries. Third, in January 2020, the Progressive Party left the majority government of Prime Minister Erna Solberg and opened up the possibility for lobbyists to form a majority against the government and use this as leverage.

The oil industry's analysis of how the systemic constraints had changed and their subsequent adaptation to these changes illustrate how ethos and kairos are connected and can amplify each other, since "a performance demonstrating knowledge, intelligence, and a good sense requires the rhetor's keen awareness of situational constraints" (Hartelius, 2011, p. 11). Thus, the ethos strategies described in the previous chapter do not work anywhere and anytime. Their effect is dependent on lobbyists' analysis of the constraints of the rhetorical situation and its kairotic opportunities.

Launching a suggestion for a political solution was only the first part of the lobbying campaign. After the tax proposal was presented on the 3rd of April, the oil lobbyists started to build wide support for the proposal. To increase the credibility of their tax proposal, the oil lobbyists utilized the ethos strategy I have labeled "we are liked by people with authority." The oil industry in particular forwarded experts from their own organization, since politicians often find experts who are close to the reality of the areas they are lobbying on more credible (Naurin, 2007). CEO of Equinor Eldar Sætre argued that without tax relief a major oil field called Whisting in the Barents

Sea would not be developed and Equinor Executive President Arne Sigve Nylund told the politicians that "this is about tens of thousands of jobs. Competence can be lost, and companies can go bankrupt" (Rønning, 2020). Similarly, an oil lobbyist I interviewed claimed that without immediate action "we could lose the hub in the Norwegian economy" (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation).

Even though some economists questioned the estimates of the oil industry, the ethos of the oil industry was strong enough to set the parameters for the negotiations among the political parties in the Storting, much to the frustration of the environmental movement:

> They said that ... oil fields x, y, and z would not be developed, and you lost so many jobs and so much money. It was really crazy that they got away with highlighting oil fields that had low profitability in a normal state. Many of the oil fields they talked about were reported in January that they could not reach break even with today's oil prices. It is only taken for granted and not questioned. Then they are also a far more powerful organization than we are in terms of the funds they use and how many times they can repeat their message. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

The fact that the politicians seemed to agree on the crisis description of the oil lobbyists speaks to the importance that the audience accepts the exigence for the rhetor to be successful (Garret & Xiao, 1993). The use of the CEOs of the oil industry as messengers was important to win the battle of exigence, and decision makers accepted their version of the pressing problem. If nothing were done, jobs would be lost. However, the use of CEOs also illustrates the importance of appearing competent and as a trusted provider of policy expertise. According to Naurin (2007), CEOs can be useful in lobbying campaigns as representatives of reality, which increases their credibility.

The power of Konkraft

As mentioned in the previous chapter, ethos is a multi-faceted concept and relies on competence, character, and goodwill. In addition, lobbyists have a broad palette of discursive strategies to choose from when they want to influence politicians. In the lobbying campaign for a reduction of the oil tax, the oil lobbyists exploited the full arsenal of ethos strategies. In addition to the CEOs of the oil companies, the coalition partners in Konkraft were called to counter the claim that the oil industry was pursuing its self-interests. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Konkraft is the lobbying alliance of the oil industry and consists of Norwegian Oil and Gas, the business organizations Norwegian Shipowners' Association and Norwegian Industry, and the most

important unions for oil workers, which are Industry and Energy and Fellesforbundet. In a campaign for reducing the taxes for the oil industry, this alliance proved its worth.

> Konkraft showed its usefulness in this campaign. We managed to make it clear that this was not about our own sick mother but all of us, … and we mobilized people along the coast all over Norway. It is obvious that when the Norwegian Shipowners' Association, Norwegian Industry, and LO decide to do something with us, it will be an enormous pressure. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The assessment of Oil Lobbyist 2 demonstrates how coalitions have a double purpose in lobbying campaigns: They can build both character and goodwill. They increase the ethos of interest organizations because they signal broad support, but they also enable lobbyists to put into play their public interest arguments (Beyers & De Bruycker, 2018; Holyoke, 2009; Rommetvedt, 2017a). Claiming to act in the public interest and not being self-centered go to the core of the concept of goodwill by "wanting for someone what is good for him rather than wanting what will benefit oneself" (Hartelius, 2011, p. 13). How lobbyists put into play distinct public interest arguments will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. However, the major point here is that a campaign that started as a demand for tax relief for one of the most profitable industries in Norway was now transformed into a campaign for "all of us" and the future of the Norwegian economy. According to the communications director of the oil company Aker, the alliance behind the tax proposal was a microcosm of the best features of Norwegian democracy: "This is the Norwegian co-operation model in practice. Behind the proposal is a broad team with actors from the entire industry, the shipping industry, LO and NHO" (Rønning, 2020).

The swift launch of the proposal and the backing of Konkraft also demonstrate how the oil industry was not hampered by internal disagreements among member organizations or coalition partners. Norwegian Oil and Gas represents more than 100 oil and supplier companies, and these companies could potentially have different opinions about the optimal taxing policy of the industry. Furthermore, tax relief to oil companies paid by the Norwegian state could potentially lead to resistance from unions. Unlike the energy industry, the Norwegian oil industry can move forward together.

As mentioned in the chapter on ethos, regional alliances are particularly important in the Norwegian context. The oil industry did not only mobilize union leaders, business leaders, and CEOs of oil companies through Konkraft but also "people along the coast all over Norway."

Consequently, local union officials and mayors were sent on the nightly news to tell how a downturn in the oil industry would affect local communities all over the country (Rønning, 2020).

Coalitions with regional political actors have a long history of the Norwegian oil industry. In his sweeping history of the development of "the Norwegian oil industrial complex," the historian Francis Sejersted (1999) observes that "care for the districts and small local communities has always been important in the Norwegian political context. … Local politicians and mayors became central in the oil policy context" (p. 33). Similarly, an experienced oil lobbyist I met at the Oil Industrial Conference in Sandefjord told me the best advice he had picked up as a young lobbyist was to understand the power of regional alliances:

> The smartest thing I ever learned about lobbying I learned from the leader of the Norwegian Shipowner's Association. He told me we never start in Oslo! We start in Hammerfest, work our way down the coast, and meet everyone locally. These then contact their local MPs. (Oil Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

The analysis of Oil Lobbyist 5 exemplifies how experienced lobbyists develop their knowledge of how the policy process works and how to use political constraints to their own advantage. As mentioned above, the center-periphery cleavage is particularly strong in the Norwegian political system, and political forces from the periphery played an outsized role in the democratization processes in the 18th century (Rokkan, 1966; Rokkan & Valen, 1964). Consequently, public interest claims connected to preserving local jobs and communities are powerful arguments. Playing the center-periphery card seems to be a common strategy among professional Norwegian lobbyists. When the tax-free industry, which administers the duty-free arrangements at Norwegian airports, was challenged on the health damage, it moved the debate to be about preserving local airports and local jobs (Raknes & Ihlen, 2020).

Public interest arguments

How lobbyists find and invent public interest arguments will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, but the lobbying campaign for the reduction of the oil tax illustrates the tendency for lobbyists to invoke several public interest arguments simultaneously and use them for strategic purposes (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020). For the oil industry, the economic public interest arguments weighed most heavily, but these were often combined with the material topos of the environment. The leader of the Norwegian Confederation of Enterprises, Ole Erik Almlid, argued that tax reductions could "secure tens of thousands of jobs across the country, and that can ensure that Norwegian companies take the lead in the green shift with important positions in, for example,

offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, and hydrogen." The claim that increased oil investments will lead to a green revolution is in line with the oil industry's traditional oxymoronic rhetoric (Ihlen, 2007).

Shortly after Norwegian Oil and Gas presented its proposal in the beginning of April, negotiations started between the oil industry and the political parties in the Stortinget. Under normal circumstances, changes in petroleum taxes would follow the policy process of the State Budget in close coordination with the SCEE and the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. However, with their swift proposal, the oil industry was able to create an exigency that demanded the creation of an extraordinary policy process that went outside the normal procedures for budget amendments. Furthermore, the industry was also able to overcome the constraints of political documents by pushing for a policy change that was not reflected in party programs or a government platform. The government platform of Erna Solberg's government did not promise the oil industry tax relief but the status quo in the form of predictable regulatory conditions (kontor, 2019).

On April 30, the minority government of Erna Solberg presented a proposal that would postpone tax payments of 100 billion NOK ($10.8 billion). The package was considered generous, and the civil servants in the Ministry of Finance feared that the tax break could lead to a contagion effect in other industrial sectors (Lorentzen, 2021). The government's proposal showed that the Ministry of Finance as a systemic constraint was severely weakened due to the extraordinary economic insecurity created by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the oil lobbyists now moved on to exploit the minority–majority constraint to obtain further concessions and pressured the government to continue negotiating with the opposition parties.

> The fact that the Progressive Party left the government was extremely important to us. Our main strategy was to maintain the notion that there was a realistic plan B by the Labor Party, the Centre Party, and the Progressive Party forming a majority and overthrowing the government. Thus, the government was forced to reconcile with these parties. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Faced with the threat of a majority against the government, negotiations continued between the government parties and the Socialist Left Party, the Centre Party, the Labor Party, and the Progressive Party. In the beginning of June, the Socialist Left Party left the negotiations and argued that the tax package demonstrated the "oil lobby's influence and defining power in

Norwegian politics" and that "it is striking how a proposal that will benefit the oil companies to such an extent obtains such strong political support" (Rønning, 2020).

Finally, on the 8th of June 2020, a final agreement was reached that was even more generous than the government's original proposal and would release an estimated NOK 115 billion for new investments in 2020 and 2021 (Ask, 2021). The CEO of Aker BP, Kai Johnny Hersvik, admitted that the politicians had been generous with the taxpayers' money and told the media that "what we asked for was not tax relief, but the way the system was set up in the end, gives somewhat lower revenue [for the Norwegian state]. But it was not necessary" (Ask, 2021).

Similarly, environmental lobbyists were surprised by the sudden turn of events but acknowledged that the oil industry had analyzed the changes of the rhetorical situation and its kairotic openings in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic with impressive precision. The leader of the Norwegian Climate Foundation wrote:

> The lobbyists in Norwegian Oil and Gas deserve a bonus. They have done everything right. They were out early with a concrete plan everyone else was forced to respond to. They have taken advantage of a situation in which the Center Party and the Progress Party are responsive supporters on their respective wings, which makes it more difficult for the Labor Party and the Conservative Party to resist. They have built alliances with the trade union movement. They have mobilized mayors. They seem to be winning over the Ministry of Finance's civil service (Bjartnes, 2020).

The assessment of the leader of the Norwegian Climate Foundation illustrates the heuristic quality of the revised model of the rhetorical situation presented above. The key to success for the lobbying campaign of the oil industry is how they used the sudden COVID-19 pandemic to win the approval of a shared exigency with politicians. Furthermore, they also exploited the kairotic openings that the change of the rhetorical situation gave them and turned constraints into opportunities. By launching their own proposal just two weeks after the lockdown, they exploited the temporal and spatial element of kairos by finding the right moment to act and helping define the possible room for persuasion. Finally, they were able to fill this window of opportunity with a decorous fitting response in the form of goodwill strategies, such as arguing in public interest terms, providing solutions, and understanding political constraints.

Explaining lobbying success

According to Bitzer (1968), "[T]he situation controls the rhetorical response in the same sense that the question controls the answer and the problem controls the solution" (p. 4). From this

perspective, one should expect the oil industry to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with a lobbying campaign for reduced taxes out of historical necessity. However, the oil industry did not have to act. They could have waited for the government to suggest a crisis package, and they could have chosen not to launch a nationwide lobbying campaign. This was the strategy chosen by most other industries that scrambled for compensatory measures and did not bring up old proposals of tax reductions (Ryggvik, 2021). Early in the pandemic, neither the government nor the lobbyists had any clear idea of how long the COVID-19 pandemic would last and its potential economic implications. However, the oil industry's lobbyists saw a kairotic opening and decided to go for it. Kairos reminds us that the skilled rhetor needs to exploit the unpredicted and uncontrollable because "there is no logical, physical, and economic necessity in the historical process" (J. E. Smith, 1986, p. 15). Therefore, kairos gives room for rhetorical agency because "kairos is always on the watch for opportunities offered by the particular situation" (Heath, 2001, p. 414).

It was not a given that the politicians would accept the exigency of the oil industry and buy into their description of the gravity of the situation and what should be done. In 2003−2004, the oil industry engaged in a massive lobbying campaign with remarkably similar arguments as in 2020 (Ihlen, 2007). The oil industry argued that it needed massive tax relief to save jobs and continue production at the Norwegian continental shelf after an economic downturn. However, they failed in building alliances, formulating strong public interest arguments, and winning approval of their exigency. In 2003−2004, the Ministry of Finance decimated the industry's credibility and argued that its tax proposal would end up with the Norwegian state losing tax income. Furthermore, the temporal element of kairos evaporated when the price of oil suddenly started to rise during 2003 and undermined the exigency of the industry's claims. In the end, the Minister of Oil and Energy, Einar Steensnæs, characterized the tax proposal as "quite hopeless, ill-considered, and completely unacceptable" (Ihlen, 2007, p. 241). In 2020, the situation was the opposite. Minister of Finance Jan Tore Sanner used exactly the same arguments as the industry, itself, when the tax proposal of the government was presented:

> The oil and gas industry is an important resource for Norway. The expertise the industry has can also contribute to the green transformation and to solving tomorrow's challenges. Therefore, it is important for the government to help ensure that activity in the oil and gas industry and the supplier industry can stay up through the coronavirus crisis (Finansdepartementet, 2020).

Consequently, the public interest argument that giving tax relief for extracting more oil would somehow help the necessary transition to a low-emission society ended up as Norway's official policy. How lobbyists create public interest arguments and choose which public interest arguments to pursue will be analyzed in more detail in the next chapter through the rhetorical concept of topos. However, this small case study illustrates the importance of presenting narrow and self-serving claims in public-interest rhetoric. The oil industry used rhetoric to change the structure of the policy process and exploited dominant discourses about the industry in which they had been working for a long time (Ihlen, 2007, 2009b). As mentioned before in the chapter, the ability of lobbyists to exploit and utilize kairos is very much dependent upon their ethos. To exploit kairos, lobbyists need a specific form of competence that I have labeled *political intelligence*, which is the ability to read the possibilities of the political game as well as decide when to act and when to use political intelligence to their own advantage (Selling & Svallfors, 2019; Svallfors, 2016a).

In summary, the lobbying victory of the oil industry did not arrive by chance or historical necessity but resulted from deliberate strategic choices made by the lobbyists of the oil industry. Thus, if we understand rhetorical agency as the ability of rhetoric to effect change, the level of rhetorical agency for lobbyists is limited by the constraints, but lobbyists also can use the kairotic openings of the rhetorical situation to mitigate and exploit these constraints (Hoff-Clausen, 2018). The Ministry of Finance, the type of government, and the political platforms of the political parties were all constraints that the industry was able to overcome and use to its advantage. The oil industry did not know in advance that politicians would agree to its version of the exigency and how the campaign would unfold. As mentioned above, a similar campaign in 2003−2004 failed miserably, and the industry could not overcome the constraints of the rhetorical situation. In this sense, agency has an unpredictable element, and room for agency must be found in the interaction between the rhetor and the audience (Hoff-Clausen, 2018). Therefore, seeking a single cause for the oil industry's success is a futile task, because no one can control exactly what rhetoric can and cannot do (Campbell, 2005). The larger theoretical point to be made is that there is a dynamic relationship between kairos and rhetorical situations. The notion of kairos helps to untangle the complicated relationship between structure and agency in the rhetorical situation and gives room for the strategic and creative rhetor (Garret & Xiao, 1993; C. R. Smith & Lybarger, 1996).

In lobbying research, a central measure of lobbying success is whether decision makers adopt the rhetoric and proposals of the lobbyists (Boräng et al., 2014; Boräng & Naurin, 2015). However, even though decision makers accept the rhetoric of lobbyists, one should be careful to conclude with causality "pointing to this or that strategy, or this or that rhetor, as the source of the effects produced" (Hoff-Clausen, 2018, p. 295). The success of the lobbying campaign of the oil industry clearly resulted from identification. Most decision makers felt that they had common cause and shared interests with the oil industry. However, we should not rule out the option that identification here worked on a deeper, more unconscious, and constitutive level like the third face of power discussed in the theoretical chapter. Ever since the first reports on climate change early in the 1990s, the Norwegian oil industry has worked relentlessly to build an image whereby concerns for the environment and the continued production of oil are compatible (Sæther, 2019). Thus, this has also been the self-understanding of most Norwegian political parties and has been popularized as the "climate paradox" (Alstadheim, 2010). From this perspective, the oil lobbyists did not really change their minds but used their inventive rhetorical capabilities to reinforce a powerful discourse that was already there (Campbell, 2005).

Summary

This chapter has explored the relationship between kairos and the rhetorical situation in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE. The first question the chapter raised was: *What constitutes the lobbying meeting with SCEE as a rhetorical situation?* (RQ3). I have argued that lobbyists working toward the SCEE face a rhetorical situation in which they struggle to find common exigencies with politicians and must adapt their appeals to organizational and systemic constraints, such as the type of organization they represent and the program of the party against which they are lobbying.

Bitzer's original model is rather static and gives little room for rhetorical agency. Hence, to untangle the complicated question of rhetorical agency, I asked: W*hat is the role of kairos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?* (RQ4). Bringing in the three-dimensional concept of kairos helps to highlight the opportunities in the rhetorical situation for lobbyists in finding the right moment to intervene, figuring out the "problem space," and formulating a fitting response through bringing in a political solution supported by public interest arguments. Thus, the fitting response can be found in the interaction between the constraints of the rhetorical situation and its kairotic openings. Lobbyists' ability to exploit the kairotic dimensions of the rhetorical situation

depends on their ability to exhaust the ethos strategies analyzed in Chapter 4. Thus, to identify "the right time to act" and "the problem space," lobbyists need credible political intelligence from decision makers or other actors with insider knowledge of when decisions are made and to what extent these decisions can be influenced.

The answers to RQ3 and RQ4 form the basis for a revised model of the rhetorical situation in which both the "fitting" or "decorous" response can be found in the interaction between the constraints of the situation and its kairotic openings. To demonstrate the heuristic value of the model, I end the chapter by asking *how the COVID-19 pandemic changed the rhetorical situation for the Norwegian oil industry and how the industry exploited the kairotic openings of the crisis* (RQ5). The short case study demonstrates how the oil industry exploited the kairotic openings after the COVID-19 pandemic. They also had the necessary rhetorical skills to formulate effective public-interest arguments that convinced decision makers that they were responding to the same pressing problem or exigency. How lobbyists invent and formulate effective public interest arguments will be the topic of the next chapter.

6 I want what you want—energy, the environment, and the struggle for the public interest

These two first chapters dealt with two specific communicative challenges with which lobbyists struggle that have gained limited attention in the research literature: the challenges of credibility, finding the correct timing, and dealing with situational constraints. In this last chapter, I will turn my attention to the challenge of finding the right arguments with a focus on how lobbyists find and construct public interest arguments through the theory of topos.

Topos can be seen as a general method of finding arguments, and its success depends on the rhetor knowing where to look (Herrick, 2017). However, as discussed in the theory chapter, topos is a multi-faceted concept and can be seen as a heuristic for finding arguments, a method for locating shared beliefs (*loci communes*), and a way to study the doxa in a given society (Gabrielsen, 2008). In this chapter, all three perspectives on topos will be relevant. Hence, the analysis goes beyond simply pointing out that lobbyists use public interest rhetoric but tries to answer how they use it and why they choose specific public interest topics at the expense of others.

Therefore, I start the chapter by addressing RQ6, which is: *What kind of appeals to the public interest are typical in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?* I will look closer at how the interest organizations working toward the SCEE construct their public interest claims and adapt them to the needs of the decision makers.

How lobbyists work with public-interest arguments has been addressed in previous studies on lobbying (De Bruycker, 2017; Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Uhre & Rommetvedt, 2019). However, we know less about how politicians evaluate lobbyists' public interest claims. Thus, in the last section of the chapter, RQ7 asks *how politicians evaluate the public interest claims lobbyists make and what kind of conceptualization of the public interest politicians adhere to.* Finally, I move on to RQ8 and examine *what the politicians' conceptualization of the public interest means for the influence of lobbyists.*

Lobbying for the public interest

Before I turn to the analysis of RQ6, I will briefly address how the topos of the public interest functions as a vehicle of identification. In lobbying, the notion of the public interest is closely connected to the process of identification because it becomes a form of "bridging device" with which the lobbyist can connect his or her world to the world of the politician (Jasinski, 2001). According to Burke (1937/1984), a *bridging device* is a symbolic structure that enables the rhetor to overcome conflict and division.

In the previous chapter, I analyzed how the oil lobbyists invoked public interest arguments to convince politicians that their demands for tax relief were not concerned with their own selfish needs, but centered on the struggle to save the Norwegian economy. In the interviews, the lobbyists frequently returned to some version of invoking the public interest when asked about what they consider effective arguments. One oil lobbyist underscored the necessity of aligning one's interests with those of the nation: "You have to put your proposal in a national context. The question is what your proposal means for Norway" (Oil Lobbyist 4, author's translation). Another environmental lobbyist equated the goal of lobbying to making the world a better place:

> As a general rule, it is all about making the proposal a step towards the greater good. … The narrative must be that this makes things better and that your party can secure a better future for the country if you do it. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Commonsensical arguments such as “do what is good for Norway” or “secure a better future for the country” are close to the understanding of topos as commonplaces or “shared, normally unquestioned, viewpoints and values” (Kjeldsen, 2019, p. 226). Hence, to bridge the gap between themselves and the politicians they are trying to influence, lobbyists find arguments in commonalities that most people would not question. For who would oppose doing something good for Norway or securing a better future for the country? By invoking that their proposals are somehow advancing the national interest of Norway, lobbyists are trying to convince politicians that they belong to the same moral community (Billig, 1987). In this respect, the public interest rhetoric of lobbyists has certain similarities with the rhetoric of royals, which is filled with “uncontroversial statements, with a platitudinous moral tone” (Billig, 1988, p. 196). They might have their differences but use commonplaces to convince politicians that they want the same things as they want.

The reason lobbyists go for the public interest topos is that politicians are searching to find a grounding for their decisions in the same philosophical landscape. One member of the SCEE admitted that the arguments that always made the most impression were arguing along the lines that “it is good for Norway, that it is the right politics for the future” (SCEE Member 7, author’s translation), while another emphasized that “it is, of course, to show how your cause is important for the greater good” (SCEE Member 6, author’s translation).

Thus, both politicians and lobbyists share the idea that the public interest rests in rather platitudinal commonplaces. On the general level, both politicians and lobbyists express sentiments that are close to Bozeman (2007) definition of *the public interest* as “those outcomes best serving the long-run survival and well-being of a social collective construed as a ‘public’” (p. 17) or De Bruycker (2017), who refers to the public interest as “the welfare or well-being of a broad and diffuse collection of individual citizens in relation to a specific policy” (p. 206). In this respect, these overarching conceptualizations of the public interest are a form of what rhetorical theory labels *sensus communis* or *doxa,* which are the taken-for-granted opinions and common beliefs in a society (Jasinski, 2001).

To argue that a proposal one is pursuing or that the organization one represents is working “for the common good” is just a rhetorical starting point. The challenge from the lobbyists’ perspective is to find more concrete applications of the public interest concept. One environmental lobbyist argued that working for “the common good” can be “about securing jobs, making more money, or

saving valuable nature" (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation). Consequently, the public interest topos is not only a commonplace, but it is also a heuristic where lobbyists can go searching for arguments (Gabrielsen, 2008). Therefore, once a lobbyist has decided that his or her arguments must support "the common good," he or she must decide whether to anchor the argumentation in creating jobs, saving the environment, improving public health, or some other public interest topic (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020).

As mentioned in the theoretical section, the advantage of the public interest concept is that it can have several meanings (Bitonti, 2019; Feintuck, 2004). An example of this strategic use of various conceptualizations of the public interest is how lobbyists work to connect their organizational concerns with the larger concerns of politicians. In the previous chapter, I showed how the oil industry worked rhetorically to connect its demand for tax relief to a campaign "for all of us" and that the tax relief would help Norway through the green transformation. Thus, conceptualizations of the public interest function as a heuristic with which lobbyists hunt for arguments according to which they can connect the little world of their organizational concerns to the larger concerns in the world of politics:

> We are working a lot with how a little issue is connected to large issues. … How is this little issue connected to something that means something for someone? Cheaper services, more secure electricity supply, and improving the environment? What does it do, and does it influence something else in a more positive direction? (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

That lobbyists work "to find something that means something to someone" demonstrates how the process of identifying the correct public interest topos is a hunt for the correct arguments that fit the situation (Leichty, 2018). Hence, the question lobbyists ask themselves is, what kind of public interest arguments are likely to be persuasive given the rhetorical situation? In the following, I will delve deeper into how the public interest topos functions as a heuristic that helps diverse interest organizations locate arguments that can help them convince politicians.

Different organizations, different visions for the public interest

Even though lobbyists claim that their proposals support "the common good" or "what is good for Norway," the type of organization they represent gives them a different starting point for making such claims (Ihlen et al., 2018; Raknes & Ihlen, 2020). However, lobbyists are aware that merely invoking some kind of public interest argument is no guarantee of success. Lobbyists working against the SCEE are caught in what I would label *public interest dilemmas*, in which they must

weigh conflicting public interest claims. What kind of public interest topic should one weigh most heavily? Are, for example, jobs and economic growth more important than environmental concerns? Hence, lobbyists working against the SCEE frequently experience that the public interest can be caught up in competing interests that are difficult to unite (Johnston, 2016).

A central part of the public interest dilemmas lobbyists experience goes back to the Burkean understanding of how identification works and that "identification is compensatory to division" and it is hard to know where identification starts and division ends (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 22). Thus, when lobbyists invoke a specific public interest topos, they indirectly exclude other understandings of the concept. If, for example, a business lobbyist argues that he or she wants to do something to create jobs, an environmental lobbyist could argue "but what about the environment?" and vice versa. Consequently, when interest organizations invoke a public interest topic, they are often met with a counter-topos. This way, a seemingly "uncontroversial topoi … can potentially be seen as anti-topoi to their corresponding counterparts" (Kjeldsen et al., 2019, p. 227).

In the following, I will illustrate how these public interest dilemmas give the oil industry, the energy industry, the unions, and the environmental organizations a distinct starting point when they are lobbying toward the SCEE. In this process, they are often met with countertopics. Thus, to answer the research question of what kinds of appeals to the public interest are typical in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE, I will more closely study the differences and similarities between the public interest topics on which organizations rely when they try to influence SCEE members. Some of these dilemmas will be illustrated with concrete policy proposals that were debated in the SCCE from 2018−2020.

Public interest dilemmas of the petroleum industry

The oil industry has a long tradition of conflating its interests with the public interest. When Statoil was founded in 1974, the CEO, Arve Johnsen, said that "a good development for Statoil will be a good development for the Norwegian people" (Sæther, 2019, p. 22). Since the start, the most important public interest argument for the oil industry has been its contribution to the Norwegian economy.

> The most important things are jobs and the cash revenue for the state—that is, our license to operate. You cannot be a business with so high emissions and surrounded by such high

> risk if you don't contribute heavily to society. That is our main argument. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)
>
> You can say that what has been most important for this industry is the social contract that we contribute to. That is, we create a great deal of jobs and create revenue for the state and the Norwegian welfare society, so that is the basis for our social contract. (Oil Lobbyist 4, Author's translation)

An important way the petroleum industry bolsters its claims of working in the public interest is through alliances with unions and other business organizations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in 1999, Kon-Kraft was formed to increase the oil industry's competitiveness (Ihlen, 2007). From the perspective of the oil industry, the alliance with the unions gives their public interest claims of creating jobs more weight and lobbying power.

> Some of the most important allies we have are the unions, and in this area, it is particularly important to show that it is all about jobs in Norway. There are many members in the private sector in LO that are dependent upon us, so I would say the unions are very important but also the other industries which deliver to our industry. We are a hub in the Norwegian economy. Shipowners, shipyards, and there are so many other industries whose activity is closely connected to us, and they have to understand that if the politicians change our regulations, they will be affected, too. The Rederiforbundet [Norwegian Shipowners' Association], for example, can look good with reduced emissions and say that they care about the climate, but if they don't help us in the big, important battles, their members will have less to do. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

In the previous chapter, I showed how the importance of regional alliances and local jobs helped the petroleum industry in its campaign for tax relief in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the public interest in securing local jobs is a complicated one for the oil industry. A central counter-topos for the oil industry since the start has been the question of whose jobs and revenue. Nobody disputes the enormous revenue the industry delivers on the national level, but when new and large petroleum projects are planned, there is usually a conflict concerning the location of refinery installations and how these will affect the local job market and the local economy.

Traditionally, the promise of local jobs and growth has been important to obtaining the Stortinget's approval of large petroleum projects. In the 1970s and 1980s, Statoil became a master of dealing out local contracts and jobs along the Norwegian coast to push large projects through the parliament (Borchgrevink, 2019). As discussed in the previous chapter, the idea of preserving local jobs and local communities has been powerful in Norway and is associated with the center-periphery cleavage (Rokkan & Valen, 1964). Consequently, for the oil industry, there is tension

between the maximization of the profitability of projects and the expectation of creating local jobs and growth.

> Everybody acknowledges the importance of what we do for the revenue to society and other positive effects, ... but there will always be debates around new projects. Take, for instance, Castberg. … [T]here will always be debates about what kind of technical solutions we should choose. (Oil Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The Castberg project exemplifies how the petroleum companies effectively played on the topos of creating local jobs but ended up with a backlash. The project is led by Equinor. The expected investment over a 30-year period is 95 billon NOK, and the expected revenue is 270 billon NOK (Stortinget, 2018). The project plan was approved in the SCEE on May 31, 2018, against the votes of the Socialist Left Party and the Green Party. In the white paper, the majority, consisting of all the other parties, underscored "the importance of an oil terminal at Veidnes in Finnmark. … This majority is concerned with petroleum projects offshore giving jobs and industry development onshore" (Stortinget, 2018, pp. 14-15).

However, the oil companies were struggling to find a profitable solution to the political expectation of bringing local jobs to the northern part of Norway. In December 2019, they finally decided to scrap the terminal and instead go for a solution in which the oil was loaded onto large ships directly from the platform. This created a backlash from the SCEE, and Stefan Heggelund from the Conservative Party told the media, "Equinor promised to build at Nordkapp. They flew up in private jets and opened champagne on the seashore and promised jobs and industrial development. … [I]n a time where the petroleum sector is under pressure, I thought they would understand the value of local jobs" (Norum, 2019). The mayor of Nordkapp told the media that "this feels like fraud. We have been deceived" (Norum, 2019). Hence, the question of local jobs and revenue is sometimes a two-edged sword for the industry, which often cannot achieve both simultaneously.

> The local effects are extremely important when one presents projects, but often, the answer is that this is not good enough. Now, I was not the one who missed Castberg, but I have been at the Stortinget several times and said that the local effects will be good and then have been told right to my face that this is simply not good enough. It is just something you have to be aware of. In this business, a large part of societal acceptance is the expectation of positive effects on the local economy, and when the industry moves north, these effects have to follow. (Oil Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

However, creating jobs and tax revenue for the state is not enough for political survival if it ruins the environment. Consequently, the oil industry is faced with another public interest dilemma: the counter-topos of environmental damage. The industry must balance its claims of creating jobs and tax revenue for the state with the environmental damage it causes.

> We realize that it becomes less important with jobs, the economy, and money. If you want to put a price on it and measure it against the environment, then many people would say that environmental concerns are so important that we have to forsake jobs and revenue. … That is why we also talk about technology and competence and that we want to be part of the solution of the climate and environmental challenges. (Oil Lobbyist 4, author's translation)

The assessment of Oil Lobbyist 4 illustrates the heuristic understanding of the topics in which conceptualizations of the public interest are a fertile hunting ground (Gabrielsen, 2008). As their traditional public interest topics lose their persuasive power, they try to broaden their appeal by moving their argumentation toward the topos of the environment. However, they acknowledge that this is a purely defensive measure, and their arguments here are not always very effective.

> On the more defensive environmental arguments, the gas argument is the most effective. We argue that Norwegian gas can replace coal power on the European continent. ... Furthermore, it won't help on the global emissions to close down the Norwegian petroleum sector. The energy needs of the world will then just be covered by Saudi Arabia and Russia, and why should we give them that? An argument we have used a lot, which really does not work well, is that our oil production is much cleaner than in other countries. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Generally, the oil industry uses its core activity as the starting point of its public interest claim. However, as various counter-topics appear that challenge the credibility of the industry's main public interest topic, it must invent what I would call *supporting public interest topics*, which are not necessarily connected to core activities but are helpful for countering counter-topics. The public interest dilemma of the oil industry is a classic example of how the public interest is a changeable concept that evolves (Bozeman, 2007; Johnston, 2017).

> In the first 50 years, the oil industry got its way all the time, but the current situation is more a continuing struggle because of the climate issue. So, it demands much more lobbying from our side to defend our license to operate, while earlier both politicians and people in general just supported us. … Even the large parties like the Labor Party and the Conservative Party are concerned about the climate and would like that Norway reaches the climate goals from Paris while we create wealth. We have to reduce our emissions and work with carbon capture, which is part of our contract with the politicians. If we had just bulldozed our way like some U.S. oil companies, we would be in much worse shape. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Thus, in the long run, the industry fears that the public interest equation for its policy field will develop to its disadvantage and that the topos of the environment will outcompete the topos of the economy. Consequently, even though the industry creates jobs and enormous revenue for the Norwegian state, the long-term prospects for the industry are bleak:

> There are certain things you can do with lobbying but only up to a certain point. Our largest challenge is not a communications problem; it is not about what arguments we use or who we send in the debates. It is a climate problem that will lead to our closure unless it is solved. … People care about Norwegian emissions and our responsibility for these. (Oil Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

This remarkably honest assessment of Oil Lobbyist 2 demonstrates why the Norwegian oil industry had few hopes for getting a more favorable taxing regime before the COVID-19 pandemic. It also demonstrates how lobbyists carefully weigh public interest topics against each other and assess their strengths and weaknesses as the rhetorical situation changes.

The public interest dilemmas of the energy industry

While the public interest dilemmas of the oil industry are quite straightforward, the public interest dilemmas for the energy industry are more complicated. Even though the industry can claim that what it does is good for both the economy and the environment, its public interest claims are challenged by both consumers, the energy-intensive industry, regional power company owners, and environmentalists.

For the energy industry, the core public interest argument is the combination of the topos of the environment and the topos of the economy. At Energy Norway's seminar in Malmø in 2019, the company's new vision of a fully electrified Norway was presented as follows: "Norway will become the first renewable and fully electrified society in the world. It will contribute to more jobs and lower emissions of climate gases."

With the general shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy, one would expect that the energy industry feels that its lobbying position has been strengthened. However, the industry is struggling with several public interest dilemmas that challenge the credibility of its public interest claims:

> Everybody agrees that the electrification of Norway is a good idea, and nobody is against this. That the government has committed to reducing our emissions of electrification is a feel-good case which is good for our industry. The problem is the relationship to the consumers and the energy-intensive industry. I am for saving the climate, but I am also interested in high prices on power, and not everyone is interested in that. This industry has

> never been considered an industry that has a value of its own; it has always been considered an input to the energy-intensive industry. (Energy Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Therefore, the public interest arguments of the energy industry are challenged by two central countertopics. First, the energy-intensive industry is constantly worried about the high prices of electricity because that would hamper its competitiveness and the industry is skeptical about the increased exportation of electricity to other countries. Furthermore, consumers must pay for electricity, and the greater production and exportation of power could potentially heighten electricity prices in Norway.

This dilemma is aptly summarized in the debate about the NorthConnect cable, which has been debated in several rounds in the SCEE. The idea is to build a 665 km-long 1.4 GW power cable connection that will enable power to be transmitted both ways between Great Britain and Scandinavia. NorthConnect is currently a joint venture between four publicly owned Scandinavian companies: Lyse, Agder Energi, Hafslund E-Co, and Vattenfall. In March 2017, NorthConnect applied to the Ministry of Oil and Energy for a license to build and operate the cable. The idea behind the interconnector is that Norway will help Europe through its energy transition by using Norway's hydropower reserves as a backup to wind and solar energy on the continent. Thus, Norway will become Europe's "green battery" (Gullberg, 2013). From the perspective of the energy industry, the combination of the public interest topos of the economy and the environment should be enough to secure political approval.

> In principle, the cables secure that both you and the industry can obtain electricity no matter what kind of winter or spring we have in Norway. That is the main intention of cables. However, cable number 18 has a limited impact on the security of our supply. So, that argument does not work that well anymore, and we have to move our argumentation to economy. Then we obtain a large calculation, which shows that the cable will give the Norwegian state a surplus of 8.5 billon NOK, but there is a small bill for the consumers on the cable. However, the minimal amount that the NVE [The Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate] puts on the price of electricity does not mean much compared to other things that influence the price of electricity, such as wind, weather, and the prices on quotas. In addition, the energy-intensive industry can import cheap power, which leads to lower prices on electricity in the long run. So, secure supply, good economy, good for the industry, and good for the consumer. However, I tend to distinguish between what is good for the nation of Norway and what is good for the climate. You know as well as me that you don't win any industrial workers with climate arguments. You win the Green Party, the Liberal Party, and parts of the Socialist Left Party. (Energy Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

The example of the NorthConnect cable reveals how the public interest topic is a useful heuristic with which lobbyists can move their argumentation around diverse understandings of the concept. Hence, when the security of supply does not work anymore, the energy lobbyists move their argumentation to cost-effectiveness and that it is good for both the industry and consumers. Consequently, lobbyists seek political approval not just by relying on a single public interest topos but by trying to combine several public interest arguments. Thus, the operationalization of what is "good for Norway" or "good for the future" has several flexible solutions. Furthermore, lobbyists also know the public interest can be achieved on several levels and that the political parties have distinct conceptualizations of the public interest. In particular, the energy lobbyists are aware that invoking the topos of the environment only convinces certain political parties at the Stortinget.

In terms of the NorthConnect cable, the industry argues that it will reduce the CHG emissions of Great Britain by two million tons and be cost-effective at the national level. However, as the lobbyist acknowledges, reducing CO2 on the global level does not necessarily convince all the political parties in parliament other than the parties that are most committed to the environmental cause. For parties less concerned with both the environment and cost-effectiveness at the national level, the arguments for the cable might not be convincing. Hence, the Centre Party and the Progressive Party have both supported motions in the SCEE to stop the construction of the cable because it "contributes to higher prices on electricity for people and industry in Norway." This dilemma is also acknowledged by the majority of the SCEE, but the SCEE argues that "an increase in the price on power increases the value of Norwegian power producers who are mostly owned by the state, Norwegian municipalities, and county councils. On the other hand, a higher price for power can be a disadvantage for Norwegian industry and Norwegian consumers. Even though the project is cost-effective, there are some distributional effects internally in Norway." Thus, for most parties, the combination of the topos of the environment and the topos of cost-effectiveness is enough to secure support for the construction of the interconnector.

The case of the NorthConnect cable demonstrates how lobbyists must adapt the public-interest topics on which they rely to the constraints of the rhetorical situation. The systemic constraints, such as political documents, the minority−majority situation, and the Ministry of Finance, are valid. Since the political parties have various party programs, they will be open to different conceptualizations of the public interest. Therefore, for some political parties, the arguments of reducing emissions of CHG and being cost-effective will be convincing, but political parties that are worried about the energy-intensive industry and price increases for Norwegian consumers will

resist (Gullberg & Skodvin, 2011). Furthermore, the focus on cost-effectiveness is clearly in line with the expectations of the Ministry of Finance, but the minority−majority situation will impact when and how the energy lobbyists must influence the political parties.

Similar to the oil industry, the question of local jobs and revenue is also a central public interest dilemma for the energy industry. This dilemma is central to the largest lobbying problem for the energy industry: the taxing regime for hydropower. Reducing the tax on hydropower has long been a central lobbying goal for the energy industry. However, since all the hydropower installations are publicly owned, questions about the tax create questions on what level the public interest should be realized. For Energy Norway, which organizes the 300 companies involved in the production, distribution, and trading of electricity in Norway, the center–periphery conflict has proven to be an insurmountable challenge.

> The classic conflict dimension for the energy industry is the relationship between the industry and the counties that own hydropower plants. These counties are organized in LVK [The National Association for Hydropower Municipalities]. We meet them all the time. We want lower property tax; they want higher. … LVK has had an enormous ability to mobilize people from their regions in the parliament, and they have had a cheering crowd, which is quite unique. That makes it difficult for any government to do something with a tax system from which the municipalities profit. (Energy Lobbyist 1, author's translation)

Hence, any attempt to change the taxing system will be met with fierce local resistance and the counter-topos of local jobs and income. In addition, a new public interest dilemma for the energy industry is the conflict between types of renewable energy. That is, 96 percent of Norway's power production comes from hydropower; however, the government has a strong ambition to increase the production from other renewable sources such as wind. This heightens another public interest dilemma for the energy industry: the conflict between reducing emissions of CO2 through the development of renewable energy and nature conservation (Tjernshaugen et al., 2011). Traditionally, the Norwegian environmental movement was mostly concerned with the conservation of nature and organized large protests against the development of large hydropower projects in the 1970s and 1980s (Nilsen, 2008; Nilsen & Thue, 2006). In recent years, wind power projects have met a great deal of local resistance due to concerns with the conservation of nature. The government recently dropped a national plan for wind power, which was supposed to reduce the level of conflict but led to fierce local resistance. The national plan has stopped the processing of all new licenses for the development of wind power.

> We are in the middle of a discussion on wind power that splits our industry in all kinds of directions. … We are really in a bad place here, and the politicians are stretched between climate policy, nature conservation, and local self-determination. (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

The situation in the energy industry is quite paradoxical. The industry is seen as a crucial actor to reach long-term goals for Norwegian climate policy, but its public interest claims are met with a host of counter-topics. The tense relationship between the energy industry and LVK [The National Association for Hydropower Municipalities] and the energy-intensive industry makes it difficult for them to form effective alliances. While the oil industry is part of a powerful alliance that helps them bolster their public interest claims, the public interest dilemmas facing the energy industry make these kinds of alliances much more complicated. Furthermore, the challenge of forming effective alliances is reinforced by what I labeled *organizational constraints* in the previous chapter. The energy industry must handle tensions between large and small producers of hydropower, conflicts arising from new sources of renewable energy, and conflicts between energy companies and the counties that own the hydropower plants.

This situation is acknowledged by the industry, itself. At Energy Norway's Winter Seminar in Malmø in 2018, one energy lobbyist presented me with a draft for a strategy document for Energy Norway from 2020−2025. The stakeholder and reputation analysis acknowledged the problem with organizational constraints and stated that "the energy industry is fragmented and has problems with gaining influence." The recommendation in the report was to "handle internal tensions better," "try to be more modern and less old school," and "build alliances with more actors so that we avoid being alone in the debates." Joining alliances is key for lobbyists to signal to politicians that policies have broad support (Hula, 1999; Naurin, 2007). Consequently, the inability of the energy industry to join effective alliances hampers their ability to neutralize the effect of the counter-topics they often meet, even though their core public interest claims of creating jobs as they reduce emissions of CHG are pretty strong.

Unions and the public interest dilemma

That business associations such as Energy Norway and Norwegian Oil and Gas and companies such as Statkraft and Equinor conflate their organizational goals with the public interest is not surprising, even though they often meet critique for pursuing policies that will increase their profits (Ihlen et al., 2018; Johnston & Pieczka, 2018). From the perspective of the unions, the question of the public interest is more complicated. A union is supposed to take care of the

interests of its members and is often labeled as representing sectorial interests and engaging in conflict (Coxall, 2014; Valentini et al., 2020). However, in modern lobbying, bargaining on behalf of the members is not enough. Much like the petroleum industry union, lobbyists remind the politicians of how their members contribute to the public interest.

> The thing that is important is the creation of value, that is, the revenue for society if you are thinking about oil. I am very conscious to show how much oil means for the balance of the state budget. Every fifth krona we use on the operation of AS Norway comes from oil. Then there is the argument of how important this sector [the oil industry] is for the operation of AS Norway. If this stops, then you remove a couple of hundred billons from our onshore industry, and that would be dramatic. (Union Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Furthermore, as many definitions of the public interest suggest, unions argue that they are concerned with the long-term interests of the nation.

> One of the reasons we are using so much time and energy on this [lobbying] is that we are dependent on society at large to accept what we are doing. If society does not accept our industry, then it is over. Politicians have to realize the long-term aims in what we are doing. You don´t invest in aluminum production or an offshore drilling rig for one four-year parliament term. ... You have to think about the long-term consequences for the industry, which is important for people living in rural areas, employment, and innovation. And not the least, to pay for the operation of the Norwegian welfare state. (Union Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Again, the heuristic nature of the public interest topos is relevant to explaining how lobbyists find their arguments. In the two quotes above, Union Lobbyist 3 presents four public interest topics: the public interest as generating value for the state, the public interest as stable long-term regulatory conditions, the public interest as people living in rural areas, and the public interest as securing future employment and innovation. These versions of public interest topics are mental maps with which lobbyists search for relevant material (Kjeldsen, 2006). These kinds of topics are what Aristotle labeled *specific topics*, and in *Rhetoric*, Aristotle offers broad lists of topics that suggest angles, topics, and subtopics relevant within distinct policy areas (Gabrielsen, 2008; Kjeldsen, 2006). These topics are the potential facts that are relevant to illuminating the case being discussed.

For LO, the largest union in Norway, the history of unions as a force of national integration also works positively with its attempts to conflate the organization's interest with the public interest (Hyman, 2001; Olstad, 2009). Thus, for LO, their close association with the "Nordic Model" is an important trademark that they use effectively to gain political legitimacy.

> In our reputation survey, we ask what people associate with LO, and then "big" and "powerful" always come first. We are pleased with this because we want to be perceived as societal players. The Norwegian model and tripartite cooperation are a construction that states that LO, NHO, and the state are in a way equal sizes. Therein also lies a great responsibility. LO's role as a responsible trade union and not a "yellow vests" organization is connected with that. (Union Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Hence, the civil unionism tradition in Norway makes it easier for LO to escape the more conflict-ridden unionism that is typical in other parts of Europe and strengthen their ability to create identification with decision makers. However, much like the oil industry, the unions use the topos of creating jobs and preserving jobs as their most important public interest argument, and they increasingly feel that the traditional strength of this topos is threatened by the greater focus on environmental concerns.

> There is a frustration among many that no matter how many climate settlements [Klimaforlik] we make and all that stuff, there are always new reports saying this is getting harder and harder. Then you must explain that it is okay to do national measures in climate policy, but they cannot be so good that they affect our clean industry [the energy-intensive industry]. The result of the national measures can be that global emissions increase. You must understand the motives of the politicians, and they want to solve many problems simultaneously, but you can sometimes be so concerned with the challenges we have here and now that, in the long-term, national measures can affect the global climate struggle. I think it is getting harder and harder to keep the Storting on the right track in these questions. (Union Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

The assessment of Union Lobbyist 3 that "politicians want to solve many problems simultaneously" shows that lobbyists are acutely aware that politicians also struggle with public interest dilemmas. However, in LO, there are increasing tensions between the industrial unions that prioritize economic growth and the public sector unions that are more concerned about the environment. Therefore, for the lobbyists who are working close to the leadership in LO, this balancing act is becoming increasingly complicated.

> LO has a long-term view on petroleum policy, but we do not have a policy for phasing it out. We sit there with the tension between the United Federation of Trade Unions and Industry and Energy on the one hand and Fagforbundet [Norwegian Unions of Municipal and General Employees] and NTL on the other hand. … In climate policy in general, there is growing conflict between those who would like the petroleum sector to close down and those who would like to pump up to the last drop. LO and, to a certain extent, the Labor Party is trying to carve out a position in this landscape. (Union Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

In the two previous chapters, I pointed to the type of organization as a constraint both regarding ethos and the rhetorical situation in general. Much like the energy industry, LO struggles with

internal tensions because public sector unions and private sector unions are moving in different directions on the environmental issue. Even though economic growth and jobs have traditionally been a winning public interest argument, the topos of the environment is gaining ground, and the union lobbyists working close to the leadership in LO acknowledge that they are caught in a complicated public interest dilemma.

> In the end, we know that the petroleum sector will be phased out, which is inevitable. The question is from what perspective it will happen. There is a recurring debate about what sector will become the new oil, but there are no industries that are in a position to overtake its role in society, and the petroleum industry will play a role in this transition. (Union Lobbyist 2, author's translation)

Thus, similar to the oil industry, the unions are facing a rather existential public interest dilemma between the topos of the economy and the topos of the environment. This creates internal tensions between diverse member groups and catches them in a complicated balancing act in which internal solidarity is tested (Houeland et al., 2020).

Environmental organizations and the public interest dilemma

For environmental organizations, the public interest line of reasoning falls more naturally because they perceive their organizational aims are more closely connected to the public interest as a starting point (Ihlen et al., 2018). According to the environmental organization Zero, "We think our work is for the common good since our aim is to solve the climate challenge in the most effective way." (Environmental Lobbyist 2, author's translation). Similarly, Friends of the Earth Norway do not consider themselves an "interest organization" because they work for "the common good" (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation).

While the unions and the oil industry worry about the increased impact of the public interest topos of the environment, the environmental lobbyists worry that the environmental topos is not strong enough to win important political victories.

> We always try to appeal to their [the politicians'] self-interest by saying that this is a good issue for you. Then there are several issues that are not like that, and our only argument is that they are good for the climate. It is not certain that it is popular and profitable for Norway. So, we are not always able to offer the potential upsides that are always good to have when we are lobbying. We are nerdy idealists and have a couple of agendas that are hard to sell. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

> When it comes to the environment, it is a sad fact that climate and nature in itself are not good enough arguments because other societal interests weigh much more heavily, and it is difficult to put a price on nature. It is often like that. When you can't measure the monetary impact, you have a bad case. … This is not because I think that climate and the

> environment affect us all, but when it has to compete with state income, future jobs, and regional policy concerns, it just loses ground. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Hence, the major public interest dilemma for environmental organizations is that the topos of the environment often are outcompeted by other public interest topics, such as creating jobs and increased revenue for the state. Unlike the oil industry and the energy industry, which can make powerful public interest arguments on the economy, environmental organizations must engage in alliances to obtain the material topos of the economy in play. One of the greatest victories for the environmental movement over the last 10 years has been the struggle to protect the Arctic Lofoten islands from oil and gas exploration (Holter, 2021). According to Friends of the Earth Norway, the main reason for this victory was the ability to get business interests on their side in the struggle.

> The reason we were able to win Lofoten was that we could compete to create jobs. It was not just about reducing emissions of CO2 and taking care of beautiful nature, but a government study gave us the number that 6,500 people worked in fishing and tourism. This was an extremely important number that could compete with the 400 local jobs the oil industry would create. When I started to work with these issues in Natur og ungdom [Nature and Youth], industry and jobs were not part of our argumentation. … There is something about those cases that we can use those kinds of arguments, and we have a much stronger position. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Consequently, environmental lobbyists work hard to create alliances that can help obtain the topos of the economy in play. As mentioned in the chapter on ethos, the environmental organization Zero always seeks alliances with business actors to bolster their public interest claims. However, simply bringing in business organizations or private companies does not always solve the dilemma connected to the topos of cost-effectiveness and overcoming the constraints of the Ministry of Finance.

> It is a goal for us to always have business organizations with us. Sometimes, when you meet the Ministry of Finance, that is not an advantage, because they hate business organizations and only perceive them as "rent seekers." But for all politicians, business organizations are important stakeholders they would like to please if it is not too expensive. (Environmental Lobbyist 3, author's translation)

Again, lobbyists are keenly aware that they operate in a world of constraints, and one way to overcome these constraints is to invoke several public interest topics simultaneously. The topos of cost-effectiveness is necessary to meet the expected countertopics from the Ministry of Finance. However, there are also the constraints of the party programs that the various political parties have adopted. Earlier in the chapter, I showed how the energy industry tried to adapt its public

interest topics to political parties in the debate about the NorthConnect cable. Similarly, environmental lobbyists use different versions of the public interest topic to find angles that are likely to resonate with different political parties. One environmental lobbyist argued that a fitting response is always dependent on which political party they are lobbying against:

> The Center Party is always a bit difficult on environmental issues and does not like environmental protection, so then we try to show what the proposal means for jobs and people living in rural areas. … When it comes to the Labor Party, it is all about creating jobs and showing the divisions and disagreements that also exist in the trade union movement. With the Conservative Party, there is always the business argumentation, but also the appeal to the somewhat conservative nature conservation mindset and generational perspective. For the Socialist Left Party, the Green Party, and the Liberal Party, it is a bit the same thing because they are green, and when it comes to the Christian Democrats, it is not always so easy to know, but then you focus on the responsibility for nature and creation. (Environmental Lobbyist 5, author's translation)

Consequently, the public interest topos is a useful heuristic with which lobbyists can search for distinct angles and potential facts that fit the political parties against which they are lobbying. To create identification, lobbyists are trying to identify the public interest topics that are likeliest to resonate with the political party against which they are lobbying. One member of the SCEE summarized this tendency in Burkean terms and argued that lobbyists are trying to mirror the doxa of the party against which they are lobbying so "the language you use is the same as the recipient. When you meet the Conservative Party, you use the rhetoric of the Conservative party, and when you meet the Socialist Left Party, you use various words" (SCEE Member 3, author's translation). Thus, the question: On what kinds of public interest topics do lobbyists depend?

Public interest dilemmas and their solutions

In Table 6.1, I have summarized the answer to RQ6, which asked w*hat forms of public interest topics are common in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE?* The analysis demonstrates that even though the lobbyists working toward the SCEE have distinctive rhetorical starting points, they rely on very similar public interest topics, such as creating jobs, creating revenue for the state, taking care of the environment, and cost-effectiveness. The natural starting point for interest organizations is to conflate their core activities with the public interest. Therefore, the oil industry claims to save the Norwegian welfare state, and the energy industry positions itself as the solution to the climate crisis. The unions create and preserve jobs while the environmental organizations battle climate change and save the environment. For the lobbyists, the public interest topic is both a commonplace they invoke to create a platform for consensus, but it is also a heuristic for inventing new public interest arguments (Gabrielsen, 2008). Commonplaces such as "what is

good for Norway" or "secure a better future for the country" are platitudes that can work across policy areas and point to the fact that lobbyists have adapted the notion of a "generalization of interests" to influence politicians (Rommetvedt, 2017a; Uhre & Rommetvedt, 2019).

Table 6.1 Public interest dilemmas for lobbyists in the policy area of energy and the environment

	Oil lobbyist	**Energy lobbyists**	**Union lobbyists**	**Environmental lobbyists**
Commonplaces	"What is good for Norway" "It is all about making the proposal a step toward the greater good"			
Main public interest topics	We create jobs and revenue for the state and are cost effective.	We create renewable jobs and reduce CHG emissions through electrification	We help create jobs and secure the rights of workers.	We battle climate change and save the environment.
Supporting public interest topics	We can replace coal with gas. We have clean oil production. We can finance the green change.	We create revenue for the state. We are cost effective.	We defend the Nordic Model. We are cost-effective.	Battling climate change will create jobs. We are cost-effective.
Counter-topics	Center-periphery Environmental damage	Centre-periphery Higher prices for consumers Higher prices for energy-intensive industry Nature conservation Competing forms of renewable energy	Centre-periphery Environmental damage	Battling climate change is not cost effective and does not create jobs.
Alliances	Business associations and unions (Konkraft)	Environmental organizations and business organizations	Business associations (Konkraft).	Business associations and other environmental organizations.

The challenge for the lobbyist, however, is to find more specific public interest topics that can work in the policy area of energy and the environment. Thus, the list of public-interest topics in the table is a list of what Aristotle labeled specific topics (*idioi topoi*). The tension between the public interest as a commonplace and the more specific public interest topics illustrates how rhetoric is torn between universal principles and concrete application in a given situation (C. R. Miller, 1987). Rhetorical argumentation is always about something, and the public interest topos functions as a heuristic that helps lobbyists to identify arguments that can be convincing (Gabrielsen, 2008). In the policy field of energy and the environment, the search for convincing public interest arguments is most often related to cost-effectiveness, creating jobs, reducing CHG emissions, and preserving rural communities. If we had included a broader sample of interest organizations from other policy areas, the analysis of the list of special topics could have been expanded to include democracy, public health, education, or human rights (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020).

The table demonstrates that creating identification through the use of public interest topics is a complicated rhetorical operation. Oil lobbyists, energy lobbyists, union lobbyists, and environmental lobbyists try to conflate their own core activity and policy proposals with the

public interest. However, these arguments are always met with counter-topics, and alliances are key to answering these counter-topics and putting other public interest topics in play. The oil industry needs to counter the claim that it is harming the environment and not creating enough jobs in rural areas, and the same is the case for the union lobbyists. Environmental lobbyists have the opposite dilemma and are met with the countertopic that their proposals are too expensive and harm the economy. The energy industry, however, is fighting a public interest battle on several fronts simultaneously. Higher prices for industry and consumers, nature conservation, and the conflict between center and periphery make it difficult for them to create effective alliances that can bolster their public interest claims because the policy field, itself, is riddled with public interest dilemmas.

The analysis here counters studies that argue that the arguments that lobbyists pursue are just an effect of the kind of organization they represent and not so much a strategic choice. In this version, all interest organizations have a constituency that severely restricts their ability to argue from another public interest topic than the specific constituency they represent (De Bruycker, 2016; Fraussen & Halpin, 2018). The analysis in this chapter indicates that the constituencies that lobbyists represent are just a rhetorical starting point, and they work their way from this starting point to include public interest topics that are not directly related to the interests of their constituencies.

Constraints play an important role in why certain public-interest topics are chosen at the expense of others. Different interest organizations have different starting points, and the safe bet seems to be to conflate the core activity of the organization with the public interest. However, lobbyists are acutely aware that the party program constrains the members of the SCEE and try to adapt their public interest rhetoric to the political parties against which they are lobbying. Therefore, putting several public-interest arguments in play is a necessity to obtain different angles for different parties. When lobbyists meet political parties they consider environmentally friendly, they stress the topos of the environment, but when they meet parties that are more concerned with economic growth, they put more stress on the topos of the economy. Furthermore, cost-effectiveness seems to be a cross-cutting public interest topos and is probably an effect of the undue influence of the Ministry of Finance in political decision making in Norway (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020; Lie & Venneslan, 2010; Slagstad, 1998). Similarly, a recent analysis of the public interest arguments of 58 Norwegian interest organizations showed that the topos of the economy was the most frequently invoked category across organizational categories (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020).

As discussed in the theory chapter, Aristotle's elaborate lists on what topics one should use when discussing war, peace, and economic matters in ancient Greece are not effective to a contemporary rhetor. Thus, one of the reasons rhetorical scholars lose interest in specific topics is that they are intimately tied to the historical context and discussion culture from which they emerged (C. R. Miller, 1987). However, the special topics are interesting because they tell us what kinds of arguments are deemed important and relevant to a society at a given point in history (Gabrielsen, 2008). This speaks to the third perspective on topics as a way of identifying the doxa in a society. The analysis in this chapter demonstrates how contemporary Norwegian political culture is permeated by the struggle between the topos of the environment and the topos of the economy. Even though the lobbyists represent diverse interest organizations with different starting points, they all return to the problem of balancing the topos of the environment against the topos of the economy. Consequently, this conflict has a doxastic nature, more like a national existential drama. Norway is caught in a climate paradox, an unsolvable public-interest dilemma with which both politicians and lobbyists struggle to come to terms (Borchgrevink, 2019; Sæther, 2019). Of course, this tension is a global phenomenon, as all societies must adapt to climate change and reduce emissions of CHG, but in a Norwegian context, the dominant position of the oil industry makes this discussion particularly challenging.

In the theoretical chapter, I discussed how the public interest concept has plagued political philosophy for centuries. The analysis of the typical appeals to the public interest in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE illustrates both the vagueness and flexibility of the public interest concept and how lobbyists tweak its use to provide fitting responses to the challenges they meet. The slippery nature of the concept is one of the main reasons some political scientists have argued to abandon the concept (Sorauf, 1957). Even though the concept is frustrating to work with from an empirical perspective, this analysis strengthens Flathman's (1966) claim that "the problems associated with the 'public interest' are among the crucial problems of politics. … We are free to abandon the concept, but if we do so, we will simply have to wrestle with the problems under some other heading" (p. 13). Hence, both lobbyists and politicians acknowledge that the public interest topic is a form of commonplace in which arguments for legitimate political decisions can be grounded and have to wrestle with its meaning. In the following, I will look closer at what this process looks like from the perspective of the SCEE members.

Politicians and the public interest

A novel aspect of this study is that it not only assesses how lobbyists construct their public interest topics but also examines how politicians evaluate these arguments. Therefore, I now move the attention to the politicians and investigate *how politicians evaluate the public interest claims of lobbyists and what kind of conceptualization of the public interest politicians adhere to.* (RQ7)

In the first section of the chapter, I showed that interest organizations seldom rely on one public interest topos but often try to combine several public interest arguments simultaneously. The reason lobbyists combine distinct public-interest claims in their argumentation is that politicians are also struggling with public-interest dilemmas. Thus, to create identification, lobbyists cannot just rely on a single public-interest claim because politicians want to solve many problems simultaneously.

> In the SCEE, it is the combination of reducing emissions and making money, which is the top argument (laughter). That is the core of the green transformation, so I think that any solution that can accomplish that makes us very open for suggestions. There is a certain agreement across the political spectrum on that, and everyone who has new ideas is welcome. If you can show that your proposal is cost-effective, then it becomes much more interesting. (SCEE Member 7, author's translation)

The summary of SCEE Member 7 is interesting because it fits quite well with the three most popular public interest topics among the interest organizations in the first section of the chapter. Even though they have assorted starting points, unions, environmental organizations, and the energy and the oil industries argue that they can help solve the climate crisis while they create jobs. The assessment of SCCE Member 7 also demonstrates that politicians are very open to political suggestions that can help them solve the public interest dilemmas with which they are struggling. Hence, as I pointed out in the chapter on ethos, creating political solutions wrapped in public-interest rhetoric is a form of goodwill that the SCEE members appreciate. Interestingly, the important question is not whom one represents but if one can help find solutions that are both profitable and help to reduce CHG emissions. Furthermore, all the interest organizations struggle with the topos of cost-effectiveness, which just demonstrates that the Ministry of Finance is a cross-cutting constraint that affects all types of organizations.

The notion that the public interest changes is also evident in the first section of the chapter. In particular, the oil industry acknowledged that the topic of saving the environment has increased its weight in recent years, and lobbyists have moved their argumentation in a "greener direction."

This change in argumentation is also acknowledged by SCEE members. Several members pointed out that the lobbyists working against the committee are more often using the public interest topos of the environment.

> In our field, you won't find a single lobbyist who does not claim that what they are proposing will also be good for the climate, and I think that kind of argumentation has increased in strength each of the six last years. (SCEE Member 7, author's translation)

How do politicians weigh these public-interest topics against each other? How do they reason in cases in which they meet countervailing public interest claims? When asked if they had principles for how they reasoned when various interest organizations were arguing for different solutions, the first approach for the SCEE members would be to consult their party program. However, as I argued in the last chapter, the party program is a baseline concerning what a member of the SCEE can say and do. However, the party program rarely gives away the solution in often-complicated cases, and the members of the SCCE must rely more on their personal conceptualizations of the public interest. Some members argued that they had clear principles they used to evaluate policy proposals:

> I want to foster zero-emission solutions, but at the same time, I do not want to be naive in that I demand something that is not possible to get. So, I would say the combination of zero emissions and future jobs [as a principle for evaluating lobby proposals]. (SCEE Member 6, author's translation)

> For questions of energy and the environment, it is about creating as many jobs as possible with the least possible emissions. (SCEE Member 2, author's translation)

> I do not think I have such a principled view, but in any case, there will be a priority, so the question is how the weighting should be. We can take the example of wind turbines; it is easier to say no to a wind power plant that looks bad and noisy, since there are few jobs and finances in it. But it is much worse if it is a project that provides a lot of jobs and creates value, and there is a business community that needs that power. Then it's harder to say no. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

These assessments reveal why lobbying proposals that are not formulated in public-interest rhetoric will have a small chance of surviving the policy process. The dominating public interest dilemma for SCEE members is how to balance the topos of the environment against the topos of the economy. How the diverse members perform these evaluations depends on the party program and political starting point. Generally, the Socialist Left Party, the Liberal Party, and the Green Party would lean more heavily on the topos of the environmental arguments, while the Labor Party, the Conservative Party, and the Progressive Party would give more weight to the topos of

the economy. Thus, for an SCEE member who is firmly on the more business-friendly right wing of the political spectrum, this public interest dilemma is also real.

> If I was sitting here with Lars Haltbrekken [member of the SCEE for the Socialist Left Party], one could say that he is more concerned with saving the environment than creating jobs, so one way or the other, you have to prioritize. But I think for both of us, we prioritize creating jobs and taking care of the environment, but he weighs it a bit different than I do. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

The public interest dilemmas with which politicians are struggling also demonstrate why they value the input from lobbyists. Some members described the interaction with lobbyists as an ongoing conversation about Norway's climate paradox, where the country has a profitable oil industry while Norway internationally joins the Paris Accords and promotes itself as a climate-friendly nation (Alstadheim, 2010). Thus, the SCEE members are sometimes truly confused about how to balance the topos of the environment against the topos of the economy:

> Well, I hope I have one [a principle for evaluating lobbying proposals]. There are probably some pillars. … One pillar is that very many people and a lot of Norwegian welfare are dependent on this industry [the oil industry], and we must take this into account. At the same time, we cannot continue with this, and we must do something else in the future. The climate crisis is very real. ... I do not know if there are principles, but I think I know what we are looking for. Then, you need a rich supply from different interest organizations, but then I try to put all these sectors into an international perspective. I understand what you are asking, but I do not know if I have anything. I hope I have it inside my head somewhere. (SCEE Member 11, author's translation)

The point to be made here is important but quite commonsensical. Politicians often do not have any clear idea of what constitutes the best solution to a public interest dilemma and experience that in a pluralistic society there are no fixed solutions to social problems (Bitonti, 2019). Much like political philosophers, SCEE members are trying to determine what kind of solution not only fits their program but also best balances public interest claims. This ambiguity and unclear preferences are reinforced by the kairotic nature of politics discussed in the previous chapter. Policy processes and issues come and go, and decisions must be made in their designated time slots for the political machinery to keep running. Hence, "quite often, time constraints force politicians to make decisions without having formulated precise preferences" (Zahariadis, 2014, p. 67). The fact that SCEE members lack a clear idea of what the public interest is and how it best can be achieved makes them open to suggestions from lobbyists about how these dilemmas should be handled.

Not having a clear idea is different from not having principles. In the theoretical section, I argued that the substantive, aggregative, and procedural views are three ways of reasoning regarding the public interest. While the substantive view argues that there is an absolute public interest that can be known, the aggregative view sees the public interest as the aggregation of interests based on a peaceful struggle. The procedural view leans more on the Habermasian notion of an ideal speech situation in which a fair procedure is likelier to produce a fair outcome (Bitonti, 2019; Johnston, 2016, 2017). As discussed above, SCEE members struggle to balance the topos of the environment against the topos of the economy. Therefore, none of the SCEE members argued for a substantive view where the public interest could be known, which is not surprising given that the substantive notion of the public interest clearly has totalitarian implications (Bitonti, 2019). If the rulers claim that they have unique insights that help them formulate everlasting truths about the public interest, the result will often be the suppression of dissenting voices and opposition.

This leaves the aggregative and procedural view as the typical ways decision makers reason about how the public interest can be reached. Some SCEE members went quite far to acknowledge that they were willing to adhere to the force of the better argument, even though they initially had another position:

> In some cases, you just know what you are for and against. But I am open to good arguments from the wrong side, and if those arguments are so good that they are worth pursuing, then I do it. … It helps very little what attitude I have in the first place. My task, both as a politician and as the leader of a faction, is to actually obtain an overview of the diversity of opinions that lie there and then obtain input and draw a conclusion. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

> It is important that the various actors come in with their perspectives of what is possible and not possible. Then you have to look at the different perspectives and look at different arguments. Then, you obtain an impression of who has the best arguments and who has facts that can substantiate the claims. (SCEE Member 6, author's translation)

The description of SCEE members 9 and 6 clearly points to an element of deliberation in the interaction between lobbyists and politicians. In a deliberate process, the parties might "not only accept compromises, but also end up having distinctive opinions compared to when the process started" (Öberg & Svensson, 2012, p. 249). The process described above has similarities with Bozeman's (2007) "pragmatic idealism," inspired by the work of John Dewey. Here, the quest for the public interest is dependent upon a rational process of rational argumentation in which the participants "keep in mind an ideal of the public interest, but without specific content, and then

move toward that ideal, making the ideal more concrete as one moves toward it" (Bozeman, 2007, p. 13).

This deliberative element was also acknowledged by lobbyists, in particular regarding the importance of being open to compromises. Thus, one energy lobbyist argued, "I think perhaps lobbying becomes most effective when you become a relevant conversation partner in a discussion about what is a good solution" (Energy Lobbyist 5, author's translation). An oil lobbyist concluded that "my experience is that best suggestions are made a little while you walk and while you talk and that it also applies the other way. Therefore, input and compromise are wise" (Oil Lobbyist 1, author's translation).

Even though deliberation seems to play a role in the lobbying process, most SCEE members operated from a procedural conceptualization with which the legitimacy of the public interest claims were based on their ability to balance interests. Here, the idea of balance is central to the legitimacy of the decisions, and solutions that are not properly balanced between the claims of interest organizations are seen as unfortunate. Repeatedly, the SCEE members underscored that they listened to but never were beholden to the interest organizations that tried to influence them.

> I am seeking to find the best solution for us as a party and what I think is right for our society. … The core of politics is often to find a solution that is not on one side or the other. Sometimes, the conclusions are a bit surprising and at other times more set in advance. But is it often quite difficult to draw conclusions because there are often nuances. (SCEE Member 1, author's translation)

> I try to obtain information myself as well and weigh the distinct information interests organizations bring and make some assessments based on that. I never take input from just one side. I cannot remember that I have done that, and I am extremely skeptical of that. Precisely because the cases we are talking about usually have several sides. (SCEE Member 2, author's translation)

Here, it is interesting to note that the idea of interest balance is closely related to an ideal of "independence" with which SCEE members defend their integrity by claiming to listen to opposing views. Furthermore, they make sure to distance themselves from the idea that certain interest groups "dominate" them. The notion of "finding political solutions that are not on one side or the other" or to "never take input" from just one side points to a Rawlsian understanding of politics with which decision makers have a "politics of difference perspective" in which "the public interest is to be found out via discussion between the voices of different perspectives" (Naurin, 2007, p. 119). From this perspective, it is an advantage that many interest organizations

say the same thing because "if many voices say approximately the same thing, the policy solution is likely to go in that direction" (Naurin, 2007, p. 121). Hence, if politicians think the public interest can be discerned by listening to dissenting voices, it makes sense for lobbyists to invoke several public interest claims simultaneously and use coalitions to illustrate that the solutions they have provided have broad support. However, the problem with this conceptualization of the public interest is that it presumes that the diverging interests that the politicians face are somehow representative of the population as a whole and not biased toward the most resourceful actors.

As SCEE Member 2 mentions, politicians are worried about being played by overtly partisan information. This explains why lobbyists, themselves, are quick to bring out the counter-arguments to their own proposals in lobbying meetings, as I discussed in Chapter 4 on ethos. Lobbyists know that politicians will be critical to one-sided and highly partisan presentations of a policy proposal. Hence, they use the ethos strategy of "listening to their critics" to reassure the politicians that they are aware of their obligation to listen to counter-arguments, but by bringing up the counter-arguments themselves, they can "get dressed for politics" and show that they adhere to the norm of the better argument (Naurin, 2007). Again, we perceive how lobbyists try to perceive the world from the perspective of politicians to create identification. If politicians care about counter-arguments, lobbyists also must care about counter-arguments.

The public interest and power

Interestingly, SCEE members subscribe to both the aggregative and procedural conceptualizations of the public interest. The dominating picture, however, is that the SCEE members perceive it as their job to listen to interest organizations and try to balance the claims and information they provide. Thus, there seems to be a bipartisan agreement that seeking out opposite views is a desirable practice. However, does this tendency to seek out opposing views and to try to balance them against each other secure decisions that are fair and balanced? This leads us to the last research question of this study: *What does politicians' conceptualization of the public interest mean for the influence of lobbyists?*

Those politicians are trying to balance interests and open up to the force of a better argument is no guarantee that the final results of the policies on which they agree are in the public interest. As Simm (2011) has pointed out, both the Rawlsian and Habermasian notions of the public interest both suffer from a naïve notion that a fair procedure gives a fair result. Much of the contemporary

critique of lobbyism is that it produces outcomes that are detrimental to the public interest despite lobbyists adhering to the rules of the game (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998; Binderkrantz et al., 2014b). A fair procedure does not help if the playing field is biased and only the most resourceful interests can exploit the possibilities of the lobbying process.

The lobbying survey gives an interesting perspective on how politicians view their own efforts to balance interest organizations. Table 6.2 shows how they view the consequences of lobbying regarding the overall consequences of lobbying and to what extent they think various types of interests are becoming too influential.

Table 6.2 MPs' assessments of possible consequences of lobbyism (percentage of MPs who agree)

Consequences	1995	2012	2019
Overall assessment: lobbying mostly positive	86	n.a.	99
Well-organized interests become too influential compared to weakly organized interests	93	75	n.a.
Specialized interests become too influential in relation to a more comprehensive policy	56	32	33
Inquiries take too much time and influence other important tasks for the MPs	23	14	14

First, the large positivity toward lobbying on a general basis among MPs is striking and has increased from 86 percent in 1995 to 99 percent in 2019. If Norwegian MPs thought lobbying was detrimental to the public interest, one would expect that that more MPs were negative. Therefore, while the media debate about lobbying is often dominated by a negative focus toward the growing PR industry (S. Allern, 2011; S. Allern & Pollack, 2018; Helgesson & Falasca, 2017), the MPs' assessment tells another story.

The increase in MPs who have a positive view of lobbying from 1995 to 2019 might point to the fact that MPs experience an increasingly pluralistic community of interest organizations and that the political parties obtain their input from a broad network of organizations (E. H. Allern, 2010; Rommetvedt, 2017a). Another factor that can explain the positivity is that MPs truly appreciate the policy expertise they obtain from lobbyists and the community of interest groups. The positive tone between politicians and lobbyists was also evident during the participant observation. As discussed in the chapter on ethos, politicians and lobbyists often have similar backgrounds and interests and enjoy exchanging gossip and political intelligence.

As mentioned in the theoretical section, there is a close connection between the view of lobbying and diverse conceptualizations of a liberal democracy (Bitonti, 2017, 2019). The positivity among MPs toward lobbying in both the survey and the semi-structured interviews points to a Rawlsian or aggregative notion of liberal democracy, where the public interest grows out of the peaceful competition between interests. Hence, as long as all interest organizations meet an open door and obtain a fair chance to present their case, the public interest is served. Thus, SCEE members do their best to accommodate the requests of all kinds of interest organizations that approach them. Consequently, the ideal of "the accessible politician" was often mentioned as a justification for the general positivity toward lobbying:

> It is a very low threshold; I have a lot of meetings with organizations, but I also meet individuals who would like to talk about an issue they are involved in. It is very, very rare that I say no to someone, and that applies even if it is Nina from Grong [a small place in Norway] who will come and talk about something she is engaged in locally. People are not aware of how low the threshold is for meeting a parliamentary representative. Just send an email, and then there is a good chance you will get a meeting. (SCEE Member 3, author's translation)

> I think it works very well, and I think it is one of the nice things in Norway that it works the way it does. I get those calls directly in from time to time from strangers who want a meeting, or they just want to say a few words. ... The threshold for making contact is so low. You can just call the reception at the Storting, and someone will answer your call. You can only present what you want, and even if you do not necessarily get to meet the one you want, you always get a meeting. (SCEE Member 9, author's translation)

The general openness and approachability among politicians is not unique but is also a feature in other Scandinavian countries (Arter, 2013; Stromback, 2011). That politicians view lobbying as unproblematic also means that they have confidence in their own ability to sort information from interest groups and make informed and fair decisions after deliberation (Hermansson, Lund, Svensson, & Öberg, 1999). Hence, a free exchange of opinions is the best we can hope for, and this process will hopefully lead to the most convincing arguments prevailing (Drutman & Mahoney, 2017).

The general positivity toward lobbying seems a bit puzzling compared to how MPs have answered other questions about the potential negative consequences of lobbying. Table 6.2 demonstrates that the number of MPs who think that specialized interests become too influential has decreased from 56 percent in 1995 to 33 percent in 2019, and the number of MPs who think well-organized interests have become too powerful has decreased from 93 percent in 1995 to 75

percent in 2012.* The fact that both questions move in a less negative direction coincides well with the increased positivity toward lobbying. However, when 70 percent of the MPs think that resourceful interests become too powerful and that about one-third are concerned about the influence of special interests, this shows that the MPs are acutely aware of the potential negative impact of lobbying and that they cannot balance the interest organizations.

When SCEE members were asked if they thought some interest organizations were given too much attention and influence, most acknowledged that this was a question with which they struggled. As mentioned above, SCEE members often face complicated public interest dilemmas when striking the correct balance between interests is difficult. One member acknowledged that each decision was a balancing act: "I really do not hope that we, as a party, are helping to favor one interest over the others. But we have emphasized our responsibility and role, and this is reflected in complicated decisions" (SCEE Member 1, author's translation).

Conversely, the results from the parliament surveys in 1995, 2012, and 2019 clearly indicate that MPs cannot fully balance interests and acknowledge that they have given resourceful lobbyists a privileged status (Espeli, 1999). Among the SCEE members, the privileged position of the oil industry was the most often mentioned example.

> There is no doubt that the oil industry mostly gets what it wants. It is a powerful group that has strong support from the Ministry. And if you want to change that, you have to get into bigger debates. There are discussions about income expectations and if we follow the Paris agreement so the consumption of oil goes down. The day we believe in it, we have to change, and then the policy also has to change. (SCEE Member 14, author's translation)

> I do not want to say that they always get what they want, but they are so strong, so if they really think something is important to them, then they are listened to and they are so strong that people are afraid to go against them. Not that there is any threat or anything like that, but they are so strong and so important to Norway. (SCCE Member 7, author's translation)

However, to what extent SCEE members think the oil industry is too influential is dependent on their own political orientation. Those who argued for the outsized influence of the oil industry were more positive toward the environmental movement. However, one of the SCEE argued that the real problem with outsized influence was the environmental movement:

> I think there are some interest groups that take a damn big place and a great deal goes on in some of the environmental organizations. … I think they take up an unreasonable

* Due to a coding error in the survey, this question fell out of the 2019 survey.

> amount of space, but it is effective in that their concerns are considered in my opinion to an alarming degree. (SCEE Member 2, author's translation)

Generally,, politicians seem to have an ambivalent relationship to what extent lobbying can help promote the public interest. On the general level, they are optimistic toward lobbyists and argue for an aggregative view of the public interest where the best decisions are made when all relevant interests are heard. Simultaneously, they acknowledge the problem of bias, even though the problem seems to have decreased since 1995. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of MPs who argue that they can handle the increased pressure from lobbyists, but there is also a danger in that positivity is a "natural way to legitimate themselves" (Ihlen et al., 2021, p. 315). Consequently, there is a certain danger that the SCEE members fail to acknowledge or do not reflect critically upon the role of power and bias in their everyday encounters with lobbyists. Furthermore, the identification strategies of increasingly more professionalized interest organizations help "to obscure and downplay their influence" (Nothhaft, 2017, p. 141). When lobbyists are packaging their proposals in public interest rhetoric, they are using the most basic strategy of identification in which they tell politicians "I am like you" and "I want what you want" (Day, 1960).

This points to the challenge of the "third face of power," which I discussed in the theoretical section. Even though politicians have a self-perception that their interaction with interest organizations is positive for democracy, the empirical realities might point in a different direction. The challenge is that the universe of interest organizations that surround politicians in their daily work is always biased toward the resourceful. In Denmark, which is quite similar to Norway, the most resourceful lobbyists dominate all lobbying arenas. Indeed, "follow the money" is a good guideline for studying their influence (Binderkrantz et al., 2014a, p. 221). The same tendency is evident in a recent analysis of Norwegian lobbyists (Wollebæk & Raknes, 2022).

Consequently, the notion that "a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing" (p. 40−41) also applies to how politicians evaluate the public interest claims of lobbyists. If they believe that balancing the demands of the interest organizations that are right in front of them will serve the public interest, they might fail to perceive those interests that are not organized and those who do not have the skills and resources to show up with the right message at the right time. If lobbying should serve the public interest, there would probably have to be certain limits on the use of raw power and mechanisms for consulting and including less resourceful groups in the decision-making process (Mansbridge, 1992; Naurin, 2001).

The challenge with "the third face of power" is that identification can occur without the active consent of the actors that are involved in the social situation (Akram et al., 2015). In the chapter on ethos, I discussed how the SCEE members were exposed to and attended arenas dominated by the oil industry to a much larger extent than other interest organizations. This continuous exposure to the arguments and perspectives of the oil industry might have long-term effects where the interest of the industry is taken for granted as a form of doxa.

An anecdote from a member of the SCEE neatly illustrates how the power of the oil industry can work on a nearly unconscious level. In the SCEE, there is a standing agreement that the committee does not bring lobbyists along on its travels because that would be an unfair advantage for those interest organizations that are invited to join. On a committee travel to Indonesia in 2018, the small idealistic organization the Rainforest Foundation was invited to join by mistake. When I talked to the leader of the Rainforest Foundation at the Zero conference in 2018, he enthusiastically talked about the trip and confessed that "our relationship with the committee improved enormously after that trip. We suddenly got a lot of contacts on the inside." At the next meeting of the SCEE, the issue was discussed and revealed an interesting distinction about who were considered lobbyists and who were not:

> Then there were some who asked if we should open it up for lobbyists to join our travels. But then I pointed out that we had already done so because we were on a visit to an oil platform arranged by Equinor and Norwegian Oil and Gas. People were surprised because many did not even think about them being lobbyists but just saw the trip as part of our basic training. (SCCE Member 7, author's translation)

This example demonstrates the extent to which lobbyists can position themselves as friends and natural allies of the politicians they are trying to influence (Nothhaft, 2017; J. C. Scott, 2015). According to Burke (1950/1969), A is consubstantial with B when their interests are joined and they share the same substance (Day, 1960). Thus, one could argue that the oil industry has become consubstantial with the SCEE members when they are not considered strangers on the outside of the political system, but dear and natural friends on the inside.

Summary

In this chapter, I started by asking, *what kinds of appeals to the public interest are typical in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE* (RQ6)? The analysis illustrates that even though lobbyists from interest organizations have assorted starting points, they rely on quite similar public interest topics, such as creating jobs and saving the environment. Conflating their own core activity with

the public is just a starting point, and they work with alliances to invoke several public interest topics simultaneously. Hence, they acknowledge that politicians are struggling to solve public interest dilemmas, and they must balance several public interest concerns. From a rhetorical standpoint, public interest topics both work as a commonplace that lobbyists use to create consensus, and it is also a useful heuristic to invent new public interest arguments that can be adapted to the political parties against which they are lobbying (Gabrielsen, 2008). Furthermore, the struggle between the topos of the environment and the topos of the economy permeates the field and points to the doxastic nature of this conflict in Norwegian politics.

In the second part of the chapter, I moved on to look at *how politicians evaluate the public interest claims lobbyists make and what kind of conceptualization of the public interest politicians adhere to* (RQ7). It appears that the politicians find it difficult to balance public interest topics, and that makes them interested in input and ideas from lobbyists. The members of the SCCE, in particular, struggle to balance the topos of the environment against the topos of the economy. Therefore, they adhere to a procedural or Rawlsian conceptualization of the public interest, where their job is to seek and balance interests.

Finally, I moved on to RQ8, which asks, *What does politicians' conceptualization of the public interest mean for the influence of lobbyists?* Here, the results reveal that the SCEE members are more concerned with a fair procedure than with fair results. The Rawlsian understanding of public interests leads to the view that if all lobbyists have the chance to be heard, the final result is fair and legitimate. However, this leads to a situation in which politicians are often unaware of the implicit bias in the lobbying process. This is also supported by the parliament survey where the MPs have an optimistic view of lobbying while they acknowledge that it often leads to exaggerated influence on the most powerful political actors.

7 Concluding discussion

This study argues that lobbyists are highly influential players in the political system, but we know too little about the rhetorical strategies they use to convince decision makers. This last chapter first draws together the answers to the research questions and then discusses the wider implications of these findings.

I will argue that there are three major takeaways when we study lobbying as a game of identification rather than as some form of instrumental exchange of resources. First, when lobbying is studied as a process of identification, it demonstrates the richness and breadth of rhetorical strategies lobbyists use, which are often ignored in traditional studies of lobbying. Second, lobbying as a process of identification raises some critical questions regarding how modern lobbyists blur the line between friendliness and influence peddling. Third, lobbying as a process of identification highlights the challenge of how the power of lobbyists can be understood and studied. Finally, at the end of the chapter, I address the issue of generalization and the important limitations of the study and suggest directions for future research.

Lobbying and rhetoric

The starting point for this study is that lobbying can be understood as a communicative process, and I defined *lobbying* as "the purposeful use of rhetoric to influence the policy process." Thus, the general research question the study tries to answer is: *What kind of rhetorical strategies do lobbyists rely on to influence decision makers?*

In the literature review, I identified three communicative challenges that are crucial to any lobbying process and have gained limited attention in the research literature. These were the challenge of appearing as credible providers of information, deciding the right timing for a meeting or a proposal, and finding the right public interest arguments. These challenges were the basis for the eight research questions in the study, which will be summarized in the sections below.

To study lobbying from a rhetorical perspective, I brought in the classical rhetorical concepts of ethos, kairos, and topos. While ethos deals with the character and trustworthiness of the speaker, kairos focuses on the right moment to speak, while topos deals with where rhetors find their arguments. These concepts were combined with Bitzer's (1968) theory of rhetorical situations and

Burke's (1950/1969) theory of identification. The concept of identification is a master concept in the thesis in that it tells us something about what rhetoric can achieve. I have argued that lobbyists are not only trying to persuade politicians, but they also form a deeper sociological connection with them through the process of identification.

Ethos and lobbying

In Chapter 4 on ethos, I started by asking, *What kind of strategies do lobbyists use to construct and strengthen their ethos in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE*? (RQ1). The analysis resulted in 14 ethos strategies that demonstrate the richness of the ethos concept. What this broad conceptualization of ethos adds is to depict how the dimensions of ethos are related, and lobbyists must work with competence, character, and goodwill to position themselves for influence. Competence in the form of policy expertise and political intelligence is a prerequisite for having something to offer; however, lobbyists must work with their character and goodwill to obtain a working relationship with the SCEE members.

Furthermore, competence is not just about policy expertise in the form of providing relevant facts, reports, and policy proposals. Just as important is political intelligence and more hackish knowledge about when political decisions are made, how they are made, and how decision makers have positioned themselves toward the issue. In particular, some goodwill strategies such as "understanding constraints," "not being self-centered," and "providing political solutions" are tied to a more "hackish" form of knowledge about how policy processes are structured and how politicians think. Moreover, the ability to form interpersonal bonds is key to retrieving political intelligence. Lobbyists do this through caring, giving praise, and showing respect. Hence, the ideal lobbyists appear as a combination of a policy expert and a relationship expert.

The findings in this chapter correspond well with Godwin et al. (2012), who argue that, to succeed, lobbyists need substantive expertise, process expertise, and people expertise, which means that they "must know the substance of the issue, the process that governs it, and the people who will make key decisions" (Godwin et al., 2012, p. 215). Since very few lobbyists have all these abilities, interest organizations must assemble a team of lobbyists with both "hacks" and "wonks" and pull their resources together.

Another interesting aspect of the ethos analysis is that half of the 14 ethos strategies were goodwill strategies, whereby lobbyists seek a form of "inoperative friendship" with the politician (Aristotle, Trans. 2007). Traditional research on lobbying often investigates only the competence dimension of ethos and emphasizes the importance of policy expertise and technical information (Esterling, 2009; Godwin et al., 2012). Here, participatory observation helps to widen the scope of lobbying research and includes those arenas where lobbyists can charm and befriend politicians, such as seminars and dinners. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates the relevance of the "goodwill" construct in the analysis of organizational rhetoric. Consequently, a construct that has sometimes been described as "the lost dimension of ethos" is extremely relevant to the analysis of the rhetorical strategies of lobbyists (McCroskey & Teven, 1999, p. 90).

Toward the end of the chapter, I explored *how resources and the type of organization influence the kind of ethos strategies in which lobbyists engage* (RQ2). In the qualitative material, there is a clear tendency that membership-based organizations such as unions and environmental organizations struggle to adapt to the expectation of "cozying up" to the politicians because they must balance the rhetoric toward the politicians against the demands from their members. Even though the number of interest organizations in this study is limited, resources seem to increase the probability of employing more advanced ethos strategies such as suggesting political solutions, sharing political intelligence, and understanding political constraints. This is not surprising given that more resourceful organizations can hire the best political talent that can fulfill the role of both the "hack" and the "wonk" in the lobbying process. A recent study confirms this expectation in that there is a connection between resources and the use of goodwill strategies (Ihlen & Raknes, 2022).

Lobbying, kairos, and the rhetorical situation

In Chapter 5 on kairos and the rhetorical situation, we delved deeper into how lobbyists solve the communicative challenge of timing. The chapter asked: *What constitutes the lobbying meeting with SCEE as a rhetorical situation?* (RQ3), and *what is the role of kairos in lobbying campaigns toward the SCEE?* (RQ4). Both these research questions highlight theoretical challenges with Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation, which I label *the perception problem* and *the agency problem*. First, the idea of singular objective exigence undermines the role of conflicts of interest and differing perceptions in politics. Second, Bitzer's model has been criticized for being too deterministic and leaves too little room for rhetorical creativity and agency. The analysis of RQ3 demonstrates that lobbyists working against the SCEE struggle with having little control

over the exigencies and constraints of the rhetorical situations they face. They meet organizational constraints such as the type of organization and financial resources and systematic constraints such as political documents, type of minority or majority government, and the Ministry of Finance. Lobbyists must consider such constraints when they craft their appeals. Furthermore, "the perception problem" is acute because politicians do not share the lobbyist version of the exigency.

Bringing in kairos (RQ4) reminds us that the constraints of the rhetorical situation can be turned into opportunities. In the chapter, kairos is analyzed as a three-dimensional concept, which is the right timing (temporal), the right problem space (spatial), and the right message (the proper measure). By analyzing the temporal and spatial element of kairos, lobbyists try to decide the right timing for influencing the policy process and the possible room for persuasion and use this insight to provide a fitting or decorous response. Unlike what Bitzer (1968) argues, it is not always a given what a fitting response is because a rhetorical situation always has room for creative rhetorical agency.

Toward the end of the chapter, I suggest a revised model for the rhetorical situation where both the constraints and the kairotic possibilities are included and the exigence of the situation is dependent on the perception of both the rhetor and the audience of the situation. Thus, the model is made more dynamic by adding the dimensions of time and space and differing exigencies. To illustrate the heuristic value of the model, I ask, *How did the COVID-19 pandemic change the rhetorical situation for the Norwegian oil industry, and how did the industry exploit the kairotic openings of the crisis?* The short case study of the oil industry's campaign for reduced taxes in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates how lobbyists can use the temporal and spatial elements of kairos to their own advantage and turn constraints into opportunities. It was not a given that the campaign would succeed and a similar initiative in 2001−2002 had failed, and the model helps illuminate that the most important difference between 2001−2002 and 2019 was that the Ministry of Finance as a constraint was weakened. Furthermore, the recent change of government from a majority to a minority government has increased the window of opportunity for political maneuvers. Therefore, the COVID-19 crisis became a perfect storm for the Norwegian oil lobby (Ryggvik, 2021).

Topos and lobbying for the public interest

The last empirical chapter in this study is dedicated to the challenge lobbyists face to overcome accusations of being egocentric and self-centered. The classic answer to this challenge is to pack their proposal into public interest rhetoric (De Bruycker, 2017; Uhre & Rommetvedt, 2019). In Chapter 6, I look closer at *what kinds of appeals to the public interest are typical in lobbying campaigns against the SCEE*. Here, the theory of topos is introduced as a rhetorical tool that can help us understand how lobbyists invent and identify the right public interest arguments. Topos is understood as a three-dimensional concept that can be a way of locating shared beliefs (*loci communes*), a heuristic for finding arguments, but also a way to study the doxa in a given society (Gabrielsen, 2008).

The analysis demonstrates that even though they have distinct rhetorical starting points, the interest organizations working against the SCEE rely on remarkably similar public interest topics such as the topos of the environment, the topos of the economy, and the topos of cost-effectiveness. Hence, when lobbyists are looking for arguments that can persuade politicians, they start from the same commonplaces and presume that the ultimate legitimacy for a political decision in some kind of appeal is to "what is good for the future" or "what is good for Norway." Furthermore, they all struggle with the same public interest dilemma, which is how to combine economic growth and create new jobs while taking care of the environment. Unlike what previous studies have argued, the choice of the public interest topos is not only an effect of the type of organization they represent. All interest organizations realize that they must put several public interest topics in play at the same time to succeed. Hence, the interest organizations face "public interest dilemmas" in which they must weigh public interest arguments against each other. Coalitions are key to how they solve these dilemmas, and here, the oil industry has an advantage because it can lean on an established alliance with unions and other important industrial players, while the energy industry struggles to form effective coalitions because the policy area is riddled with public interest dilemmas. The environmental organizations also struggle because the topos of the environment, itself, is often not enough to win a policy battle, and they are dependent on alliances to put into play the topos of the economy. Simultaneously, the unions and the oil industry fear that the topos of the environment will become so strong that it threatens the existence of the oil industry.

While there are several studies on how lobbyists rely on public-interest arguments, there is a lack of studies that investigate how decision makers relate to these kinds of arguments. Thus, in the second part of the chapter, I ask *how politicians evaluate the public interest claims lobbyists make and what kind of conceptualization of the public interest politicians adhere to* (RQ7). The reason lobbyists engage in public-interest rhetoric and try to solve public-interest dilemmas is that politicians are struggling with the same dilemmas. Hence, they are open to policy proposals that can help solve the growing dilemma of combining the topos of the economy with the topos of the environment. When politicians are evaluating contrasting public interest claims, they lean on an aggregative or Rawlsian understanding of liberal democracy according to which the public interest can be found by balancing the public interest claims of interest organizations against each other. Hence, when all interested parties are heard during the lobbying process, it leads to fair and legitimate results.

However, there is a question of whether balancing interests is enough to create a fair result. Thus, in the last section of this study, I examine this by asking, *what the politicians' conceptualization of the public interest means for the influence of lobbyists*? The answer is both paradoxical and complex. The lobbying survey of the MPs demonstrates that they have an ambivalent relationship with whether lobbying can help them make decisions that are in the public interest. On the one hand, 99 percent of Norwegian MPs think that lobbying has a positive effect; on the other hand, 75 percent fear that the consequences of lobbying are that the most resourceful interests dominate. Hence, the MPs are ambiguous in their view on lobbying, but they seem to underestimate the role of bias in lobbying. The positivity toward lobbying seems to lean on a naïve view of how power and influence work.

Takeaway 1: Lobbying as a game of identification

The summary of the research questions shows that studying lobbying from a rhetorical perspective gives us new insights that can help understand lobbying as a democratic practice. However, these insights have wider implications when it comes to the contested aspects of lobbying, such as the roles of power, democracy, and inequality. Therefore, in the following, I will first look at how studying lobbying as a process of identification widens our understanding of what lobbying is and how it can be studied. Then, I will move on to the questions of lobbying and democracy and lobbying and power.

The empirical analysis of ethos, kairos, and topos in chapters 4, 5, and 6 illustrates how identification as a master concept is fruitful for understanding how lobbyists work with rhetoric. The overall aim of all the rhetorical strategies I have analyzed in this study is to create some kind of closeness to power and build trustful relationships by seeing the world from the perspective of politicians. In this sense, both ethos, kairos, and topos illustrate the process of identification from various angles. In the chapter on ethos, I showed how lobbyists work with their competence, character, and goodwill to build trust and become the preferred conversation partners of politicians. Part of goodwill is also to understand other people's constraints, which was analyzed in the chapter on kairos where lobbyists work with the temporal and spatial dimension of kairos to discern the correct timing and the problem space their political solutions are supposed to fill. Finally, politicians care about the public interest, and therefore, lobbyists search for public interest topics when they are arguing to demonstrate that they care about the same problems as the politicians.

If we follow Burke that rhetoric should be understood as the "use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 43), it is obvious that it is hard to say where the quest for identification starts and where it ends. The rhetorical strategies described in this study illuminate the wide array of arenas and rhetorical situations lobbyists use to create identification. They go to formal meetings and hearings, and they seek the right moments to contact politicians on ongoing issues. However, they also drink coffee, have dinners, meet people in bars, and arrange seminars. Lobbyists are working with identification when they present drafts for policy solutions that are carefully crafted to adhere to the constraints of the political party they are trying to influence. In addition, they are trying to create identification when they ask politicians if they have children and compare their own family life with the family life of the politician.

The advantage of the concept of identification is that it enables us to study the rhetorical strategies of lobbyists under a common umbrella. One of the most striking aspects of the participant observation I performed for this study is how lobbyists use all arenas and occasions as a possibility for getting closer to the politicians they are trying to influence (Nothhaft, 2017). An after-dinner speech, a casual meeting at a seminar, or an invitation to a debate are all seen as opportunities for building relationships and gathering political intelligence. Hence, the effect of the rhetoric of lobbyists depends to a large extent on the cumulative effect of a series of interactions between lobbyists and politicians. Burke was also aware of this when he noted that

"we must think of rhetoric not in terms of some one particular address, but as a general body of identifications that owe their convincingness much more to a trivial repetition and dull daily reinforcements than to exceptional rhetorical skill" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 26). The strong position of the Norwegian oil industry can be understood in this context. It is not a single argument that determines the dominant position of the oil industry, but its constant presence and repetition of arguments in all arenas where SCEE members are present.

Lobbying as a process of identification also reminds us that, to succeed, the lobbyist must analyze the audience carefully. Identification is essentially a process in which A tries to persuade B by seeing the world from B's perspective. The analysis of how lobbyists work with the public interest topos highlights the ambiguity of the concept of identification because "identification is all about adhering to the opinions of the audience, and these opinions are not the same as scientific truth" (Wolin, 2001, p. 188). In this respect, political decisions in the last instance rest on how politicians perceive the policy proposals they are presented and the public interest topos induced to support them. The analysis of the public interest in Chapter 6 reminds us that "the opinions of the audience" are not a scientific fact or something given that the rhetor could just pick up and use. Lobbyists, though, try to use this uncertainty to their advantage and shape their arguments in a way that makes them as similar as possible to the opinions they know politicians already have. In a way, lobbyists engage in a form of translation process in which they "get dressed for politics" and use rhetorical strategies to transform their arguments from self-interested organizational claims to something that can make an impact on the political arena (Naurin, 2007).

The ambiguity of the public interest concept is the main reason that both political philosophers and political scientists have pushed the concept to the margins of the study of politics (Simm, 2011; Sorauf, 1957; Zarecor, 1959). From a rhetorical perspective, however, the changing meanings and interpretations of the concept are what make it interesting to study. The suspicion against the public interest concept mirrors the suspicion against rhetoric because it reveals the essentially groundless and arbitrary nature of democratic politics (B. Garsten, 2009; Martin, 2013). In the end, there are no eternal truths or everlasting consensus; there are only arguments and counter-arguments. The politicians and lobbyists in this study live in a pluralistic and Rawlsian world where there are no optimal solutions to social and environmental problems and it all comes down to the complicated balancing of interests (Drutman & Mahoney, 2017; Rittel & Webber, 1973).

Consequently, how political decisions are made and the public interest is defended can best be understood through the lens of rhetorical perspectivism (Cherwitz & Hikins, 1983). The public interest is neither an objective fact that can be observed, nor is it solely socially constructed through the use of rhetoric. Both politicians and lobbyists have their perspectives of what the public interest is and how it can be realized, but these perspectives are affected by the structures that surround them, such as the political party they represent or the type of organizations to which lobbyists belong. Thus, to create identification, the lobbyist must understand and adapt to the constraints of the politicians and find public interest arguments that appeal to them. To succeed, lobbyists need to find "the margins of overlap" between themselves and the politicians they are trying to influence (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 377).

From a Burkean perspective, one could argue that lobbyists are searching for "ways of seeing one's reflection in the social mirror" (Burke, 1941/1973, p. 227) and working hard to overcome separation and create some kind of consubstantiation. Consequently, they want to "take communication beyond information exchange and closer to understanding its capacity to form alliances and community" (Baumlin & Scisco, 2018, p. 209). Here, the rhetorical perspective adds a deeper and more elaborate understanding of how lobbying works as a communicative process than the more transactional theories such as "information exchange" or "legislative subsidies" (Berkhout, 2013; Hall & Deardorff, 2006). From a rhetorical perspective, lobbying is a communicative process that transforms both the rhetor and the audience, which makes them come closer to each other and create identification. Goodwill strategies such as caring about people, not being self-centered, understanding constraints, recognizing good work, and showing respect obviously do something for the relationship between lobbyists and politicians. Therein, lobbyists are trying to move the relationship closer to something that resembles a mutual friendship rather than a cold, professional relationship in which one exchanges information. The transactional perspectives that dominate lobbying research underestimate that communication is a relational process in which meaning is created through the interactions between A and B. In addition, when lobbying is seen as an exchange of informational resources, we simply lose track of the role of arguments and persuasion in the study of lobbying and politics in general.

In this process, lobbyists have much more to bring to the table than policy information and technical details. As I showed in the chapter on ethos, lobbyists can bring personal closeness, caring, praise, and recognition, third-party support from experts, coalition partners, and a platform on which one can speak. The fact that lobbyists use charm and try to create personal closeness to

get what they want is often not acknowledged in the academic literature on lobbying because they do not engage in participant observation and assume that lobbying is more or less a transactional business that goes on in formal meetings (Groll & McKinley, 2015; Grose et al., 2022; Nothhaft, 2017).

Consequently, the Burkean perspective on identification adds an important dimension to what rhetoric can do and how it can be studied. One of the weaknesses of traditional studies of lobbying is that researchers have a limited view of when and where lobbying takes place (Nothhaft, 2017). Similarly, studies of rhetoric often rely on speeches and written texts and rarely engage in the use of surveys, interviews, and participant observation (Corbett & Connors, 1999; Foss, 2017). As discussed in the theoretical chapter, rhetoric was originally intimately connected to politics (Bitzer, 1981). However, in this study, I have argued that modern rhetorical scholarship has struggled to make itself relevant to the study of modern political practices. Burke, himself, was more concerned with the world of literary criticism than with the world of politics. This study demonstrates that rhetorical concepts such as identification, ethos, topos, and kairos can be studied empirically and enrich our understanding of lobbying as a political practice.

Takeaway 2: Lobbying, inequality, and democracy

For Burke (1950/1969) identification could be a source of a better world where people could overcome division and find common ground. However, much of the critique against lobbying is that decision makers are too understanding of the claims of resourceful interest organizations and that these interest organizations are not representative of the average voter (Gilens & Page, 2014; Kimball et al., 2012; Schlozman et al., 2012). Furthermore, lobbying is criticized because it involves non-transparent processes that are accessible only to political insiders and because "close-knit relations among lobbyists and politicians might lead to real collusion that benefits only a small segment of the population" (J. C. Scott, 2015, p. 10).

The rhetorical strategies described in this study neatly illustrate the challenging democratic aspects of lobbying because lobbyists work in the gray zone between formality and informality and friendship and friendliness. Even though lobbyists would never describe themselves as "friends" of politicians, they behave in quite "friendlike" ways. The findings in this study correspond well with Nothhaft (2017) and Naurin (2007b), who studied professional lobbyists in Brussels. According to Nothhaft (2017), lobbyists work very hard to get rid of the identity of representing an organized interest and instead take on the role of the insider, a helpful

professional or a helpful friend. The insider refers to the fact that many lobbyists have previous experience as politicians or bureaucrats. The helpful professional provides timely and relevant information on short notice while the helpful friend gives personal assistance and good advice. Similarly, Naurin (2007) argues that lobbyists avoid self-interested arguments and bargaining and instead assume the role of "the committed partner," which can be described as "an engaged fellow problem solver involved in a constructive dialogue" (p. 83).

One could take this argument a bit further and argue that the lobbyists in this study are not only "getting dressed for politics" (Naurin, 2007), but also are "dressing up as politicians" and trying to merge with the political system. Assuming the role of the policy expert, building coalitions, understanding the constraints of the politicians, and arguing in public interest terms are strategies that help the lobbyist downplay the role of being a lobbyist with a clear self-interest. The case study of the oil industry's lobbying campaign for reduced taxes in Chapter 5 is an interesting example of how the industry managed to portray itself as a longtime friend who just wanted to do what is best for Norway, even though a more independent economist pointed out that the tax relief was not necessarily in the best interest of the Norwegian state (Lorentzen, 2021).

In summary, these strategies point to a process where the lobbyist tries to find other identities that make it easier to seek cooperation and agreement. If lobbyists are "dressing up as politicians," the ultimate aim of a lobbyist is to get so close to the decision makers that they are consubstantial in the Burkean sense. Lobbyists want to bring the relationship with politicians to a point where they have "common sensations, concepts, images, and ideas and attitudes that make them consubstantial" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 21). Hence, lobbyists want politicians to think that "I want what you want" or "I have the same interests as you have" (Day, 1960). What rhetorical theory adds to the mix here are tools and concepts that can help us better describe and analyze the process of influencing politicians through lobbying. Lobbyists use rhetoric to blur the line between self-interest and the public interest and sometimes disguise seeking influence with friendliness, charm, and praise. Thus, in their quest for identification, lobbyists take on a role that makes it harder for politicians to perceive them for what they truly are (Naurin, 2007; Naurin & Boräng, 2012; Nothhaft, 2017).

If lobbyists are increasingly "dressing up as politicians," it helps explain why former politicians have become so popular in the lobbying profession. In 1974, 3 percent of retiring members of Congress went on to work for lobby organizations, whereas in 2012, more than half of them did

(Lazarus, McKay, & Herbel, 2016). In the EU, the pace of the revolving door is also increasing. A recent report from Transparency International shows that 30 percent of members of the European Parliament who have left politics for other employment in the last few years now work for organizations registered on the EU lobby register. The same trend is evident in Scandinavia, even though there are fewer studies that try to measure the frequency of the revolving door (S. Allern, 2011; S. Allern & Pollack, 2018; Blach-Ørsten, Willig, & Pedersen, 2017; C. Garsten et al., 2015).

When lobbyists increasingly are "dressing up as politicians" and trying to melt into the political system in a grand act of identification, it becomes more difficult to separate between legitimate lobbying, collusion, and unwanted political practices. Recently, the former minister of Oil and Energy for the Progressive Party, Terje Søviknes, was criticized for being paid as a lobbyist from the Norwegian salmon farming industry while he participated in policy processes in the Progressive Party on issues concerning the industry. According to both Søviknes and the leader of the party, Sylvi Listhaug, this practice was unproblematic because Søviknes "has been completely open about his commitment, and therefore, it has not been a problem." Even though Søviknes backed down and changed the contract with the salmon farming company after massive critique, it illustrates that even in a well-functioning democracy like Norway, the blurring of the lines between lobbying, collusion, and close-to-corrupt practices is becoming increasingly problematic.

Part of the problem is that it seems difficult to influence the political system unless one has been part of the system. As mentioned, most lobbyists interviewed in this study had some kind of political background, which was crucial for the effectiveness of their work. In the chapter on ethos and kairos, I discussed how lobbyists are supposed to be both "hacks" and "wonks." They need policy expertise but also political intelligence and a wide network for information retrieval. In the chapter on kairos, I demonstrated how understanding the temporal and spatial dimensions of kairos depended on the lobbyists' "hackish" abilities to read the political game and decide the right time to act (Selling & Svallfors, 2019). This kind of knowledge is hard for amateurs and outsiders to access and would often demand inside experience from the system. One member of the SCEE had a quite blunt assessment of who was fit for the lobbying profession:

> It is obvious that former politicians are often the best lobbyists, no matter what party you come from. I think that if the business community had realized how good politicians are at lobbying each other, we would have had less need for these lobby companies; they [the

> business community] should have recognized political competence as much more important. (SCCE Member 7, author's translation)

Interestingly, SCEE members do not seem to reflect on how their own attitudes toward lobbyists indirectly privilege the most experienced and resourceful lobbyists. If previous political experience is a prerequisite for being an effective lobbyist, this would advantage the most resourceful interest organizations that could recruit for the best political talent (LaPira & Thomas, 2017). In lobbying, identification hinges on the ability of the lobbyist to understand policy processes and political structures and find the right arguments at the right time.

As I discussed in Chapter 4, the SCEE members get what they ask for because they expect lobbyists to understand the policy process and provide relevant policy expertise that is packaged in public interest rhetoric. Across the political spectrum, SCEE members have little patience for lobbying amateurs who do not bring relevant information at the right moment. While the SCEE members emphasized that they always had an open door and were interested in input from a broad array of interests, it was obvious that lobbying amateurs had little chance of being heard. Of course, there are important differences between the political parties concerning what kind of interest organizations they grant access to and have close relationships with. Obviously, ideology plays a role here (E. H. Allern, 2010). However, across the political spectrum, all SCEE members expect lobbyists to act as professionals and get irritated and annoyed when they do not. Time is an extremely constrained resource in the world of politics, and the 20−30 minutes that SCEE members most often give lobbyists must be used effectively. Consequently, interest organizations that shout and criticize, talk in a self-centered manner, and do not have realistic policy solutions to bring to the table cannot meet the expectations of the people they are trying to influence. Therefore, the amateurs are simply just annoying, and "a good lobbyist argues his case without irritating the elected representatives" (Nothhaft, 2017, p. 140). Understandably, SCEE members have a tight schedule and little patience for lobbying amateurs. However, this attitude probably reinforces the gap between the professionals and the amateurs in the game of lobbying. Correspondingly, meeting an open door is different from being heard.

Takeaway 3: Lobbying as identification and power

If lobbying can be seen as a game of identification in which lobbyists increasingly try to act like politicians and talk like politicians, it raises some difficult questions regarding how the power of lobbyists can be understood and studied. According to Burke, identification can work on a subtle

and more unconscious level. A can be identified with B when their interests are joined, but also "if he assumes they are, or is persuaded to believe so" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 21). This speaks to the notion of the third face of power, where politicians can be influenced by lobbyists without really understanding that they are being influenced and "an orientation can function as a blinder to the true interests of an individual or group" (Branaman, 1994, p. 444). Again, the power of the oil industry is an interesting illustration. Did the industry get its way during the COVID-19 crisis because it persuaded politicians with new arguments, or did it just reap the rewards of a powerful discourse it has taken 30 years to construct? In Chapter 6, I argued that the conflict between the topos of the environment and the topos of the economy has a doxastic nature in Norwegian politics, where it is taken for granted that the two can coexist (Ihlen, 2009b). Hence, the power of the oil industry might rest on a much firmer basis, where its rhetoric is constitutive and is "within the bodies of those it constitutes as its objects" (Charland, 1987, p. 143). An interesting example of this is the finding in Chapter 6, where most of the SCEE members did not think of Norwegian oil and gas as a lobbying organization, but more as a natural part of the political system. The history of the oil industry, with the close interaction between the political system and the industry, makes it hard even for seasoned MPs to distinguish between the oil lobby and the political system, which is meant to control and regulate the industry (Sejersted, 1999; Sæther, 2019).

The question of power hinges on the extent to which politicians recognize and understand how lobbyists work to create identification. The experience from my fieldwork indicates that politicians are often unaware of or at least do not critically reflect on how strategic interest organizations are in their relationships with them. At dinners, receptions, and meetings at the bar, lobbyists are looking constantly for opportunities to establish relationships with people in power and use this as a springboard for future lobbying attempts. When they are on friendly terms with politicians, meeting and exchanging information comes more naturally. Hence, lobbying as a game of identification blurs the line between friendliness and influence peddling. The same tendency is evident in Nothhaft's (2017) fieldwork among lobbyists in Brussels, where she observes "lobbyists adapt to their counterpart expectations, downplay, and obscure their influence because politicians do not want to be openly confronted with the fact that they are extensively exposed to influence" (p. 140). This study corroborates these findings. Lobbyists are cautious not to pressure and offend politicians, and when things go their way, they praise the politicians and not themselves. Thus, lobbyists have no interest in promoting their victories and are careful not to challenge the notion that politicians are in charge.

This study demonstrates that the question of power is also a question of methodology. Social scientists rarely acknowledge that they usually study power from the outside because they lack access to the arenas where decisions are made and power is wielded (Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007). As I mentioned in the methods chapter, the main reason the lobbyists I interviewed wanted to talk anonymously was that they feared that an honest assessment of how they worked could damage their working relationships with politicians. Correspondingly, it is a democratic problem that lobbyists do not acknowledge and talk openly about their influence, because they perceive it as their job to make politicians look good and let them "shine" while they reap the silent rewards of influence (Figenschou & Fredheim, 2019; Ihlen & Raknes, 2022; Trapp & Laursen, 2017). Meanwhile, politicians have an interest in upholding an image of equal access and a fair balancing of interests. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the egalitarian intentions of the SCEE members; simultaneously, they meet lobbyists with expectations that clearly favor the most resourceful and professional among them. The same paradox is evident in the parliament survey, where 99 percent of the MPs say that lobbying is mostly positive for democracy at the same time as they acknowledge that lobbying results in outsized influence for the most well-organized interests.

The paradoxical nature of how the SCEE members relate to the influence of lobbyists actualizes the difficult question of self-perception and power, which is central to the debate on the third face of power (Akram et al., 2015). Here, participant observation is helpful because it allows us not only to listen to what people say but also to look at what they do. If the SCEE members want to give equal access to all interest organizations, why do they spend so much time on seminars that only the most resourceful groups can arrange? The same paradox is evident for lobbyists. In interviews, they are careful to underscore that they play by the rules and respect the politicians, but at the bar later at night, they can tell you that politicians are weak, can be manipulated, and do not have a clue about the issues on which they are working. Thus, power and influence are complicated issues in which the self-perception of the actors involved can sometimes be deceptive.

Regarding the public interest, most models of democracy rest on the idea that the public interest can be found through fair and rational deliberation (Dahl, 2020). In Chapter 6, I concluded that most politicians adhere to a Rawlsian or aggregative conceptualization of liberal democracy where the public interest can be discerned through the peaceful struggle of interests. Hence, as long as all interest organizations meet an open door and can get their case heard, the public

interest is served. The problem is that the public interest is vulnerable to capture because the public interest will be decided in the free market of interest competition; only the loudest and most powerful voices are heard (Binderkrantz et al., 2014a, 2015; Gilens & Page, 2014; Schattschneider, 1975). However, the procedural conceptualization of the public interest reminds us that public deliberation is necessary for deciding how the public interest should be interpreted (Bozeman, 2007; Johnston, 2017). The challenge is that when all interest organizations claim that their proposals are in the public interest, it makes it harder for politicians to evaluate the increasingly strategic uses of the public interest concept. When the proposed policy is packaged in public interest rhetoric, politicians often lower their guard and make it less likely that they will "probe deeply into its implementation, question the claims made on its behalf, or look for indirect or hidden harms" (Lindsey & Teles, 2017, p. 141).

Are there general rhetorical strategies for lobbyists?

As discussed above, the concept of identification opens up new venues in the empirical study of lobbying as a phenomenon. However, this is a study of Norwegian lobbyists within a particular policy area. Therefore, we must ask ourselves, to what extent are the rhetorical strategies described in this study relevant for lobbyists working in different countries and different political contexts? This underscores the importance of institutions in analyses of how lobbyists communicate. Clearly, the consensual nature of the Norwegian political system encourages lobbyists to create as little distance as possible between themselves and the politicians they are trying to influence (Lijphart, 2012; Mahoney, 2016; Mahoney & Baumgartner, 2009).

The rhetorical strategies identified in this study resemble the "consensus-oriented informational lobbying in the EU" (Woll, 2012, p. 192). Even though there are institutional differences between Norway and the EU, one could ask whether Norway is part of a larger subgroup of consensus-based democracies that has a softer lobbying style in which identification is more important than confrontation (Lijphart, 2012; Naurin, 2007). To what extent the rhetoric of Norwegian lobbyists is different or similar from lobbyists in other consensus democracies would merit a more thorough comparative approach to determine.

Nevertheless, without a more detailed comparative rhetorical analysis, one should be careful about buying into Woll (2012) description of the U.S. lobbying style as "adversarial." Appeals to the public interest seem like a lobbying strategy that works across borders and is common in U.S.

lobbying campaigns (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Valentini et al., 2020). Furthermore, the ability to form and develop good relationships is important for lobbyists, no matter what political system they work within. In his analysis of interviews with 60 lobbyists in Brussels, London, and Washington, McGrath (2006) mentions traits such as honesty, credibility, courtesy, listening, and relationship building as key to success.

On a general level, one could argue that the rhetorical challenges lobbyists face are quite similar across political systems. They must appear credible to be trusted deliverers of information, they need to find the right moment to intervene in the policy process, and they must avoid portraying themselves as self-centered. However, differences in political institutions, policy areas, and political cultures probably influence how they solve these challenges. In the chapter on ethos and kairos, I discussed how understanding and analyzing constraints is crucial for lobbying success. For the lobbyists working against the SCEE, the party program, the minority–majority situation, and the Ministry of Finance are the three most important constraints that affected what they should say and when they should say it. In the chapter on kairos and the rhetorical situation, I developed this argument further, arguing that a rhetorical situation has both opportunities and constraints. Lobbyists must determine the temporal and spatial dimension of kairos coupled with the dimension of the proper measure, and in this process, constraints can be turned into opportunities. However, to exploit these opportunities, lobbyists need intimate knowledge about the policy process and how the political actors relate to this process.

In this respect, one could argue that "all lobbying is local" since the Norwegian political system has certain peculiarities that cannot be replicated elsewhere. The challenge from the point of generalization is that the way the policy process is structured varies considerably between democracies (Weible et al., 2012). Thus, what works in one system does not necessarily work in another. The U.S. system, with its two-party system and checks and balances, gives incentives to a more aggressive lobbying style whereby proposals can be "killed" at an early stage in the policy process. In a Norwegian context or an EU context, this aggressive strategy would probably fail and alienate decision makers (Woll, 2012).

Even though the rhetorical challenges lobbyists meet have similar features across political systems, the rhetorical situations they face are rather unique. In the chapter on kairos and the rhetorical situation, I pointed out how the constraints of the rhetorical situations lobbyists face are never stable. Governments come and go. Party programs change, and the influence of the Ministry

of Finance varies. When the Norwegian oil industry managed to reduce its taxes after the COVID-19 crisis, the industry exploited that both the exigency and constraints of the rhetorical situation had changed. Furthermore, even though one could argue that lobbyists always seek to ground their arguments in some kind of public interest topic, the kind of public interest topics they choose depends on the constraints and the political culture in which they operate. The strength of the local jobs topic is closely tied to the center-periphery cleavage in Norwegian politics, and the strong focus on cost-effectiveness points to the strong role of the Ministry of Finance in the Norwegian decision-making system (Lie & Venneslan, 2010; Rokkan & Valen, 1964). Hence, even though invoking public interest topos is a staple strategy for lobbyists across political systems, what kind of public interest topics lobbyists chose to rely on is highly dependent upon the political context they operate in.

Limitations and future research

Even though I have identified several novel rhetorical strategies that lobbyists use to create identification, I have not addressed the most pressing issue in lobbying research: who wins and who loses in the struggle to influence the outcome of public policy. Even though the SCEE members confirm that providing policy expertise, providing political solutions, praising politicians, and arguing in public interest terms are useful strategies when positioning for influence, the study does not tell us anything about how effective these strategies are and if some are used more frequently and others. With a sample of 17 lobbyists and 13 politicians, one should be careful to draw any broad conclusions on this issue. However, it should be noted that measuring the influence of various lobbying strategies has proven to be an extremely difficult task and often produces contradictory findings (Helboe Pedersen, 2013; Lowery, 2013).

Regarding studying the effect and impact of lobbying, I would argue that more studies should engage in a mixed-methods design. Researchers should aim not only to survey but also to interview and observe both lobbyists and politicians. The effects and impacts of lobbying depend not only on what lobbyists say and do but also on how politicians interpret and evaluate messages from lobbyists. Furthermore, this study demonstrates how lobbyists frequently fail to get their message across. This work also demonstrates the insecurities and dilemmas that politicians struggle with, which makes them open for suggestions from lobbyists. One interesting aspect of this study is how rhetorical theory sheds light on the world of uncertainty and imperfect choices that both lobbyists and politicians experience. I would argue that communication theory, such as

rhetoric, is a fruitful starting point to understand these processes, which can complement resource exchange theory, which is common in traditional lobbying research (Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Bouwen, 2004a).

Lobbying is about political power and how those with political power can be influenced. I would argue that there are two lessons to be learned from this study that can inform future lobbying research. First, researchers should be more open about the fact that they usually lack access to the corridors of powers, but must beg for access there (Rhodes & Noordegraaf, 2007). Second, researchers have much to gain from engaging in participant observation, and this study is an apt reminder of Gans (1962/1982) old dictum that "participant observation is the only method I know that enables the researcher to get close to the realities of social life" (p. 350). Too many researchers shy away from the participant observation of political elites because it is time consuming and raises difficult questions about access. The level of access was also a severe limitation in this study. Even though I could freely participate in seminars, listen in on conversations, and talk to all the people I wanted to, I did not get close enough. I was not present on the strategy sessions lobbyists had before they met politicians. I did not sit in on lobbying meetings in the parliament, and I did not participate in the faction meetings where politicians debated what they should do with the input from lobbyists. It is a fact of modern political research that what goes on behind the closed doors of power is better covered by investigative journalists than by social scientists. Hence, future studies of lobbying should aim for even more ambitious designs of participant observation with which they shadow both lobbyists and politicians in their everyday work (Nothhaft, 2017).

Given the limited sample of organizations, a natural expansion of this study would be a broader sample of both lobbyists and politicians. The strategies that were identified in this study could be explored both quantitatively and qualitatively. Here, one can ask both politicians and lobbyists to rank the rhetorical strategies I have identified regarding their effectiveness. The limited sample also makes it difficult to say anything certain about the relationship between the rhetorical strategies I have discussed and the resources. I have indicated that, in particular, some ethos strategies, such as providing policy expertise, political intelligence, caring, and giving politicians a platform for speaking, are resource demanding and favor the more resourceful interest organization. Thus, financial equality also manifests itself in rhetorical inequalities between organizations, and studies from Denmark confirm that there is a strong link between resources and access to lobbying arenas (Binderkrantz, 2019; Binderkrantz et al., 2014a). To examine how

resource inequality leads to rhetorical inequality, we would need a larger sample of both resourceful and less resourceful organizations and perceive to what extent the resources impacted the type of rhetorical strategies they used.

Another weakness of the study is the limited rhetorical arsenal I have utilized. Building a theoretical framework always involves choices and limits the scope of the study. However, when Aristotle argued a rhetor should the use available means of persuasion, he included appeal to reason (logos) and emotional appeal (pathos) along with ethos (Corbett & Connors, 1999). Some argue that the three artistic proofs are inseparable and dependent on each other (Conley, 1994). Hence, it is not possible to study the use of ethos without including logos and pathos. While this is an interesting objection, my argument is that the research questions should govern how the theoretical framework is set up. Furthermore, previous studies have used a similar combination of rhetorical concepts as I have in this study to analyze the effect of identification on politics, film, and the construction of expertise (Hartelius, 2011; Woodward, 2003).

A central conclusion of this study is that lobbyists in the context of a consensual democracy are constantly searching for identification and common ground. However, there is a certain danger of a confirmation bias in that I only look for strategies that induce cooperation and identification and fail to address and look for more adversarial strategies. This connects with the limitations of the empirical material. The study strictly focuses on the direct meetings lobbyists have with politicians in the Storting, at seminars, and in more informal venues such as dinners and meetings in a bar. If I had included how lobbyists work with indirect strategies such as media coverage or social media campaigns, a more nuanced picture would probably emerge (Binderkrantz, 2008). Media critique and confrontation is often considered the fallback option when direct meetings fail to convince politicians, and for less resourceful groups who lack direct access to politicians, media critique is often their best chance of getting heard (Figenschou & Fredheim, 2019; Trapp & Laursen, 2017). In particular, for idealistic organizations, telling emotional stories in the media is a key way to get politicians' attention, and here, obviously, conflict and confrontation play a key role. Therefore, when I say that pathos seems to play a limited role in the rhetoric of lobbyists, this conclusion is limited to their direct interaction with politicians.

The coding of qualitative data is a complicated field, and the lack of intercoder reliability tests obviously hampers the reliability of the results. How categories relate and differ is also challenging when coding qualitative data. In the chapter on ethos, one could surely question why

certain discursive strategies are coded as competence, character, or goodwill. Is providing political solutions a sign of competence, an act of goodwill, or both? The versatility of the public interest concept raises many of the same issues. Part of the problem here is that rhetorical scholarship does not engage itself with coding as a practice and does not discuss traditional methodological concepts such as operationalization, coding, reliability, and validity. In my view, the greatest weakness with both the Neo-Aristotelian and critical approach to rhetoric is that it puts too much faith in the researcher as a methodological instrument for analysis and is not transparent enough about how the conclusions are reached (Brummett, 2017; Foss, 2017). If rhetoric will aid our understanding of organizational communication, it must be possible for other researchers to critically examine coding processes, and questions of validity and reliability must be addressed.

What I am certain of is that scholars from fields other than political science and sociology should engage in research on lobbying to better understand its democratic implications and how we could amend the inequalities that lobbying creates and often strengthens. The increasing professionalization of the lobbying work of interest organizations and their sophisticated understanding of how the political system works increases the chances of interest capture (Lindsey & Teles, 2017; OECD, 2021). However, politicians need more knowledge about how lobbyists work in order not to fall for the charm, the praise, and the self-serving arguments dressed up in public interest rhetoric. At Energy Norway's Winter Conference, I talked to a newly appointed political advisor in the Ministry and Oil and Energy. He told me that he really had a hard time with the lobbyists "because they are so good at what they do, they always seem to find the right arguments, and I really have a hard time saying no to them." Many lobbyists in this study belong to that category; they are smart, soft-spoken, and politically savvy. However, if they become too good at their job and the politicians fail to do theirs, the public interest is not served.

Appendices

Appendix A—Overview of interviewees

Number	Position	Organization	Interview (min)	Date
1.	Parliament member	SCCE	49	06.19.17
2.	Parliament member	SCEE	52	06.19.17
3.	Parliament member	SCEE	32	12.16.19
4.	Parliament member	SCEE	15	12.10.17
5.	Parliament member	SCEE	30	11.22.17
6.	Parliament member	SCEE	97	06.28.17
7.	Parliament member	SCEE	38	12.05.19
8.	Parliament member	SCEE	48	03.28.19
9.	Parliament member	SCEE	46	08.15.19
10.	Minister of oil and energy		33	08.16.18
11.	Parliament member	SCEE	46	11.13.18
12.	Political advisor	SCEE	46	06.27.17
13.	Parliament member	SCEE	53	06.27.17
14.	Oil lobbyist	Norwegian Petroleum Association	41	04.24.19
15.	Environmental lobbyist	Zero	50	10.25.18
16.	Environmental lobbyist	Zero	38	10.21.18
17.	Oil lobbyist	Norwegian Oil and Gas	38	12.05.19
18.	Union lobbyist	Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	33	03.19.19
19.	Union lobbyist	Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	33	03.19.19
20.	Union lobbyist	Industry and Energy	60	10.18.18
21.	Environmental lobbyist	Zero	47	03.28.18
22.	Environmental lobbyist	Norwegian Climate Foundation	28	03.01.19
23.	Oil lobbyist	Equinor	59	10.11.18
24.	Energy lobbyist	Energy Norway	52	08.19.17
25.	Energy lobbyist	Statkraft	53	04.09.19
26.	Energy lobbyist	Energy Norway	39	03.28.19
27.	Energy lobbyist	Statkraft	40	03.28.19
28.	Energy lobbyist	Statkraft	42	04.12.19

29.	Environmental lobbyist	Friends of the Earth	46	06.18.20
30.	Oil lobbyist	Equinor	50	05.20.20

Appendix B—SCEE members 2013–2017 and 2017–2021

Name	Party	Period	Interviewed
Ketil Kjenseth	Liberal Party	2017–2021	No
Espen Barth Eide	Labor Party	2017–2021	Yes
Stefan Heggelund	Conservative Party	2017–2021	No
Åsmund Aukrust	Labor Party	2017–2021	Yes
Une Bastholm	Green Party	2017–2021	No
Sandra Borch	Centre Party	2017–2021	No
Liv Kari Eskeland	Conservative Party	2017–2021	No
Hege Haukeland Liadal	Labor Party	2017–2021	Yes
Terje Halleland	Progressive Party	2017–2021	Yes
Lars Haltbrekken	Socialist Left Party	2017–2021	Yes
Ole Andre Myhrvold	Centre Party	2017–2021	No
Else-May Norderhus	Labor Party	2017–2021	No
Gisle Meininger Saudland	Progressive Party	2017–2021	No
Aase Simonsen	Conservative Party	2017–2021	No
Runar Sjåstad	Labor Party	2017–2021	No
Tore Storehaug	Christian Democrats	2017–2021	No
Lene Westgaard-Halle	Conservative Party	2017-2021	Yes
Ola Elvestuen	Liberal Party	2013–2017	Yes
Terje Aasland	Labor Party	2013–2017	Yes
Nikolai Astrup	Conservative Party	2013–2017	Yes
Tina Bru	Conservative Party	2013–2017	No
Rigmor Andersen Eide	Christian Democrats	2013–2017	No
Jan Henrik Fredriksen	Progressive Party	2013–2017	No
Eva Kristian Hansen	Labor Party	2013–2017	No
Rasmus Hansson	Green Party	2013–2017	No
Odd Henriksen	Conservative Party	2013–2017	No
Per Rune Henriksen	Labor Party	2013–2017	Yes
Heikki Holmås Eidsvoll	Socialist Left Party	2013–2017	Yes
Øyvind Korsberg	Progressive Party	2013–2017	No
Anne Ljunggren	Labor Party	2013–2017	No
Eirik Milde	Conservative Party	2013–2017	No
Geir Pollestad	Centre Party	2013–2017	No
Thorhild Aabergsbotten	Conservative Party	2013–2017	No

Appendix C—Interview guides

Semi–structured interview guide—Lobbyists working against the SCEE

General lobbying questions

- How would you describe your lobbying activity against SCCE?
- Could you describe a typical lobbying meeting you have with SCEE members? Probe: Could you, for example, describe the last meeting you had?
- What is your impression of the lobbyists working against the committee? Probe: Is there anyone you think is particularly good or bad at lobbying?
- What do you think characterizes a successful lobbyist?
  Probe: Can you give any examples?
- Which of the political parties in the SCEE do you spend most of your time lobbying?

Lobbying and relationships

- Are there any political parties you feel closer to than the other parties?
  Probe: Ask about details, relationships, and friendships.
- To what degree do you meet politicians on occasions other than meetings in parliament?
- Probe: What kinds of occasions? (Seminars, dinners, travels)
- What do you get from meeting politicians on more informal occasions?

Arguments and rhetoric

- Could you say something about how you develop arguments regarding the issues you want to lobby on?
- What do you consider good or persuasive messages in a lobbying situation?
  Probe: Could you give some examples?
- What do you consider bad or non-persuasive arguments in a lobbying situation?
  Probe: Could you give some examples?
- What kind of information do you think politicians value most from lobbyists?
- Do you sometimes praise or give politicians positive feedback?
  Probe: How do politicians react? What does that mean?

The public interest dilemma

- Some people argue that politicians are skeptical of lobbyists because they represent special interests. Is that a challenge you face in your work?
- Probe: If, no, why is it not a challenge? If yes, how so?
- How do you develop arguments related to this challenge?

Probe: Are there any strategies you use to overcome this challenge?

Semi-structured interview guide—Members of SCEE

On lobbying in general

- Generally, how would you describe lobbying activity against the SCEE?
  Probe: Who are the dominant groups/organizations?
- Could you describe a typical meeting you have with a lobbyist?
  Probe: What was the last meeting you had?
- What is your impression of the diverse lobbyists working against the committee? Probe: Is there anyone you think is particularly good or bad at lobbying?

- Which of the organizations working toward the SCEE do you spend the most time with?
- Are there any interest groups you feel closer to than the other interest groups?
  Probe: Ask about details, relationships, friendships.

Informal lobbying

- To what degree do you meet lobbyists on occasions other than meetings in parliament?
  Probe: What kinds of occasions? (Seminars, dinners, travels)
- Are there any seminars you always participate in?
- What is the most important output for attending these seminars?
- What is the most important information you get from meeting interest groups in more informal settings?
- Do you sometimes receive praise or positive feedback from lobbyists?
  Probe: If yes, how do you react? If no, why do you think that does not happen?

Arguments and rhetoric of lobbyists

- What do you think characterizes a skilled lobbyist?
- What do you consider good or persuasive messages in a lobbying situation?
  Probe: Could you give some examples?
- What do you consider bad or non-persuasive arguments in a lobbying situation?
  Probe: Could you give some examples?
- What do you think is the difference between the way a skilled lobbyist and an unskilled lobbyist behaves in a meeting with politicians?
- What kind of information do you value most from lobbyists?
  Probe: Do you have examples of information you have used?

The public interest dilemma

- Some people argue that politicians must think of the public interest, while interest groups represent narrow group interests. Do you think that is a challenge?
  Probe: If no, why not? If yes, how is it a challenge? How do you develop arguments related to this challenge?
- Interest groups often have conflicting solutions to distinct political issues. How do resonate your way toward a solution on issues where interest groups disagree?
  Probe: Do you have any specific principles you rely on?
- Have you ever thought that some interest groups are too powerful and that politicians give their views too much consideration?
  Probe: If yes, why is that so? If no, why not?

Appendix D—Consent forms for semi-structured interviews and participant observation

Consent from the Parliament Survey 2019

Velkommen til Stortingsundersøkelsen 2019. Undersøkelsen er en oppfølging av tidligere spørreundersøkelser som er sendt ut til stortingsrepresentantene, blant annet i forbindelse med Grunnloven og Stortingets 200-årsjubileum i 2014. Hensikten med undersøkelsen er å studere utviklingen i komitearbeidet og lobbyvirksomheten mot Stortinget.

Spørsmålene om fagkomiteenes arbeid inngår i en internasjonal studie av parlamentskomiteenes arbeid og betydning. Denne gjennomføres i regi av Research Committee of Legislative Specialists i International Political Science Association.

Med lobbyvirksomhet mener vi skriftlige og muntlige henvendelser fra eksterne grupper/interesser som prøver å få satt saker på Stortingets dagsorden eller prøver å påvirke representantenes standpunkter i saker som er under behandling. Vi tenker både på direkte henvendelser til deg og henvendelser som formidles gjennom gruppesekretariat og fagkomite. Disse henvendelsene kan omfatte så vel informasjon som argumentasjon og konkrete forslag.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?
Deltakelsen innebærer å svare på en elektronisk spørreundersøkelse som tar omtrent 15 minutter å besvare. Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern—, hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger
Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har redegjort for overfor. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Hva hver enkelt stortingsrepresentant svarer, vil aldri fremgå av forskningsrapportene, og materialet vil kun bli publisert i form av statistiske tabeller. Undersøkelsen er meldt til Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste (NSD)

Dine rettigheter
Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:
- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- å få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke. Du samtykker til undersøkelsen ved å svare ja på det første spørsmålet i det elektroniske spørreskjemaet. Dersom det skulle være spørsmål om undersøkelsen kan disse rettes til prosjektleder Hilmar Rommetvedt ved NORCE Norwegian Research Centre (tel: 41 25 28 17, epost: hiro@norceresearch.no) eller doktorgradsstipendiat Ketil Raknes, Høyskolen Kristiania (tel: 41545309, epost: ketil.raknes@kristiania.no).

Consent forms for semi-structured interviews and participant observation

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

"Lobbyspeak—understanding the rhetoric of lobbyists"

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et doktorgradsprosjekt hvor formålet er å *studere lobbyvirksomheten mot Energi- og miljøkomiteen på Stortinget*. I dette skrivet gir jeg deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål
Lobbyisme er et ganske nytt fenomen i det norske samfunnet. I denne doktorgraden ser jeg nærmere på hvilke kommunikasjonsstrategier lobbyister bruker når de skal få gjennomslag for sitt syn. Prosjektet innebærer kvalitative intervjuer med medlemmer av Energi og- miljøkomiteen og lobbyister som jobber mot komiteen. Studien inkluderer også deltakende observasjon på en rekke seminarer hvor medlemmer av Energi og miljøkomiteen også deltar.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?
Ketil Raknes ved Høyskolen Kristiana er ansvarlig for prosjektet. Øyvind Ihlen ved Institutt for medier og kommunikasjon ved Universitetet i Oslo er veileder for doktorgraden.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?
Du blir spurt om å delta enten fordi du er eller har vært medlem av Energi- og miljøkomiteen på Stortinget, arbeider aktivt med å påvirke komiteen i politiske saker eller deltar på seminarer som medlemmer i Energi- og miljøkomiteen også deltar på.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?
Hvis du sier ja til å delta, vil jeg gjennomføre et kvalitativt intervju på omtrent en time.

Det er frivillig å delta
Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern—, hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger
Jeg vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene jeg har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Jeg behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Navnet og kontaktopplysningene dine vil jeg erstatte med en kode som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data, og datamaterialet lagres på forskningsserver. Det vil kun være intervjuer og veileder som har tilgang til hele materialet. Jeg legger vekt på at det ikke skal gå an å gjenkjenne informantene i publikasjoner fra prosjektet, med mindre det gis eksplisitt godkjennelse.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Doktorgraden skal etter planen leveres høsten 2020, noe av materialet vil inkluderes i senere publikasjoner i etterkant av at doktorgraden er levert. Datamaterialet vil oppbevares i anonymisert form frem til 01.01.2023

Dine rettigheter
Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?
På oppdrag fra Høyskolen Kristiania har NSD—, Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?
Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- Ketil Raknes ved Høyskolen Kristiania er ansvarlig for gjennomføring av undersøkelsen. Og kan nås på ketil.raknes@kristiania.no eller telefon 41545309.
- NSD—, Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personvernombudet@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Ketil Raknes
Doktorgradsstipendiat

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet ***"Lobbyspeak—, understanding the rhetoric of lobbyists"*****?** og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- ☐ *å delta i intervju*
- ☐ *at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes*
- ☐ *at anonymisert materiale oppbevares til 01.01.2023 til bruk i akademiske publikasjoner*

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. Januar 2023

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

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