REVISITING LOBBYING IN OKLAHOMA

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The authors surveyed 369 registered Oklahoma lobbyists by mail in 2006. One hundred sixty-three questionnaires (44 percent) were completed and returned. Lobbyist responses demonstrated there was no lawyer-lobbyist stereotype in Oklahoma. Lobbyists in Oklahoma were as experienced and educated as state lobbyists elsewhere but were paid less. Their average age (51) was typical of state lobbyists as was the percentage of males (72 percent). Lobbyists were found to be conservative or middle-of-the-road although somewhat more Democratic than Republican. Two measures of political influence indicated that petroleum was particularly powerful in both measures and gaming in one. Some of the most influential interests included petroleum, health care, education, business, transportation/communication, banking/finance, gaming, agriculture, realtors/ insurance, and utilities. Groups found to be losing influence included labor and agriculture. Lobbyist reactions to changes in lobbying were much more often negative than positive. Nevertheless, lobbyists were favorably disposed toward a career in lobbying.

INTRODUCTION

In 1963 political scientist Samuel Patterson published an article in the *Journal of Politics* entitled "The Role of the Lobbyist: The Case of Oklahoma." Patterson's sample of forty-three Oklahoma lobbyists was drawn in 1961 (Patterson 1963, 73). In 1993, Robert England and David Morgan provided another study of lobbying in Oklahoma entitled "Oklahoma: Group Power in Transition" (p. 263-284). Some forty-five years after Patterson's ground-breaking study, the present authors developed another questionnaire (Fowler 1995; Pattern 2001, 65-72; Rea and Parker 1997) to be administered to Oklahoma lobbyists. During the winter, spring and summer of 2006, four waves of questionnaires were mailed to the 369 lobbyists then registered with the Oklahoma Ethics Commission (2006). One-hundred sixty-three questionnaires, 44 percent, were completed and returned by the respondent-lobbyists.

The authors used four points of reference in predicting change or continuity in Oklahoma lobbying activities. The first was lobbying in Oklahoma during the early 1960s. The second point of reference was Oklahoma lobbying during the 1980s and 1990s. The third was the situation most often found today in state lobbying elsewhere. The fourth point of reference was the electorate and general public in Oklahoma over time. Whereas one or more of these reference points may not be available in a particular set of comparisons, at least two of the four should be.

It may be that what was true about Oklahoma lobbying in the 1960s or the 1980's and 90's is in general agreement with what is typical of lobbying in most states today. Given such agreement, what may be expected today in Oklahoma is predictable. But what if lobbying in Oklahoma yesterday differs significantly from lobbying in most states today? The question would then become which road is more likely, the road followed by most states today or the road less traveled–i.e., the "Oklahoma way" as evident in the latter third of the 20th century.

The authors predicted that lobbyists in Oklahoma would be more like their colleagues in other states today than their predecessors in Oklahoma. However, the "Oklahoma way" was expected under certain circumstances. If, for instance, continuing internal or external causes affected Oklahoma uniquely, the Oklahoma political way was predicted over what obtained broadly across American states. Thus the fact that Oklahoma has always had a large population of Native-Americans will

probably continue to make a positive difference in the influence of such interests as gaming on tribal lands.

If changes in external developments affected an Oklahoman interest of historic but variable influence (i.e. an oil shortage), continuity, in the sense of returning to a dominant position of influence, was expected. As proud as Oklahomans are about their heritage, their conservative political culture is not believed to cause political continuity so much as a unique history or demography or a particular natural resources does. For example, gaming goes against Oklahoma's traditionalistic and fundamentalist political culture. However, gaming is in accord with a demography that includes a large population of Native-Americans with extensive sovereignty over enterprise in their tribal lands. Thus demography would be controlling over political culture.

Oklahoma is situated in the middle of what has become the nation's conservative powerhouse, the American Sunbelt. As a result, it is one of the key states in the small-state lock on the electoral-college and plays a larger part in the making of presidents than might be expected from its population alone. Similarly, the Sunbelt is the seedbed of conservative leadership in Congress and indeed, throughout American federalism. Shifts in regional power that reinforce conservatism in states like Oklahoma probably accelerate shifts toward the national Republican Party.

Confirmation or refutation of the authors' expectations was provided by lobbyist responses in this study. Most lobbyists at the national as well as the state levels get into lobbying as a second career (Berry and Wilcox 2007, 102; Rosenthal 2001, 25-30; Davis, Metla, and Herlan 2006, 5). Nevertheless, once in lobbying they typically stay put for many years (Rosenthal 2001:33).

WHAT CAREER PATHS DO OKLAHOMA LOBBYISTS FOLLOW INTO LOBBYING?

At the national level lobbyists are often lawyers (Berry & Wilcox 2007, 102-106; deKieffer 1981, 193-199; Hrebenar 1997, 82-83, 92-96; Mahood 1990, 56-57; Thomas and Hrebenar 1991, 65-74; Wright 2003, 93). At the state level, however, lower proportions are lawyers and higher proportions are from various other occupations (Rosenthal, 2001, 23, 30-33). While England and Morgan did not trace the career

paths of Oklahoma lobbyists, Patterson found that the stereotypical lawyer lobbyist did not materialize en masse in 1961. Of his forty-three respondent-lobbyists, only four were lawyers,10.8 percent (Patterson 1963, 75-78). On the other hand, some 23.3 percent (N=10) of Patterson's respondent-lobbyists were professionals other than lawyers including teachers, pharmacists, policemen, firemen, ministers, and editors (Patterson 1963, 77).

In light of Oklahoma's political history and of patterns across the states today, it seems safe to predict that the lawyer lobbyist is still not stereotypical. As may be seen in **Table 1**, lawyers made up 11 percent (N=17) of the 2006 sample of 163 Oklahoma lobbyists. Nearly 21 percent (N=32) of the present sample came from professions other than law such as education, media, and medicine.

It should be noted that while there is not the proportion of lawyer lobbyists in the states that there is in Washington, there probably is a significant strata of former legislators, officials, or their assistants (Rosenthal 2001, 28; Thomas and Hrebenar 1991, 65-66). This is especially true in states which have adopted term limits comparatively recently, such as Oklahoma (Francis-Smith, 2004). Thus, one would expect to find a large portion of ex-legislators or ex-officials or ex-assistants to officials to be among Oklahoma's lobbyists.

Was that true in 1961? Patterson drew the conclusion that ex-legislators were only infrequently lobbyists, or 11.6 percent, N=5 (1963, 76). However, he classifies another five lobbyists as "non-legislative" public office holders (Patterson 1963, 78). Together these legislative and non-legislative ex-officials amounted to ten lobbyists or 23.2 percent of the 1961 respondent-lobbyists. Similarly, 21 percent (N=33) of the 2006 Oklahoma respondent-lobbyists came to lobbying through "politics" or "government." Thus, by the designations used in these studies, there is not much difference in the proportion entering lobbying via public service in 1961 and 2006, roughly one in five.

Similarly, the initial impression from the Patterson sample alone was that there were few business backgrounds among lobbyists in the 1961 sample. Only three of Patterson's sample of forty-three lobbyists were businessmen, all three in the insurance business. These three lobbyists amounted to about 7 percent of Patterson's 1961 sample. However, this may be a function of this particularly small sample since business

lobbies and lobbyists were relatively numerous in 1961 (Patterson 1963). This was also true in the mid-1980s (England & Morgan 1993). In fact, since the 1970s, the government of Oklahoma has been increasingly involved in economic development (Hunter 1999; Morgan, England & Humphreys 1991) like many other state governments (Hunter 1999). Stressing economic development would result in more business people serving as lobbyists.

In a related vein, career paths through business were expected to be more frequent among Oklahoma's lobbyists to the extent that the state, in stressing economic development, also stressed the state's infrastructure. Various representatives of business interests such as construction, banking/finance, transportation, communication, utilities, realtors, insurance, etc. have reason to form enduring coalitions as a result (Hula 2007: 118-121, 128-129). That would increase the number of lobbyists with business backgrounds. Business backgrounds for lobbyists are also quite frequent at the national level. More Washington lobbyists represent either trade associations or individual corporations than any other sort of association (Berry & Wilcox 2007, 104). Thus, the prediction of the predominance of business is well grounded for Oklahoma in the early 21st century. A comparatively large proportion of the Oklahoma lobbyists were expected to have business backgrounds. In fact, the Oklahoma data proved that business was the most prevalent occupation route (35 percent, N=56) in the 2006 sample. As may be seen in **Table 1**, business was the career path for 36 percent of the 2006 sample.

HOW EXPERIENCED ARE OKLAHOMA LOBBYISTS?

Probably the best background for lobbying is experience with state government and politics. Thus, past lobbyists have included former state bureaucrats, former legislators, and staff members from public bureaucracies, legislative offices and private associations with legislative liaisons) (Hula, 2007: 58-59; Rosenthal 2001: 33-37; Thomas and Hrebenar 2004:113-116; Berry and Wilcox, 2007. 103). Nationally, state lobbyists average between eight and twelve years experience (Zigler and Baer 1969, 46-48; Rosenthal 2001, 33).

TABLE 1

Oklahoma Lobbyists: Career Paths into Lobbying

1. Business	36%	(56)
2. Politics, government	21%	(33)
3. Educational	13%	(20)
4. Law	11%	(17)
5. Media	6%	(10)
6. Medical	1%	(2)
7. Non Profit	3%	(4)
8. Other	9%	(14)
Total	100%	(156)

Source: Authors' calculations using data from questionnaire.

Forty-five years ago, a little less than half of the Oklahoma lobbyists registered with the Speaker of the House were registered for only one legislative session of two years (Patterson 1963, 78). Our prediction is that Oklahoma's interest representation system is closer in this regard to its current sister states than it is to the Oklahoma system of forty-five years ago.

In fact, the present sample averaged nearly eleven years of total lobbying experience, of which nearly ten years were in Oklahoma. This is very much in keeping with the eight to twelve years experience state lobbyists had elsewhere (Zigler and Baer 1969, 46-48; Rosenthal 2001, 33). Thus, Oklahoma lobbyists are typical of other state lobbyists with regard to years of experience. They are considerably more experienced than were their Oklahoma counterparts of the early 1960s.

They are probably busier as well. Forty-five years ago, a little less than one in five Oklahoma lobbyists (18.6 percent, N=8) worked full-time during a particular legislative session (Patterson 1963, 78). They would have been able to lobby as a side-line to their main employment and still pursue the latter until retirement. On the other hand, 90 percent of the lobbyists surveyed in Oklahoma recently observed "full time or career lobbying instead of part-time lobbying," "more often," or "very often these days" (Data from questionnaire). That strongly suggests that Oklahoma lobbyists are much busier than those who preceded them in

the 1960s. Perhaps this is one effect of the shortened legislative session in Oklahoma and thereby requiring more legislative activity in less time to achieve similar levels of output.

Besides an education in the "school of hard knocks," *how much formal education do Oklahoma lobbyists have*? The expectation was that Oklahoma lobbyists would resemble their colleagues in other states more than their predecessors in Oklahoma. This is because the positive relationship between affluence and education has generally been obtained in Oklahoma and across the United States since the 1960s. Most state lobbyists across the country are college graduates (American League of Lobbyists 2003; The Catholic University of America 2005). A little less than half of the present sample has a bachelor's degree (45 percent) and an equal percent (46 percent) has an advanced degree, such as a masters, doctorate or law degree. One may probably conclude from these patterns that the level of formal preparation for Oklahoma lobbyists is at least that of their peers across the states.

In Patterson's 1961 sample of Oklahoma lobbyists, just less than a quarter (23.2 percent) of the respondents had no more than a high school diploma. In fact, three or nearly 7 percent of the 1961 sample had no more than a grade school education. Only 2 percent (N=3) of this 2006 sample of Oklahoma lobbyists had only a high school education or less.

Five percent (N=8) of the respondent-lobbyists had an associate's degree or the equivalent of some college. In Patterson's 1961 sample,

TABLE 2

Oklahoma Lobbyists: Formal Education

High School	2 %	(3)
Associate Degree	5 %	(8)
Bachelors	45 %	(74)
Masters	31 %	(50)
Doctorate	5 %	(8)
Law degree	10 %	(16)
No response	2 %	(3)
	100 %	(162)

Source: Authors' calculations using data from questionnaire.

27.9 percent (N=12) had "some college." In 2006, 45 percent (74) had a bachelor's degree whereas only 27.9 percent (12) did in the 1961 sample. Finally, 46 percent of the 2006 respondent-lobbyists had a masters (31 percent, or N=50), doctorate (5 percent, or N= 8) or law degree (10 percent, or N=16). That is an advantage of better than 2:1 in graduate or legal educations when compared to the 20.9 percent (N=9) in the 1961 sample (Patterson 1963, 77). One would have to conclude that the differences in formal education are marked between Oklahoma lobbyists today and those in the early 1960s.

Given their experience and formal education, *how much money do Oklahoma lobbyists make?* Oklahoma incomes tend to be lower than incomes in most other states (Oklahoma Office of State Finance 2001, 1-2). It may follow that lobbyists in this state make less money than lobbyists in many other states. At the same time, lobbyist incomes have probably outrun inflation in this state over the forty-five years since the Patterson's study. So Oklahoma lobbyists were expected to make more than their predecessors in Oklahoma but less than their colleagues in other states.

Two qualifications must be made about using these income figures. The first is that income ranges were self-reported in the 1961 sample as well as in the present 2006 sample. However, unless human nature has changed in Oklahoma, accuracy was probably served about as well in 1961 as it was in 2006.

The second qualification is that figures gained via agencies across several cities in each of fifty states are bound to raise some questions about equivalency. Hopefully, such problems occur randomly rather than systematically across the fifty states. Finally, problems are avoided that would result from comparing self-reported figures with figures gained through a common agency source. No such comparisons are made in this study.

In any case, the starting place for comparing lobbyists' gross earnings is Oklahoma City. The figure given is $116,403 (Salary.com's *S*alary Wizard 2007). It would appear, at least to most Oklahomans, that Oklahoma lobbyists make a pretty good living. But did they in the 1960s? Samuel Patterson said they did (Patterson 1963, 76). But, again, that was forty-five years ago.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor, $1.00 in 1961 would be worth $6.74 in 2006 (U.S. Bureau

of Labor Statistics 2007). Patterson's ranges for Oklahoma lobbyists in 1961 are given as follows:

less than $4,000 (in 2006 less than $26,969.90)
$4,000 to $6,000 (in 2006 less than$40,454.85)
$6,000 to $8,000 (in 2006 less than $53,939.80)
$8,000 to $10,000 (in 2006 less than$67,424.75)
$10,000 to $20,000 (in 2006 less than $134,849.50) and
more than $20,000 (in 2006 more than $134,849.50)

Author's calculations are derived from figures from Patterson's work in 1963 and converted to 1961 figures using the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics "Inflation Calculator" website service.

The income ranges for the 2006 Oklahoma lobbyists are given in **Table 3** along with what the maximum for each range would have been in the 1960s. What may be seen is that the maximum of $134,849.50, or more, earned by 1961 lobbyists is less than half the maximum earned today in hard dollars (**Table 3**: $300,000). In short, Oklahoma lobbyist salaries have grown about twice as fast as inflation and Oklahoma lobbyists in 2006 made about twice what they did in 1961.

How high are lobbyist salaries these days compared with their peers in Washington, D.C. and in other state capitals? The average gross income for a lobbyist in Washington, D.C. is $136,919. In the states around Oklahoma the standard is lower. In Little Rock, Arkansas, the gross income for a lobbyist is $115,176, in Denver, Colorado, $133,643, in Topeka, Kansas, $119,472, in the Jefferson City, Missouri, vicinity $124,464, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, $120,331 and in Austin, Texas, $122,172 (salary.com's *Salary Wizard* 2007). The mean for these seven states is $121,666. At $116,403, lobbyists in Oklahoma City average a little less than they do in the surrounding states.

The average gross annual income for lobbyists in all state capitals is $126,14 (author's calculations from Salary.com's Salary Wizard 2007). That is somewhat more than the regional average ($121,666) and appreciably more than Oklahoma lobbyists ($116,403). In fact, Oklahoma City lobbyists are tied with lobbyists in Helena, Montana, for 43rd in yearly income (Salary.com's Salary Wizard 2007). Thus, only six states have lobbyists working in their capital who earn less than those in Oklahoma City. Thus, the overall picture for the income of lobbyists in Oklahoma is, as predicted, somewhat less than their colleagues and considerably more than their predecessors.

TABLE 3

Oklahoma Lobbyists:
Annual Income Ranges in 1961 and 2006 Dollars

2006 Income Ranges % =	(N=)	Income Ranges in in 2006 Dollars	Range Maximums in 1961 Dollars
28.6	(38)	Less Than (<) $ 50,000	< $ 7,418. 40
32.3	(43)	$ 51,000 - $100,000	$ 14,836. 80
15.8	(21)	$101,000 - $150,000	$ 22,255. 19
9.8	(13)	$151,000 - $200,000	$ 29,673. 59
6.0	(8)	$201,000 - $250,000	$ 37,091. 99
2.2	(3)	$251,000 - $300,000	$ 44,510. 39
5.3	(7)	More than (>) $300,000	> $ 44,510. 39
100.0	(133)		

Source: Authors' calculations using response data from questionnaire and data from Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics in "Inflation Calculator"

Note. The income ranges given in Table 3 include only those respondent lobbyists who receive more than expenses. If those who receive no more than their expenses were included they would number 14 and represent 21 percent of the entire sample of 163.

WHAT ABOUT DEMOGRAPHICS SUCH AS AGE, GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY FOR OKLAHOMA LOBBYISTS?

One would expect to find Oklahoma lobbyists to be in their middle years because lobbying is usually a second career (Berry and Wilcox 2007, 102-104). They, like their colleagues at the state and national levels, are probably at the age at which people reach a peak or a plateau professionally, approximately their early fifties. For the same reason it was probably also true in Oklahoma during the 1960s.

In the 1960s the Oklahoma lobbyist was typically slightly less than forty-eight years of age (Patterson 1963, 77). Ages were not given in the 1993 study of lobbying in Oklahoma (England & Morgan 1993, 263-284). In the current sample of Oklahoma lobbyists, the average age

is just over fifty-one. The age norms across the interim forty-five years are therefore close.

How old are lobbyists in other states? It is difficult to establish an average age for lobbyists because it is difficult to find "typical" lobbyists (Mahood 1990, 53). However, one characteristic that is typical of lobbyists is that they are in their second career (Berry and Wilcox 2007, 102). Fifty-one years of age, the norm for Oklahoma lobbyists, is probably a reasonable norm for lobbyists elsewhere (Nownes 2001, 121). This is because by fifty-one an individual is old enough to have had one career and young enough to begin another (Mahood 1990, 53-55). Thus lobbyists have tended to be middle-aged across states and, in Oklahoma, across time as well.

Lobbying has been considered a "man's world" (Berry and Wilcox 2007, 106). There were no females among Samuel Patterson's 1961 sample of forty-three Oklahoma lobbyists (Patterson 1963, 75). In one early 1980s survey, only 22 percent of state lobbyists were female (Schlozman 1990). Similarly, in the early 1990s, between 20 and 25 percent of the lobbyists in northeastern or western states were women. Only about 12 to 15 percent of the lobbyists were female in the southern states (Thomas and Hrebenar 1991, 162). By 2001, the proportion of female lobbyists across states was still estimated to be about 20 percent (Thomas and Hrebenar 2004, 116; Rosenthal 2001, 26). If there is a range to be taken from these studies, it is that between 20 and 25 percent of state lobbyists are female. It is therefore hypothesized that Oklahoma now has more female lobbyists than it used to and is close to the current 20 to 25 percent estimate in other states.

Approximately 80 percent of the respondent-lobbyists in 2006 observed female or minority lobbyists "more often" or "very often" (Data from the 2006 questionnaire). The male to female ratio of lobbyists in Oklahoma was 72 percent (N=113) to 28 percent (N=44). As predicted, lobbying in Oklahoma is much less of a "man's world" than it was in the 1960s. Moreover, it compares well with what has been found or estimated to be true in recent studies about state lobbyists (Thomas and Hrebenar 2004, 116; Rosenthal 2001, 26).

Minorities are still underrepresented in lobbying across the states (Rosenthal 2001, 26). This was probably true of the 1960s in Oklahoma although the 1961 Patterson data does not give a percentage for minority lobbyists. Neither does the England and Morgan study of 1993.

It is expected that Oklahoma is no exception to the generalization of minority under representation in state lobbying. What was found in the 2006 data was that about 2 percent (N=3) of the lobbyist respondents were Native-American. However, Native-Americans comprise about 6 percent of the Oklahoma electorate according to some sources (O'Neil 2006, 17) and about 8 percent of Oklahoma's population (U.S. Census Bureau 2006). Similarly, only .006 percent of the respondent-lobbyists was African-American (N=1) whereas the African-American percentage is a little less than 6 percent of the Oklahoma electorate (O'Neil 2006, 17). African-Americans comprise nearly 8 percent of the population of Oklahoma (U.S. Census Bureau 2006). So the percentages of Native and African-American lobbyists are somewhat lower than their percentages in the state's electorate and lower still when compared with their percentages in the general population. It should be noted, however, that the small numbers of minority lobbyists in a sample of only 163 respondents reduces the reliability of these percentages. Just a few more minority lobbyists would change the picture considerably.

WHAT OF THE IDEOLOGY AND PARTISANSHIP OF OKLAHOMA LOBBYISTS?

The following discussion of findings on ideology and partisanship among Oklahoma lobbyists is based to some extent on the results in a prior publication entitled "Profiles and Stereotypes of Lobbyists in Oklahoma" authored by two of the present authors (Davis and Metla) along with OSU undergraduate Josh Herlan. It was published in *Oklahoma Politics* in 2006.

There were no figures found on the ideological orientations of Oklahoma lobbyists in the 1960s or the 1980s and 1990s. There are also few, if any, studies of ideological predispositions of lobbyists in other states. Such studies that may be available would supply very few pieces of the puzzle. However, another reference point does exist. The ideological predispositions of the respondent-lobbyists may be compared with data about the electorate in Oklahoma.

By all indications, Oklahomans have not changed their conservative predispositions much over the years. The authors assert that the

rise in national political power of religious fundamentalism that began in the early 1980s served to reinforced Oklahoma's "traditionalistic political culture" (Elazar 1984) by increasing the emphasis on social conservatism. It is further asserted that participation in an increasingly powerful Sunbelt has also served to reinforce conservatism in Oklahoma. At the same time, that participation began to nudge Oklahomans away from their traditional Democratic preference toward a preference for an even more conservative Republicanism. This shift in party preference became increasingly evident during and since the Reagan years of the early and middle 1980s.

About 45 percent of the Oklahomans surveyed in a study in the middle 1980s saw themselves as conservative. Nearly 40 percent saw themselves as moderate or middle-of-the-road and only about 15 percent as liberal (Wright, Erikson and McIver 1985, 469-481). By 2004, 43 percent of a sample of Oklahomans described themselves as conservative, 44 percent as moderates, and 13 percent as liberal (CNN.com 2004).

OSU undergraduate Timothy O'Neil employed two measures of ideology in a survey of Oklahoma voters in 2006. One measure dealt with social issues and the other with economic issues. The results of both measures were quite similar and similar to results of other studies of Oklahoma as well. About 44 to 45 percent of the responses to both of O'Neil's measures were either "very conservative" or "somewhat conservative." Forty-six to 48 percent of the respondents identified themselves as in the middle or "slightly conservative," "middle-of-the-road" or "slightly liberal." Only 6 to 9 percent of the Oklahoma electorate in the O'Neil sample of 2004 saw themselves as "somewhat liberal" or "very liberal" (2006). If these several sources tell a story over the last several decades, it is that Oklahomans remain fairly evenly divided between political conservatism and moderation. If there is any movement at all over time among Oklahomans, it is the slight shift away from liberalism toward a "middle-of-the-road" or moderate position.

The authors expected Oklahoma lobbyists to reflect the ideological patterns of the Oklahoma electorate because pluralist and democratic processes occur in the same conservative to moderate political culture. As noted earlier, respondent-lobbyists report an average of nearly ten years of lobbying experience in Oklahoma. Consequently, the authors believed that Oklahoma lobbyists would reflect an Oklahoma electorate

of several years ago. Oklahomans have not changed much ideologically. Both self-identified conservatives and self-identified moderates have percentages in the low or mid-forties in the electorate. Only 9 to 15 percent considered themselves liberal (Wright, Erikson and McIver 1985, 469-481; CNN.com, 2004; O'Neil, 2006).

What did the data show? Some 38 percent of the respondent-lobbyists saw themselves as either "very conservative" or "somewhat conservative." That is somewhat less conservative than the electorate's 43 to 45 percent. Forty-six percent (N=74) of the lobbyists saw themselves in the middle politically, or as "slightly conservative," "middle-of-the-road," or "slightly liberal." Similarly, forty percent of the Oklahoma electorate in 1985, 44 percent in 2004, and 48 percent in 2006 identified themselves as "moderate" or in the middle (Davis, Metla, and Herlan 2006, 2-4). Thus, a similar proportion of lobbyists and voters saw themselves as moderate, especially among the most recent surveys.

Some 16 percent of the lobbyist respondents described themselves as "somewhat" or "very liberal." Only 6 or 9 percent of the O'Neil sample saw themselves as social or economic liberals (2006). The earliest sample of Oklahomans from the mid-1980s put the percentage of liberals at very nearly what it is for Oklahoma lobbyists today, about 15-16 percent (Davis, Metla & Herlan 2006, 2-4). However, self-identified liberals supply a shrinking percentage of voter samples taken since the turn of the 21st century.

Thus, Oklahoma lobbyists were expected to be less conservative and possibly more liberal than the Oklahoma electorate today. The proportions in the political middle are similar among voters and lobbyists. Why are lobbyists less conservative and more liberal than voters? Perhaps as advocates of diverse interests, lobbyists may be more likely than voters to take a liberal position on one issue and a conservative position on the next because they are less likely to be set in their political ways. Lobbyists in this sample do appear to be less inclined than voters to be predisposed toward a left or right attitude and, by the same token, more disposed toward either. On balance, the hypothesis of close ideological resemblance should be rejected.

While the Patterson 1961 study did not have self-designated ideological orientations, lobbyists did identify themselves as allegiant to either a major party or were Independents. According to Patterson's 1961 sample, 76.8 percent of the Oklahoma lobbyists considered themselves

Democrats. Only 9.3 percent thought of themselves as Republican and 6.9 percent were Independent (Patterson 1963, 78). Many conservative Democrats have become conservative Republicans in Oklahoma (Davis, Byrraju, and Metla 2004, 69).

Since Patterson's study in the early 1960s, the United States has moved toward a nearly universal two-party competition. Even the formerly one-party Democratic South has, since President Johnson's Great Society of the 1960s, moved toward two-party competiton, albeit with a Republican advantage. For reasons that have more to do with religious fundamentalism, President Reagan and Sunbelt politics, Oklahoma has moved from a two-party state (Bibby and Holbrook 2004, 88) leaning toward the Democrats, to a two-party system (Hershey 2007, 2) leaning toward the Republicans.

In the mid-1980s, almost 50 percent of a sample of 915 Oklahomans identified themselves as Democrats. A little less than one-quarter were self-identified Independents and a little more than a quarter were Republican (Wright, Erikson, and McIver 1985, 469-481). Exit polls of 1,577 Oklahoma voters in the presidential elections of 2004 revealed significantly fewer Democrats, 40 percent, and Independents, 16 percent. However, there were significantly more Republicans, 43 percent, (CNN.com 2004) among Oklahoma voters. Symptomatic of these shifts in voting predispositions was the Republicans winning the Oklahoma House of Representatives in 2004, and many observers expect the Oklahoma Senate to follow shortly.

Given this latter day view of party history in Oklahoma, the authors expected the lobbyists surveyed to resemble the Oklahoma electorate of several years ago more than the electorate of today. At the same time, today's lobbyists were expected to prove much less Democratic than Oklahoma lobbyists in 1961. This relatively short lag behind the partisanship of the electorate was expected among Oklahoma lobbyists because, again, they average nearly ten years on the job.

The prediction in this case was that lobbyists would be more Democratic and less Republican than the Oklahoma voters today. At the same time, today's lobbyists in Oklahoma were expected to be less Democratic and more Republican than Oklahoma lobbyists were in the early 1960s.

The data did indicate that Oklahoma lobbyists today are still Democratic, but not nearly as Democratic as they were in the early 1960s. Some

45.6 percent of the respondent-lobbyists saw themselves as "strong" Democrats or "not-so-strong" Democrats whereas 31.4 percent regard themselves as "strong" or "not-so-strong" Republicans. Independents, including those with slight leanings toward either the Democratic or Republican parties, comprised 22.4 percent of this sample (Davis, Metla, and Herlan 2006, 2-4).

It may be worth noting that there are more strong Democrats than strong Republicans among today's lobbyists. Strong partisanship among the Democratic lobbyists may indicate retrenchment within a political culture marked otherwise by a shift toward the Republican Party. It is probably true that the shift toward independency among Democratic lobbyists is more pronounced among the not-so-strong Democrats than among the strong Democratic identifiers. It may be that Republican House leaders would like to begin working with more lobbyists from their own party. In any case, Democratic partisanship is still prevalent among Oklahoma lobbyists although, as with the Oklahoma electorate, this is probably changing toward independency and Republicanism.

Having characterized Oklahoma lobbyists demographically and politically to some extent, it may prove helpful to consider several major questions about the interests they represent. State interest constellations are not nearly as complex as the enormous and shifting constellations of

TABLE 4

OKLAHOMA LOBBYISTS: PARTISANSHIP

Strong Republican	20.5%	(32)	31.4%	(49)
Not-So-Strong Republican	10.9%	(17)		
Independent leaning Republican	9.6%	(15)	22.4%	(35)
Pure Independent (no partisanship)	7.1%	(11)		
Independent, leaning Democratic	5.8%	(9)		
Not-So-Strong Democrat	17.3%	(27)	45.6%	(71)
Strong Democrat	28.2%	(44)		
Other political party	0.6%	(1)	.6%	(1)
Total	100.0%	(156)	100.0%	(156)

Source: Authors' calculations using response data from questionnaire.

interests in the nation's capital (Ainsworth 2002, Shaiko 2005, 99-118; 5-16; Berry and Wilcox 2007, 131-148). Given the sheer numbers and the resulting diversity of interests, a rough balance between competing organized groups is often asserted about group power in Washington D.C. This balance may be tipped temporarily in the direction of the Republican or Democratic Party if either has won a majority in both congressional houses and controls the presidency as well.

However, as noted, interests are neither that numerous nor that diverse within individual states. A balance of any sort is much less likely therefore. Instead, the tendency is for a set of the most influential interests to predominate at the state level. However, that does not preclude some shifts in the composition of the minority of interests that tends to dominate group politics over the decades.

The relevant literature suggests that shifting minorities of interests do, in fact, often dominate lobbying within states (Hrebenar and Thomas 1993). For instance, business, education, health care, banking/finance, utilities, insurance, professionals, local governments, and farm interests are often ranked among the top ten or so interests in most states (Thomas and Hrebenar 2004, 119).

The relative handful of interests that have changed their composition slightly over the years had been typical of Oklahoma historically. However, some jockeying for influence is inevitable among competing interests (England and Morgan 1993, 263-267). Political power did shift during the latter half of the 20th century in Oklahoma. Patterson (1963, 81) found in 1961 that the interests employing the most lobbyists were business, labor, agriculture, government, and professionals. Perhaps by other indicators, oil and gas would have been found to be particularly influential in Oklahoma during the 1960s. However, energy lobbyists were not among the most frequently found lobbyists in Patterson's 1961 sample.

England and Morgan note that in 1982 Oklahoma ranked 5th nationally in crude petroleum production and 3rd in natural gas production. It was ranked 5th nationally in the value of mineral fuels to the state (England and Morgan 1993, 264-265). One would therefore suppose that petroleum was among the most influential interests in Oklahoma during the 1980s. However, no study specifically puts petroleum there. Moreover, the England/Morgan theme was that Oklahoma's interest community was in transition during the 1980s. They found business,

realtors/insurance, banking/finance, petroleum/mining, and education to be among the best represented interests in Oklahoma at that time. Furthermore, they add that Oklahoma legislators felt the six most powerful interests were education, labor, professional groups, banking/finance, public employees, and oil (England and Morgan 1993, 270). England and Morgan wrote in 1993 that education, labor, professional groups, and banking/finance were among the most powerful groups in Oklahoma politics. Oil and gas, while still powerful, did not dominate interest group politics in Oklahoma during the 1980s and 1990s because the state's economy was becoming more manufacturing and service oriented like the rest of the nation (England and Morgan 1993, 282).

In other states (Thomas and Hrebenar 2004, 119) and at the national level (Birnbaum, 1997; Timewarner *Newsroom* 1999) petroleum is powerful but not as powerful relative to other interests as it has traditionally been in Oklahoma. It may be that the continuing nationalization of Oklahoma's economy has left petroleum a player but not a dominant player as England and Morgan suggested during the 1990s. Nevertheless, international developments that shorten the supply of oil for the U.S. may, along with only intrastate regulation of oil prices in an oil-producing state, raise issues of gas prices, regulation, and tax burdens. That would increase oil's lobbying role perhaps to the point of being a dominant interest in Oklahoma again.

Besides petroleum, gaming was expected to be unusually powerful in Oklahoma. According to one study, gaming, like petroleum, is not quite in the top twenty most influential interests across American states (Thomas & Hrebenar, 2004, 119-120). But Oklahoma is different. Oklahoma has more gambling casinos than might be expected in a traditionalistic/fundamentalist state. In fact, it is fifth in the number of gambling casinos among the forty-six states that allow gambling (*World Casino Directory* 2007).

It is also second to California in the number of Native-American residents and third behind Alaska and New Mexico in the proportion of its population that is Native American (StateMaster.com 2006). The connection between gambling and Native-Americans is tribal sovereignty (Kussel 1996; whitehouse.gov 2004, 2). Most Native-American lands across the country are held in trust by the federal government. As a result, negotiations for types of gambling and other activities are between the tribes and the national government. Moreover, in Oklahoma, the degree

of tribal sovereignty is greater than for most tribes elsewhere. Tribal control under such legal and governmental circumstances is greater so activities such as gaming are more common (whitehouse.gov 2004, 2) in Oklahoma.

Gaming, like petroleum, is at the lower end of the influence spectrum in most states. However, it is expected to be much higher in Oklahoma because of the extra degree of tribal sovereignty that Native-Americans enjoy in this state and the latitude it provides in financial enterprise.

The authors expected to find minority rule in Oklahoma's group politics. They also expected to find that influential lobbies in other states were likely to be influential in Oklahoma as well–the two exceptions being oil and gaming. These would include such interests as business, health care, education, banking/finance, transportation/communication, utilities, realtors/insurance, local governments, and possibly, agriculture.

It might surprise some readers that the authors expected agriculture to be at the lower half of the top ten or so most influential interests in Oklahoma. Oklahoma is often seen as a major producer of food and fiber as well as energy. Although historically powerful, agriculture was expected to be less so today because of the growing resemblance of the Oklahoma economy to the national economy that England and Morgan wrote about in the 1990s. In addition, government subsidies to agriculture in Europe and elsewhere, together with a policy of cheap food in the United States, might serve to keep food and fiber prices low in Oklahoma. At the same time productivity per farmer has increased in Oklahoma as it has elsewhere. Inevitably, cheap food and fiber production along with increased productivity would reduce the number of farmers and, just as inevitably, the political clout of agricultural in Oklahoma.

Although labor was listed among the most influential interests in Oklahoma during the 1960s and 80s, the state passed a right-to-work-law in 2000 that went into effect in September of 2001. This law has had the effect of reducing the proportion of workers who are union members (Denholm 2007). Thus the power of labor has been reduced if anything more dramatically than that of farmers.

Group influence was indicated by two means in this study. The first indicator was the number of lobbyists who recalled lobbying for an interest. The second was a group's reputation for influence among lobbyists. **Table 5** provides the total of recalled instances of lobbying (N=281) for an interest. This includes recollections of lobbying by

TABLE 5

Oklahoma Lobbies: Clients Recalled by Lobbyists

Interest	Rank	No. of Examples	Interest	Rank	No. of Examples
1. Health Care	1	38	16. City/Co Officials	16	5
2. Business	2	34	17. Gaming	17	4
3. Education	3	27	18. Churches	18	3
4. Petroleum/Mining	4	25	19. Human Services	18	3
5. Transportation/Communication	5	23	20. Senior Citizens	18	3
6. Banking/Finance	6	18	21. Political/Public	18	3
7. Realtors/Insurance	7	14	22. Waste Management	18	3
8. Agriculture	7	14	23. Aviation	23	2
9. Professions	9	10	24. Public Employees	23	2
10. Utilities	9	10	25. Consumers		0
11. Industrial	11	8	26. Hotel/Motel		0
12. Minorities	11	8	27. Press/Media		0
13. Construction	13	7	28. Restaurants		0
14. Environmental	13	7	29. Wildlife/Hunting		0
15. Labor	13	7	30. Women		0

Source: Authors' calculations based on using response data from questionnaire.

"company" or single client lobbyists (N=111) or by "hired guns" or multiple client lobbyists (N=170).

As expected, petroleum was among those interests that employed the most lobbyists in Oklahoma. In fact, it was listed fourth behind health care, business and education. However, gaming was not among the leading interests in political influence by this measure. Perhaps the second measure of group influence, the reputation for influence among lobbyists, will shed some light on the influence patterns found via the first measure.

All but two interests, gaming and churches, of the top ten "gainers" in **Table 6** are also among the top ten employers of lobbyists in **Table 5**. Clearly, the top employers of lobbyists are also likely to be among those interests considered by lobbyists to be gaining power and influence. The basic hypothesis about a minority of interests predominating politically clearly holds for Oklahoma. By a wide margin, lobbyists rank "petroleum/mining" first among interests gaining power and influence in Oklahoma.

Also, as originally predicted, gaming proved unusually influential in Oklahoma landing in second place in reputed influence. Gaming was followed closely by education. Health care and business tied for fourth. The interests rising in power in 2006 are oil and gas, education, health care, and business according to these data in **Table 5**.

But why was gaming nowhere near the peak among those interests employing the most lobbyists (**Table 5**)? Gaming is seen by lobbyists to be among the most influential interests in Oklahoma but it does not employ the most lobbyists. Perhaps gaming uses the resource of campaign contributions more than the resource of lobbying personnel. There is some evidence of this. While gaming is sometimes controlled by the federal government, state governments do have say over such aspects as the classes of gambling that may go on within their state. It therefore behooves gaming supporters to be active politically and, once again, their lobbying resource of choice is money or financial resources. Gaming interests on particular tribal lands are known to give generously to such things as research on diabetes in the state hospital complex in Oklahoma City (Robert England, personal communication, September 12, 2007). Such generosity builds good will, networks political alliances, and more indirect lobbying for gaming.

In the present study, five lobbyists recalled lobbying for gaming interests. While five is a small number, all five gave the same "very often" response to reliance on financial resources. The political

TABLE 6

Oklahoma Lobbies: Interests Lobbyists See Gaining Power

Interest	Rank	No. of Examples	Interest	Rank	No. of Examples
1. Petroleum/mining	1	67	16. Aviation	15	5
2. Gaming	2	49	17. Construction	15	5
3. Education	3	47	18. City/Co. Officials	15	5
4. Health Care	4	39	19. Professions	18	4
5. Business	4	39	20. Political/Public	19	4
6. Transportation/Communication	6	19	21. Consumers	19	4
7. Churches	7	18	22. Human Service	21	3
8. Banking/Finance	8	14	23. Wildlife/Hunting	21	3
9. Utilities	8	14	24. Industrial	21	3
10. Agriculture	10	12	25. Press/Media	24	2
11. Senior Citizens	11	10	26. Restaurants	24	2
12. Realtors/Insurance	12	9	27. Hotel/Motel	24	2
13. Environmental	13	6	28. Labor		0
14. Minorities	13	6	29. Waste Management Management		0
15. Public Employees	15	5	30. Women		0

Source: Authors' calculations based on using response data from questionnaire.

resource of "money" was defined in the questionnaire as "political fund-raising and contributions to campaigns and other political activities, etc." At sixty percent, a substantial part of the remaining sample did too but not to the same extent (calculations derived from data).

The same five were divided three ways regarding the lobbying resource of "leadership and access," such as the "number of contacts, political credibility, and skills in persuasion, organizing, motivating, framing issues, public relations, timing, strategizing, etc. At the same time, ninety-three percent of the entire sample believed that reliance on "leadership and access" was emphasized "more often" or "very often." Thus, the little evidence that exists suggests that advocates of gaming interests are indeed more inclined to rely on financial resources than on large numbers of lobbying personnel (calculations derived from data).

The obverse of who is gaining influence is who is losing influence. It was predicted that labor would be seen to be losing power in Oklahoma in light of the "right-to-work" law that went into effect September 25, 2001. Education is considered second among those interests losing power in **Table 8**. However, education was also fifth among those gaining power in **Table 7**. The same respondent-lobbyist wrote "*education (as a whole)*" was gaining influence. But "*education (OEA),*" the Oklahoma Education Association, was losing influence (completed questionnaires). Additionally, any lobbyist-respondent who wrote in "OEA" also put education among the interests losing power. Thus the contradiction between education gaining and losing power may be more apparent than real. It may well be that the loss in influence for education is applicable only to the union-like education organization such as the OEA, but not to the interest of education as a whole.

Agriculture is ranked ninth among interests gaining power and fourth among interests losing power. That agriculture is seen to be both gaining and losing power might be a consequence of agriculture declining from what once was a powerful position (England & Morgan 1993, 266, 269, 280-281). Additionally, it may be an artifact of most respondent-lobbyists representing, and thus considering, just a handful of interests.

TABLE 7

Oklahoma Lobbies: Interests Lobbyist See Losing Power

Interest	Rank	No. of Responses	Interest	Rank	No. of Responses
1. Labor	1	79	15. City/Country officials	14	7
2. Education (OEA)	2	34	16. Wildlife and Hunting	16	6
3. Public Employees	3	30	17. Professions	16	6
4. Consumers	4	28	18. Industrial	18	5
5. Agriculture	5	26	19. Waste Management	18	5
6. Environmental	6	18	20. Realtors/Insurance	20	4
7. Minorities	6	18	21. Utilities	20	4
8. Senior Citizens	6	18	22. Banking/Finance	22	3
9. Human Services	9	15	23. Construction	22	3
10. Health Care	10	11	24. Gaming	24	2
11. Aviation	11	9	25. Business	25	1
12. Transportation/Communication	11	9	26. Petroleum/Mining		0
13. Churches	13	8	27. Hotel/Motel		0
14. Press/Media	14	7			

Source: Authors' calculations based on using response data from questionnaire.

WHAT ABOUT LOBBYING ITSELF FROM THE LOBBYIST'S POINT OF VIEW?

The four reference points used to this point were not used in answering questions about lobbying itself. Perhaps some of these cues could have supplied some means for evaluating changes in how lobbying is practiced in Oklahoma but not nearly so well as Oklahoma lobbyists themselves. The coded results from lobbyists writing about the biggest changes in lobbying seemed to fall into three large categories of change. The authors called these three categories of change "Political Culture and Contextual Changes," "Changes in Players and Roles" and "Changes in How Lobbyists Lobby."

Oklahoma now limits legislators to a total of twelve years in the legislature. Term limits were by far the most often mentioned changes in the lobbying context (MSNBC 2006). Of the twenty-seven mentions of term limits, fifteen were negative, and another seven were mixed. Only three lobbyists thought term limits had a beneficial effect (**Table 8A,** row 1). Another fairly clear pattern emerges in **Table 8A,** row 3. Nine lobbyists felt the public's opinion of lobbying was worse. No one thought it had improved. Similarly, only five reactions were volunteered by lobbyists about motivation in lobbying these days but the reactions are unidirectional. All five were pessimistic in what they volunteered about self-service among lobbyists (**Table 8A**, row 7) in the more partisan context of lobbying these days.

Many of the other reactions volunteered by lobbyists produced ambivalent results. For instance, four lobbyists felt negatively about the effects of the greater emphasis on information, expertise, and technology in lobbying (**Table 8A,** row 2). Six felt positively because, as some noted, supplying prepared information in testimony or in hard copy to legislators is time-saving as opposed to "schmoozing," for instance. The remainder of the responses yielded either mixed positive and negative responses or did not evaluate the effects of more reliance on information and expertise.

Lobbyists felt professionalism and ethics had improved but by only six to four. To this close division must be added a mixture of pros and cons or unknown effects in the minds of other lobbyists. Thus, the overall picture of professionalism and ethics is not clear. However, even if they did produce mixed evaluations, thirteen respondent-lobbyists volunteered

Table 8A

Oklahoma Lobbying: ***Political Culture and Contextual Changes***

	(Please write on the reverse side of this page) What do you think are the biggest changes in lobbying in Oklahoma over the past decade or so?	Negative - Responses	Negative & Positive - / + Responses	Positive + Responses	Effects Unknown ?	Row Totals N =
1	*Term Limits* - How term limits influence lobbying	15	7	3	2	27
2	*Information/Expertise/ Technology* – Influence lobbying culture how?	4	1	6	2	13
3	*Public attitude better/ worse* – Changed how?	9	3		1	13
4	*Professionalism/Ethics* – How do they affect lobbying culture?	4	1	6	2	13
5	*Folkways/Good Ole Boys* – loss changed lobbying how?	2		6		8
6	*Fairness*-fairness of treatment of lobbyist by changes	2	1	3		6
7	*Self Service* - How lobbyists serve their own needs.	5				5
8A Totals	Totals Per Column =	41	13	24	7	85
Percents	Column Percentages =	48.2	15.3	28.2	8.2	99.9*

Source: Authors' calculations based on response data from questionnaire.
*99.9% due to rounding error.

observations of some sort about professionalism. If these thirteen suggest any increase in professional consciousness, perhaps it is related to the demise of the "good ol' boy" culture that used to involve networks of long-term legislator/lobbyist friendships that relied on extra-informational inducements such as gifts, food, liquor, and even women on occasion (Thomas and Hrebenar 2004, 112; Rosenthal 2001, 38). The decline of the good ol' boy may be a consequence of the obvious, for example, more female lobbyists. It may also be due to the turnover in legislators required by term limits. In any case, only two lobbyists were disappointed with the passing of traditional folkways whereas six were pleased about it (**Table 8A**, row 5). The rest gave mixed evaluations or mentioned with no evaluation.

Some evaluations of specific changes were offered in numbers that were too small to produce reliable cell populations especially if the results were not unidirectional. For instance, only six lobbyists mentioned the fairness of the system (**Table 8A,** row 6). However, the summary patterns toward the biggest changes in the political culture or context are clearer than most individual row patterns. Forty-eight percent (N=41) of a total of 85 assessments of political culture or contextual changes were negative. Only twenty-four assessments, 28 percent, were positive while the remainder were mixed, 15 percent, or mentioned without evaluation (8 percent) (**Table 8A**, row 11, "Totals").

The next set of reactions to changes in lobbying were grouped under the heading *Changes in Players and Roles*. As may be seen in **Table 8B**, the most frequently mentioned change in actors and roles is the ex-legislator lobbyist (**Table 8B,** row 8). A little more than half of the lobbyist-respondents wrote negative assessments of this change in players. None spoke in positive terms. Two gave mixed assessments and three withheld judgment although they did mentioned this change in actors.

The effect of term limits has been to increase turnover in the legislature. What were the effects of losing the most experienced legislators and gaining the least experienced? Like the reactions to the ex-legislator lobbyists, the reactions to new legislators were negative on balance (**Table 8B**, row 9). Possibly there was a reaction against ex-legislator lobbyists by some respondent-lobbyists because of the competitive advantages ex-legislators would have in experience and personal networks. While the ex-legislator lobbyist brings know-how

TABLE 8B

Oklahoma Lobbying: Changes in Actors and Roles in Lobbying

	What do you think are the biggest changes in lobbying in Oklahoma over the past decade or so?	Negative Responses -	Negative & Positive Responses - / +	Positive Responses +	Effects Unknown ?	Row Totals N =
8	*Ex-legislator lobbyists* - affects lobbying & institutional memory?	6	2		3	11
9	*New Legislators* – Effect on lobbyist and lobbying?	6	1	2		9
10	*Republican Majority* - Affects lobbying how?	3	1	2	1	7
11	*Parties/Partisanship Power* - Influences lobbying how?	5				5
12	*PACs* - How Political Action Committees affect lobbying.	4				4
13	*Oil & Gas* - Interest affects lobbying how?	2		1		3
14	*Public Interest Groups*- Affect lobbying how?	1		2		3
8B Totals	Totals Per Column =	27	4	7	4	42
Percent	Column Percentage =	64.3	9.5	16.7	9.5	100

Source: Authors' calculations based on using response data from questionnaire.

and contacts to lobbying, the new legislator brings neither. The former may be seen as too influential while the latter is too subject to the influence of others. For whatever reasons, however, neither seems to suit the lobbyists.

The reaction to the relatively new Republican majority in the House also met with mixed reactions (**Table 8B**, row 10). However, reactions were uniformly against the power of parties and partisanship in lobbying (**Table 8B**, row 11). That may be a consequence of all lobbyists, whether Republican, Democrat or Independent, regretting the burdensome effects of party divisiveness on good-faith brokering. In both cases dealing with partisanship, the cell populations are small.

As may be seen in **Table 8B**, rows 12, 13 and 14, few lobbyists feel particularly concerned with the power of PACs (political action committees), oil and gas, or public interest groups, though all three were mentioned. As with **Table 8A**, the negative to positive ratios for column totals and percentages clearly demonstrate more negative than positive evaluations to changes in lobbying. Twenty-seven of forty-two reactions (64 percent) to changes in actors and roles were negative. Only seven (17 percent) were positive. The remaining reactions that were mixed plus those mentioned without evaluation were about 10 percent each. Thus, again, the summary of negative versus positive reactions clearly leaned negative.

Table 8C, row 15 of involves lobbyist reactions to changes in relationships (Rosenthal 2001, 108-111). With less time and greater partisanship, relationships may be strained more frequently and seen in a more negative light these days. In fact, that seems to be the case. Six lobbyists volunteered negative comments about personal and professional relations in lobbying. There were no positive comments. Similarly, there is a decided tendency to see competition and conflict with one's lobbyist colleagues more often these days (**Table 8C**, row 16).

The increase in the number of lobbyists in and of itself does not seem to be a source of complaint (**Table 8C,** row 17) (England and Morgan 1993, 267, 270). Moreover, the greater number of women and minority lobbyists seems to be welcomed (**Table 8C**, row 18). Higher salaries and more access to money gets mixed reactions from lobbyists **(Table 8C,** row 19). Perhaps this division is a consequence of which side of the money the respondent-lobbyist is on (Rosenthal 2001, 30).

TABLE 8C

Oklahoma Lobbying: Changes in How Lobbyists Lobby

	What do you think are the biggest changes in lobbying in Oklahoma over the past decade or so?	Negative Responses -	Negative & Positive Responses - / +	Positive Responses +	Effects Unknown ?	Row Totals N =
15	*Relationships* – personal & professional relations affect lobbying how?	6	1		2	9
16	*Lobbyist Competition/ Conflicts* – Affect efficiency of lobbyists?	7	1		1	9
17	*Lobbyist Numbers* – How number of lobbyists affects the process	1	1	3	1	6
18	*Minority* – Effectiveness of women and minority lobbyists	1		4	1	6
19	*Money* – How has salary or access to money affected lobbyist's power	1	1	1	2	5
20	*Preparation & Experience* - alter effectiveness of a lobbyists?	4		1		5
21	*Access* . . . of lobbyists to decision-makers	2		3		5
22	*Strategizing* – Hinder or promote effectiveness of lobbying?	1		3		4
8C Totals	Totals per Column =	23	4	15	7	49
Percent	Column Percentages =	47	8	31	14	100
8A+B+C	A + B + C					
Totals	Column Totals =	94	21	46	18	179
Percents	Column Percents =	52	12	26	10	100

Source: Authors' calculations using response data from questionnaire.

Somewhat surprisingly, the advantage lobbyists have over new legislators in preparation and experience is not favorably received (row 20). Perhaps that is a consequence of the extra effort now required to be convincing to inexperienced legislators. At the same time, the access to decision-makers gets mixed reviews (row 21) while opportunities for strategizing with legislators seem to be more favorably received than not (row 22).

What may be seen on the last row (8A + B + C) are the totals for all columns as well as the percentage of all comments that are negative, positive and negative, positive, and mentioned without evaluations. These summaries are neither ambiguous nor evenly divided nor unclear. Fifty-two percent of lobbyist reactions to changes in lobbying were negative. About half of that, or twenty-six percent, were positive. Twelve percent of all comments mixed pro and con reactions and ten percent mentioned changes without positive or negative evaluations. In sum, lobbyists in Oklahoma are most likely to feel negatively about changes in the political context, the players, and the techniques of lobbying.

In light of this negativity about changes in lobbying, how do Oklahoma lobbyists feel about a career in lobbying? Lobbyists were asked to rate lobbying as a career on a scale of zero to five where five was excellent. It should be noted that there are six possible rankings, 1 to 6, in the question that produced data for **Table 9.** The exact

TABLE 9

Oklahoma Lobbying:
Rating Lobbying as a Career

Rating	Responses	Response %	
1	4	2.6	
2	4	2.6	
3	7	4.5	
4	42	27.1	
5	53	34.2	
6	45	29.0	
Totals	155	100.0	Mean = 3.75

Source: Authors' calculations using response data from questionnaire.

midpoint between 1 and 6 is 3.5. In fact, as may be seen, the mean score was 3.75. Thus, about three-fifths of Oklahoma lobbyists rank lobbying favorably despite the fact that over one-half disapprove of changes in lobbying on the whole.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Career paths that lead to lobbying in Oklahoma most often pass through business (35 percent), political or governmental (20 percent), or educational (12 percent) institutions. Though the lawyer-lobbyist is a common stereotype, only about ten percent of the Oklahoma lobbyists in 2006 were lawyers. Oklahoma lobbyists had an average of nearly ten years of experience. They are just as well educated though not as well paid as lobbyists in most other states.

The average age for Oklahoma lobbyists is fifty-one which is typical of state lobbyists around the country. Seventy-two percent of the respondent-lobbyists were male and twenty-eight percent female. Oklahoma lobbyists tend to be conservative or moderate. Less than half of the lobbyists in 2006 were Democratic as compared to more than three-quarters in the early 1960s. However, this is probably changing with shifts in the electorate toward independency or Republicanism.

The handful of lobbies that dominate group power in Oklahoma includes petroleum, health care, education, business, transportation/communication, banking/finance, gaming, agriculture, realtors/insurance, and utilities. Labor, the Oklahoma Education Association, public employees, consumers, agriculture, environmentalists, and minorities are among those interests seen to be losing influence in Oklahoma.

The respondent-lobbyists wrote short essays on changes in Oklahoma lobbying. Once coded, the results tended to fall into three kinds of changes. These were termed *Political Culture and Contextual Changes*, *Changes in Players and Roles*, and *Changes* in *How Lobbyists Lobby*. Negative reactions to changes in lobbying were much more likely than positive changes in all three categories. Nevertheless, lobbyists tended to feel favorably overall about a career in lobbying in Oklahoma.

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