Lobbying for the "Public Good":

A Case Study of A Nonprofit Organization Lobbying Effort in Alberta, Canada

by

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A thesis

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfillment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Sociology

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2010

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

Political advocacy research has often relied on concepts from social movement literature to explain the success or failure of lobbying efforts. The following study builds on recent efforts to partner social movement concepts with neo-institutional theory in order to better understand political mobilization. Specifically, I aim to contribute to an understanding of how non-state actors, with little or no formal power, attempt to influence public policy. Seventeen in-depth interviews were conducted with participants of a nonprofit lobbying campaign that occurred in Alberta, Canada, in 2007. By examining the processes and the structural elements of the lobby's activities, I assess the utility of combining these two theoretical literatures to enhance explanatory power. This study also emphasizes the multi-faceted nature of lobbying campaigns. Advocacy outcomes are influenced not only by challenger strategies and arguments, but by the responses and contexts of their challenges. Social movement concepts, such as frame analysis and resource mobilization, shed light on the lobbying processes undertaken by nonprofit advocacy participants. However, neo-institutional theory allows us to situate these processes within a larger political context, and understand how this context influences the decisions made by political decision makers. In addition to arguing these theoretical claims, I discuss the opportunities and limitations that facilitate and constrain collaborative processes between the Government of Alberta and the province's nonprofit sector.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I thank my supervisor and committee members for the tremendous assistance they provided me throughout the thesis-writing process. As my supervisor, Dr. Janice Aurini (University of Waterloo) has always been available to provide sociological insight and academic mentorship. I would not have reached this point without her encouragement and support. Thank you Janice.

I feel honored and privileged to have had Dr. Emily Barman (Boston University) as an active member of my committee. This thesis benefited greatly from her guidance, her encouragement, and her extensive knowledge of the nonprofit/charitable sector. I am also grateful for the time that Dr. Martin Cooke (University of Waterloo) contributed my to thesis' development. His suggestion that I think more analytically about power was particularly useful during the thesis-writing process.

I'm also thankful for having received the opportunity to participate in the University of Waterloo's sociology department. I learned a great deal, and was exposed to a wide variety of sociological ideas during my time in this department. Not only were my years at UW intellectually stimulating - they were also a lot of fun as well. Whether having animated conversations at the grad pub, or troving through the mounds of books periodically discarded by professors, there was usually a good time to be had. Specifically, I thank Alyshia, Amrit, Matt Jenny, Julia and Britt for their academic advice and friendly support.

A special thank you to Matt Lye, whose presence has enriched my life immeasurably, and who appreciates the importance of a Coffee Crisp at the end of a long day. Thanks also to Bryan and Caroline Lye for always making me feel "at home" in their lives. I dislike living far away from my family, and I appreciate the effort you have always made to incorporate me into yours.

Finally, I would like to thank the participants who agreed to be interviewed for this research. Your enthusiasm and passion for the nonprofit sector was inspiring. I learned great deal through our conversations; thank you for sharing your time and your insights with me.

Dedication

      I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Keith and Anita Shackleford. I am so fortunate to have been raised in a family where education was valued, and the running theory was that you could never have too many books. Thank you so much for all of your support.

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Chapter I. Introduction

Lobbying is a crucial but controversial element of Canadian politics. While definitions of lobbying vary, the Federal Lobbyists Registration Act defines lobbying as "any oral or written communication made to a public office holder" (Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada, 2005). Proponents argue that lobbying is an important part of any democratic political process. Lobbying allows citizens to gain access to government officials in an organized and inexpensive manner, and helps foster trust between constituents and political leaders (Office of the Ethics Commissioner of Alberta, 2008). However, lobbying has a distinctly negative connotation in this country. It is recognized that lobbying also allows opportunities for special interest groups to accrue unfair advantages, and for heavily-resourced organizations and individuals to influence the government for their own benefit. This has most seen most recently with the case of Rahim Jaffar, a Member of Parliament who allegedly used his political position to seek public funds for his private company (Akin, 2010). Controversies such as this have contributed to the tarnished reputation of lobbying processes.

It is important to realize that lobbying occurs outside of the corporate world as well. Nonprofit organizations also engage in lobbying efforts – generally rephrased as "advocacy" in order to avoid the stain of the original term. Nonprofit organizations are often viewed as more trustworthy lobbyists because they are not motivated by an interest in increasing revenues. Nonprofit organizations generally lobby (or advocate) not for their own benefit, but on behalf of a particular social, political, or cultural cause. Because of this, citizens often turn to NPOs to "defend their rights, promote their interests, and provide needed services" (Brock &Banting, 2001: 1). For example, a disability rights organization might lobby a municipality to provide discounted bus passes to disabled citizens. However, concerns about legitimate lobbying have permeated the nonprofit sector as well – many nonprofit organizations have been accused of

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using lobbyist regulations in order to tout their own interests. For example, the environmental group KAIROS recently had its funding cut after being accused of spending more effort on achieving political goals than environmental advocacy (Lunn, 2010).

Concerns about the lobbying abuses have lead to an increased regulation of the lobbying process in Canada. The federal government and five provinces currently have legislation constraining who is allowed to lobby[1], and ensuring that all lobbyists interact with government in a professional and transparent manner. Alberta is the most recent province to have introduced lobbying regulations. In 2007, Premier Ed Stelmach commenced his political term by introducing Bill 1 – *The Lobbyists Act.* This led to, interestingly, a lobbying effort about the right to lobby, instigated and carried through by the province's nonprofit sector. Nonprofit organizations argued that they should be exempt from the lobbying regulations proposed by the Bill, as they lobbed not on their own behalf, but on behalf of "the public good".

The Lobbyists Act Campaign (LAC) that followed has been referred to as the most unified and consistent work ever put forth by Alberta's nonprofit sector (Canadian Fundraiser, 2007). It united nonprofit organizations from a number of different subsectors[2] around one singular issue: excluding the nonprofit sector from *The Lobbyists Act*. Ultimately, the campaign appeared to have had an impact: in December 2007, Bill 1 was amended to exclude nonprofit organizations from its regulations. As one participant in the campaign stated,

"...[The nonprofit sector] had a common enemy in Bill 1, they came together, they found it, it was the right thing to do, they could do it with the high road, and they could all do it together because everybody was in the same boat."

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[1] Canada's federal lobbying legislation was introduced in 1989. Ontario introduced its provincial legislation in 1999, and Nova Scotia, British Columbia and Quebec followed suit in 2002. See Meunier, 2004.
[2] By "subsectors" I refer to the different classifications of nonprofit activity as stipulated by the John Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. Please see the Methods chapter for more details.

Drawing on the sociological frames of social movement theory and new institutionalism, I examine the mechanisms and tactics used during the Lobbyists Act Campaign. This research tells two stories about nonprofit lobbying from two separate perspectives. First, it explains how Alberta's nonprofit sector, with little formal power, attempted to change a key piece of legislation. Second, this research explains why nonprofits perceive lobbying as a crucial component of their sector's responsibility. In a political environment where consultation with nonprofit stakeholders does not occur consistently, nonprofits feel they need to lobby in order to have their concerns heard. One participant in the lobbying effort described lobbying as something of a "consolation prize":

"...The reason we end up having to [lobby] is because we're not part of the public policy, when they make public policy, they think they know what they're talking about. When it comes to the nonprofit sector, they don't."

A. Research Questions

The over-arching question guiding this research is how non-state actors - with little or no formal power - influence or challenge state policies. Three specific research questions are nestled within this larger query. First, what specific strategies did the nonprofit coalition utilize in their attempt to have the Bill amended? I found a two-pronged approach to lobbying, where members of the LAC used both"outsider" and "insider" strategies to achieve their goals. Large, resource-rich organizations provided the financial and informational means to fuel the campaign, and initiated lines of contact between different nonprofit organizations throughout the province. The grassroots lobbying carried out by the non-mobilizing nonprofits added legitimacy to the campaign, ensuring it was viewed as a sector-wide initiative rather than simply the pet project of a few large nonprofit organizations. However, the well-cultivated ties that some LAC members shared with key governmental decision makers were a crucial element of the campaign's success.

By exploiting their ties with "inside supporters" (Binder, 2001), LAC members contributed to the crafting of a "Public Good Amendment", which exempted all nonprofit organizations contributing to the "public good" of Albertans. The long-term relationships that existed between some nonprofit stakeholders and government officials were extremely helpful in bringing forth desired changes to the Bill. While the lobbying effort was necessary for giving legitimacy to the eventual amendment, the support of a few key government officials gave the campaign the political clout to eventually gain success.

My second question broadens the scope of this research by focusing on the larger context in which this lobbying campaign occurred. What political and institutional conditions facilitated the efforts of the Lobbyists Act Campaigners? I argue that LAC members took advantage of political opportunities that existed in their political culture at the time. Premier Ed Stelmach was eager to come across as more democratic and responsive to the public than his predecessor. Most importantly, however, there was political precedent for exempting nonprofit organizations from lobbyist registries. The "Public Good Amendment", created through the joint effort of governmental and nonprofit stakeholders, was modeled after legislation already in place in Quebec. By modeling the proposed amendment to the Bill 1 on *Quebec's Public Good Amendment*, both the nonprofits and policy makers were able to add legitimacy to their attempts to change the Bill.

Third, I explore how the relationship between the nonprofit sector and the Government of Alberta impacts nonprofit lobbying in that province. My findings reveal that Government of Alberta does attempt to work with the province's nonprofit sector, their lack of knowledge about and priority attributed to the sector make these efforts limited at best. The lack of a true collaboration between the government and the sector means that nonprofits often have to engage

in lobbying in order to have their interests heard. This makes for a more combative and acrimonious relationship between the two entities than would exist if the government were more responsive to the sector's non-lobbying input.

This thesis contributes to an understanding of how nonprofit organizations can attempt to influence public policy. Studies of nonprofit lobbying in an American context, though numerous, cannot easily be translated to a Canadian context. American nonprofits are regulated by different laws than are Canadian nonprofits, meaning that they have different avenues of advocacy available to them. Moreover, this thesis examines the nonprofit-government dynamic at a provincial level. Because so many nonprofits focus on issues that are officially under provincial jurisdiction (for instance, education and health), understanding how the relationship between nonprofits and provincial governments play out is also important. Nonprofit organizations often try to influence policy outcomes that are ultimately provincial, rather than federal, issues.

My goal in this research was to use material from social movement and organizational theory literature to explain the processes that lead to the Lobbyist Act campaigners achieving their desired outcome. By using theoretical ideas from both sociological traditions, I will be following the lead of a strain of sociologists (Davis, McAdam, Scott, &Zald, 2005; McAdam, Tarrow& Tilly, 1999) who use this approach to study political events. In addition to the research questions delineated above, I ask the following: is any explanatory power gained by using both social movement and organizational theory to examine the Bill 1 lobbying process? Ultimately, I found that neo-institutional theory, an organization-based perspective, illuminates the primary reason that the lobbyists eventually achieved their goal. However, it is apparent from my research that the tactics used by the lobbyists, particularly their ability to frame their argument in a salient manner and channel information through a vast network efficiently, nudged policy

makers to into a position where they were able to acquiesce to the desires of the lobbyists while "saving face" with their political colleagues. This indicates that social movement concepts, such as framing and resource mobilization, also contributed to the lobbyists' success. I argue that the strategies used by the lobbyists in this case study were necessary, but not sufficient factors in the campaign's ultimate outcome. Concepts from both theoretical camps are required in order to produce a complete understanding of the case study presented here.

Below I provide a definition of nonprofit organizations and review some of the literature that examines nonprofit lobbying in a Canadian context. This review is complemented by a discussion of nonprofit-government relationships in Canada – a relationship dynamic that greatly affects the nonprofit sector's ability to engage in political activity. I will then provide an outline of the lobbying campaign that I studied, and elaborate on the research questions that guided my work. Finally, I will ground my use of the term "power", in the context of this research, and the larger realm of sociological theory.

B. Defining Nonprofit Organizations

Following Salamon and Anheier (1997) I define nonprofit organizations as voluntary, private, self-governing organizations that do not redistribute surplus profits amongst employees. Three distinct types of organizations are housed within this broad definition. "Charities" are those organizations that, by law, must prove they provide benefit to the general community or a significant segment of the population (Canadian Revenue Agency, 2003). Examples of registered include Canadian Cancer Society and the Sierra Club. Charitable organizations are exempt from paying income tax, and those who donate to them receive a tax credit for their donation. "Non-charitable voluntary organizations" also serve the community, but either do not qualify to register for charitable status or choose not to.

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Finally, there are organizations that comply with the financial definition of nonprofit organizations, but do not necessarily provide benefit to the broader community. These nonprofits include unions, cooperative housing and food organizations, and religious communities. Since all three types of nonprofits (including some unions) voiced opposition to *The Lobbyists Act,* I use the term "nonprofit sector", rather than "voluntary sector", throughout this work.

C. Nonprofit –Government Relationships in Canada

Nonprofit organizations have a long history of attempting to influence Canadian public policy. However, nonprofit lobbying has changed in response federal government's shifting models of governance (Phillips, 2004).At one time, Canada's governance model of "new public management" relied on the contracting out of services to non-governmental organizations (ibid.). These non-governmental actors include nonprofit organizations – particularly the 74% of nonprofit that provide direct services to Canadian constituents (Hall et al., 2005). The power in these contractual relationships lay primarily with the government. Non-governmental organizations were hired to provide particular services, but had no say in formulating what these services were or how they should be delivered.

Phillips (2004) argues that this model of governance is slowly being replaced by a "horizontal" management structure, which depends on collaboration with non-governmental actors" (ibid: 452). This change was based on the rationale that community nonprofits were "better positioned to understand and respond to local needs" (Murray, Low, & Waite, 2006: 375-376) and therefore better equipped to serve the needs of Canadian communities.

In contemporary Canadian politics, the federal government and the nonprofit sector are generally assumed to have a collaborative relationship (Tsasis, 2008). In making this shift, Canada joined the ranks of other countries who attempted to establish a shared governance

model (Hall et al, 2005). Contemporary nonprofits generally still receive government funding to provide particular services (Phillips, 2004), rather than simply to carry out a particular mandate. However, the "horizontal" model is supposed to allow nonprofits more input into deciding what mandates would best serve their communities.

This trend is not only evident at the federal level in Canada, but at the provincial level as well. In Alberta, the site of my current research, the provincial government has articulated an interest in working with the province's nonprofit sector to "build a vibrant and sustainable sector for the benefit of all Albertans" (Alberta Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Initiative, 2004). This has resulted in the creation of a framework through which the provincial government and nonprofit sector can supposedly work together "to address issues, engage in policy dialogue, and build organizational capacity" (ibid.). This framework, the Alberta Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector Initiative (ANVSI), was established in 2007 to establish a place where both parties can come together, on common ground, to ameliorate the quality of life in Alberta.

However, there is debate as to whether the horizontal governance model has increased nonprofit organizations' ability to influence public policy (Phillips, 2004; Tsasis, 2008). Some Canadian scholars (Tsasis, 2008; Phillips &Levasseur, 2004) stress that any "real" shift in nonprofit power has lagged behind the shift in governance models. For instance, the afore-mentioned ANVSI has not resulted in the strengthening of nonprofit/government collaborative efforts[3]. While politicians have articulated their *intent* to collaborate with nonprofit actors, these intentions have generally materialized in collaborative processes that satisfy both deliberating parties.

Nonprofit attempts to influence public policy have also been tempered by extremely rigid

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[3] ANVSI's credibility as a conduit for collaboration decreased significantly after a nonprofit representative was dismissed from the committee after criticizing funding cuts experienced by the sector. This story will be described in more detail later in this study.

accountability regulations, which impose strict reporting and approval requirements upon

nonprofit organizations (Phillips, 2004). Phillips' (ibid.) analyses suggest that this

"accountability regime" (pg. 453) has an extremely averse impact on the ability of nonprofit

organizations to be innovative in their work. Heightened measures of accountability can also

make nonprofits less likely to engage in political activity, and feel less able to criticize their

funders (Phillips, 2004). Additionally, Tsasis (2008) notes the difficulty of creating an equal

partnership when "funding and other critical resources are concentrated in the hands of one

participant" (pg. 266). Such relationships can be characterized by large disparities in power, with

nonprofit organizations feeling as if their original mandates and work have been co-opted (ibid.).

Many nonprofits feel as thought they respond to government mandates, rather than contribute to

governmental policy decisions (ibid.).

Tsasis (ibid.) has found that government-NGO partnerships can move non-governmental

organizations away from their mandates and dilute their attempts at advocacy. Lamoureaux

(1997, as cited in Juilletet. Al., 2001) suggests that, as the service delivery activities of a

nonprofit increase, its political activity decreases. This may be due to the fact that greater service

demands deplete time and resources that might have gone towards advocacy work (Murray, Low

& Waite, 2006). Jensen and Phillips (1996) have also speculated on the impact shifting

nonprofit-government relations might have on political advocacy work. Specifically, they argue

that as nonprofits are increasingly viewed as being the providers of government services,

advocacy is increasingly being viewed as an illegitimate activity.

> *"…the discourses and practices which delegitimize advocacy as the expression of "special interests" make it more difficult for groups to function. They have always been advocates…moreover, these groups are also the basis for civic engagement; by encouraging individual participation, they contribute to the development of communities and civil society."* (pg. 129)

The legitimacy of nonprofit advocacy has been contested not only in Alberta, but at a federal level as well. This was exemplified during the Voluntary Sector Initiative, a government-nonprofit collaborative process active at the end of the last century. During nonprofit/government deliberations, issues of political activity and funding were particularly contentious (Elson, 2008). As Elson summarizes, "Voluntary sector representatives initially took the position that advocacy was a Right of Citizenship…The Finance department took the opposite view that political activity was not a Right, but a privilege…" (2008: 114). This attests to the fact that, even in an environment supporting collaboration and discussion between the nonprofit sector and the government, political activity is often an issue of discord.

It is important to note that governmental policies are not entirely responsible for stifling advocacy work performed by the nonprofit sector. Nonprofit advocacy is also hindered by misinformation within the sector about the legitimacy of engaging in political work. The Canadian Revenue Agency dictates that nonprofits *can* engage advocacy work, the amount being dependent on the size and financial resources of the organization. However, not all nonprofits are aware of the advocacy opportunities that do exist in Canada. Some nonprofit organizations are, erroneously, reticent to engage any political work for fear of having their charitable status revoked.

Despite the challenges brought forth by shifting roles and relationships, nonprofit organizations continue to engage in advocacy work and attempt to influence policy. Carter (2008) argues that Canada's nonprofit sector has grown in self-confidence and self-awareness, due to "successes through coalitions and campaigns where civil society organizations teamed up to address particular issues (pg. 3). This success has infused the sector with greater awareness of

its strengths and capacities, and potentially increased the influence that nonprofits can exert over governmental agencies.

Tsasis (2008) notes that even in situations where nonprofit organizations may feel subservient to their political "partners", they are able to utilize strategies to help them gain influence and manage their dependencies. Coalition-building is one tactic that nonprofits can use to exercise greater "environmental control" (ibid: 281). By banding together, nonprofits are able to gain political strength to promote their causes (ibid.). This tactic was also instrumental in the lobbying effort that is examined in this research. By coalescing around one specific concern – amending a piece of legislation that would have hindered their ability to lobby – Alberta nonprofits attempted – and possibly succeeded – to influence a policy decision.

D.*Overview of Case Study: The Lobbyists Act, 2007*

In December 2006, Conservative Ed Stelmach succeeded Ralph Klein as the premier of Alberta. Stelmach was elected not through a provincial election, but through a Conservative party vote after Klein resigned from office. Klein enjoyed consistently high approval ratings from both Albertans and his caucus over the 13 years of his premiership. However, he had also developed a reputation for conducting business in a non-transparent fashion, and was involved in a number of conflict of interest scandals. The first of these was the so-called Multi-Corp Scandal of 1995. The Liberal Party of Alberta alleged that Klein had promoted the interests of a Calgary based software company during a trip to Asia – a violation of the province's conflict of interest laws (McCormick, 2006). This scandal resulted in the commissioning of a report by political scientist Allan Tupper, which made recommendations on ways in which governmental "integrity" and "transparency" could be improved in Alberta. One of Tupper's recommendations was that a lobbyist registry be established in order to monitor lobbying activity within the

province. However, the provincial government did not adopt this recommendation, and the idea of a provincial lobbyist registry was shelved for the time being (CBC News, 2005).

Upon entering office in 2006, Stelmach was faced with the challenge of creating an aura of government transparency and accountability after the arguably opaque premiership of Ralph Klein. In response to Klein's reputation for eschewing measures of government accountability, Stelmach began his time as premier by introducing Bill 1: *The Lobbyists Act* (CBC News, 2007). This Bill, if passed, would have implemented the recommendation offered by Tupper 11 years earlier. Stelmach stressed the importance of governmental transparency when he first introduced the Bill on March 7, 2007. He assured the Alberta Legislature Assembly that governing the province with integrity and transparency was one of his priorities, and that *The Lobbyists Act* would assist him and his government in achieving that goal.

> *"One of our top five priorities is governing with integrity and transparency, and this act, the Lobbyists Act, is an example of our commitment to this principle."* (pg. 5)

Specifically, *The Lobbyists Act* would have required all organizations (both for and nonprofit) to provide detailed documentation of any communication undertaken with any public officials. It also would have prohibited organizations from "lobbying and providing advice to the government on the same issue at the same time" (Alberta Legislative Assembly Meeting, 2007: 5). The Bill's wording defined "public officials" as any Members of the Legislative Assembly; all employees of government departments; all those appointed to office by the Lieutenant Governor in Council or a member of Cabinet; and all employees, officers, directors or members of provincial entities (Bill 1, 2007). For the purposes of the Bill, a lobbyist was defined as "an individual who is paid to communicate with public office holders in an attempt to influence government decisions" (Alberta Legislative Assembly Meeting, 2007: 5).

Interestingly, the Bill initially garnered great enthusiasm from both sides of the Legislative Assembly. The Conservative Party, predictably, supported their new leader's first initiative. The opposition parties, however, were just as supportive of *The Lobbyists Act*, and the positive effect it could have on governmental transparency. Opposition MLAs also noted the importance of the Bill as a symbol of governmental transparency that might improve the trustworthiness of the government in the eyes of citizens. *The Lobbyists Act* would not only enforce tighter regulation on Alberta lobbyists; it would also signal the government's increased commitment to transparency and accountability. Liberal MLA articulated this idea during a Legislative Assembly meeting on March 21, 2007):

> *"We have to recognize that the appearance of openness and transparency is equally important as actual openness and transparency. Because politicians have such a bad reputation with the public, we are trying to convince them every day that we are hard working, honest people and we are driven by the public good. This Bill 1 is a good start."* (pg. 32)

However, unified opposition from Alberta's nonprofits countered the warm reception offered to Bill 1 in the Legislative Assembly. Approximately 170 nonprofit organizations[4] "signed a joint submission to the government, wrote their Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), presented at public hearings and encouraged their colleagues to get involved" (Canadian Fundraiser, 2007:2.). According to one nonprofit stakeholder, "It [was] the first time in anyone's memory that the sector as a whole has got involved in like this, and used consistent communications and messaging" (ibid.).

Opposition to *The Lobbyists Act* centered around three main concerns. First, nonprofits

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[4] This number would be larger had I included unions in my study; numerous unions, particularly educational unions, were involved in this campaign as well. However, I did not interview any of these organizations, and much of their advocacy work took place simultaneously but separately from the voluntary organizations involved. For that reason, I am unable to include their lobbying strategies, tactics, and their perspectives in my research, and have not included their numbers in this count.

warned that the Bill could have a "substantial chilling effect on the nonprofit sector to communicate with government officials and negatively affect vital working relationships" (Canadian Fundraiser, 2007: 2). Many nonprofit organizations attempt to advise government decision makers in mandated area of expertise, whether it be social service delivery, or the impact of environmental policies on communities. The Bill's detractors feared it would create a barrier impeding nonprofits from offering their advice and perspective on those issues that fell under their mandate.

Second, nonprofit organizations argued that *The Lobbyists Act* would adversely affect the financial situation for smaller Albertan nonprofits. 43% of Albertan nonprofits have annual revenues of under $30,000 (Muttart Foundation, 2007). Detractors of Bill 1 warned that the administrative costs for nonprofits to provide appropriate documentation would have been disproportional to the amount of money and influence these groups actually held.

Finally, nonprofits objected to the fact that this legislation attempted to manage for-profit and non-profit lobbying in the same manner. The nonprofit sector, they argued, had a completely different societal role than for-profit organizations(Volunteer Alberta, 2007). Specifically, nonprofit organizations stressed that they contributed to the public good, rather than simply to their and their shareholders' revenues. Nonprofits officially advocate not for their own interests, but on behalf of the interests of their clients and service populations. This point was stressed often during the public hearings on Bill 1 held by the Government of Alberta. The following quote, made by a nonprofit representative on September 27th 2007, articulates this concern:

> *"...the point is whether or not there needs to be an act that governs the relationship between elected officials and nonprofit, voluntary sector organizations...They're not asking for themselves. You do realize that. In most cases nonprofit organizations deliver services that government has*

> *deemed that they want them to deliver. It's not a question that we're*
> *putting those dollars in our pockets and walking away."* (Pg. GS-57)

The discussion that occurred in the Alberta Legislative Assembly indicates that politicians heard the objections raised by nonprofit organizations. On May 29th, 2007, the Alberta Conservative Party created the afore-mentioned Standing Committee of Government Services. This entity (referred to as "the Committee" from hereon in) was established to examine the Bill in further detail and invite public submissions and suggestions. This Committee, which met eight times and held two days of public hearings, was the first bi-partisan committee ever created by the Alberta government. (Alberta Legislative Assembly Orders of the Day, May 29 2007). The Committee dealt with all concerns regarding Bill 1, including those voiced by industry and for-profit organizations. However, the majority of the Committee's time was spent discussing the implications of the Bill for the nonprofit sector. This is largely because nonprofit organizations overwhelmingly dominated the public hearings, and were the most vocal and persistent opponents of the Bill. A number of MLAs noted the professional and organized nature of the nonprofit lobbying campaign. Liberal MLA Bridget Pastoor, who also served on the Committee, noted the professional nature of the lobbying effort put forth by Albertan nonprofits.

> *...the nonprofit area was particularly troubled and, in fact, quite fearful of*
> *this bill going through as it had been originally thought about, they put*
> *together some very, very thoughtful and, certainly, worthy of discussion*
> *documents. Their presentations were in depth. They had done their*
> *homework."* (Alberta Legislative Assembly: 2127)

The Amendment of The Lobbyists Act

Ultimately, Bill 1 was amended to include what House Leader Dave Hancock called the "Public Good Amendment", exempting all nonprofits that "served the public good" in some capacity (Lobbyists Act, 2007). Hancock introduced this amendment on November 21, 2007. With this Amendment, all nonprofits were excluded from complying with the Bill *except* for

those serving management, union, or professional interests. Hancock clearly articulated the unique nature of those nonprofit organizations that lobby primarily to provide benefit to the community, rather than to gain financial benefit for themselves. He also expressed a desire to lift any administrative burdens that are detrimental to the work being done by nonprofit organizations. Hancock introduced the Amendment with a statement in which he acknowledged the distinct nature of the nonprofit sector, and the added burden that *The Lobbyists Act* would place on nonprofit organizations.

> *"...,The voluntary sector in this province does a lot of work, does a lot of good things in our community and sometimes – and, I think, quite accurately – are concerned that with all of the accountabilities that are built into the governance process ,we make them spend about a third of their time applying for money and a third of their time accounting for it, and if we have a registry act with which they have to comply, they would spend the other third of their time complying with the registry act...This amendment will have the effect, in my view, of relieving voluntary organizations of, even if it's just a perceived burden, having to comply with the act..."*

<div align="right">(Alberta Legislative Assembly, November 21 2007)</div>

It is important to note that the Public Good Amendment was *not* recommended by the Standing Committee of Government Services. Despite the intensity with which the LAC advocated for their cause, the Committee was never convinced of the utility of excluding the nonprofit sector from the Bill. However, it is erroneous to say that the lobbying done by the LAC was entirely unsuccessful. After the Committee's report was made public, key members of the LAC worked with government officials to help craft and justify Hancock's Public Good Amendment. This "backroom" work, I will argue, would not have proved as successful without the legitimacy provided by the LAC's initial lobbying efforts. Because of the united and far-reaching opposition expressed initially by LAC members, the final crafting of the Public Good Amendment was seen not as catering to the "special interest" of those key nonprofits that had

their hand in the Amendment's creation. Rather, it was seen as a justified response to the concerns of the nonprofit sector.

The Public Good Amendment was heralded as a major success of Alberta's nonprofit sector - proof that they could, in fact, effect change if they acted in a unified and consistent manner. One nonprofit that participated in the Lobbyists Act Campaign identified the sector's efforts as a primary reason for the amendment's success.

> *"Working closely with its partners in the sector, Volunteer Alberta was able to convince the Provincial Government to remove nonprofits from the impending legislation that would have silenced many crucial voices. This would not have been a success without the unprecedented outpouring of support from membership." (Volunteer Alberta, 2007: 8).)*

E. Contributions

While a considerable amount of research has examined the relationship nonprofits have with Canada's federal government, fewer studies have focused on their relationships with provincial governments. Wiktorowicz et al. (2003) investigated the involvement of nonprofit organizations in Ontario health policy formulation, particularly the strategies they used to attempt to exert influence. Their survey research reveals the wide variety of methods used in the attempt to influence policy, from educating the public through media campaigns to consulting with provincial ministers (ibid.). The researchers note the extreme difficulty encountered when attempting to measure the influence that nonprofit organizations actually have over policy formulation. This is partly because nonprofits, policy makers, and other stakeholders tend to have different conceptualizations of what "influence" is, and how it can be measured. Additionally, as Wiktorowicz et al. (ibid.) point out, policy rarely has a direct line of lineage

back to one specific policy maker. As the authors state it: "Every successful policy idea has a hundred mothers and fathers. Every bad policy idea is an orphan" (ibid: 174).

The Bill 1 lobbying campaign centeredon a very specific political event. Because the event had a narrow scope and took place over a short amount of time, it was easier for me to contact and speak with many of the key figures that played a role in the lobbying effort. I spoke with many nonprofit employees who interacted extensively with government officials during the campaign. Additionally, I was able to interview both a governmental insider and a political consultant who were involved in different parts of the campaign's evolution. This diversity of perspectives allows for a more nuanced perspective of exactly what occurred. Additionally, by reading government transcripts I was able to enhance the understanding of how the nonprofit lobbying campaign was perceived by politicians. These factors make my particular case a unique chance to look at nonprofit lobbying from both sides.

Finally, the lobbying campaign studied in this thesis fosters an understanding of lobbying from two perspectives: the *strategy* of lobbying and the *rationale* of lobbying. Approximately 170 nonprofit organizations[5] with a variety of different mandates, lobbied in part by uniting around one particular issue - lobbying. The "meta" nature of this campaign – lobbying *about* lobbying – allows for a two-pronged understanding of nonprofit lobbying processes. First, I am able to study the strategies and tactics by which nonprofit organizations attempt to influence public policy. Second, studying the arguments and messaging put forth during the campaign, I can ascertain exactly why the ability to lobby is perceived as important by so many nonprofit organizations.

This study also contributes to an understanding of how sociological theory can be utilized to explain nonprofit lobbying processes. In the next chapter, I will provide a detailed discussion

of the theoretical orientations guiding my work: social movementtheory and neo-institutional theory. After discussing some of the concepts important to these theoretical fields, I will argue that using both theories in concert offers greater explanatory power than either one could provide alone.

Chapter II. Theoretical Literature Review

The following research examines how nonprofit organizations, with little or no formal power, attempt to influence public policy. I examine this question by studying a united attempt by Albertan nonprofit organizations to alter a Bill that would have diminished their ability to engage in lobbying activities. Many political sociologists have studied lobbying efforts with the aid of concepts from social movement theory. While my research follows this tradition, I also use neo-institutional theory to examine the larger context of the lobbying campaign. Taken from the larger repertoire of organizational theory, neo-institutional theory provides explanations for how the larger political climate and the nature of governmental/nonprofit relationships can contribute to nonprofit lobbying outcomes.

Using social movement and neo-institutional theory in concert, I will answer three specific research questions that fall within this study. First, I ask what strategies the Lobbyists Act Campaigners used in their attempts to alter Bill 1. I discuss the social movement concepts of framing, resource mobilization, and political opportunity as possible contributors to the LAC's success. Frame analysis (Benford& Snow, 2000) offers an explanation of why the "public good" argument put forth by the LAC resonated with government officials.

Social movement theory also contributes to the answer of my second question: how political and institutional conditions facilitated the efforts of the Lobbyists Act Campaigners. Specifically, political opportunity theory focuses attention on the political conditions in Alberta that contributed to the campaign's success. However, I argue that social movement concepts alone do not fully explain the success of the lobbying efforts put forth by the LAC. Larger organizational and political mechanisms, as explained through neo-institutionaltheory, are needed to understand the larger context in which the LAC eventually found success. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the initial lobbying strategies undertaken by the LAC did not

convince the Standing Committee of Government Services to exempt nonprofits from Bill 1. I argue that a second round of "insider" lobbying techniques relied on the astute knowledge some LAC members had of the political process in Alberta. The neo-institutional concepts of isomorphism and legitimacy explain how this second round of LAC work lead to the desired outcome of the campaigners' goals.

Finally, I investigate how the power dynamic between the nonprofit sector and the Government of Alberta impacts lobbying in that province. While nonprofit organizations may not have "formal" power, their ability to contribute to Bill 1's alteration demonstrates that the sector can employ power of some kind. I will discuss some classic sociological work on the concept of power, and suggest how nonprofit organizations can be seen as "powerful" in certain contexts. Part of the nonprofit sector's power lies with their ability to leverage certain analytic frames in order to be seen as an essential and desirable part of our society. Frame choice is an essential mechanism for uniting challengers and influencing chosen targets of persuasion. The "public good" frame used by the Lobbyists Act Campaign did just that; it helped the sector carve a niche for itself and explain their uniqueness in the lobbying process.

I will begin this literature review by discussing the two theoretical traditions from which I will be drawing: social movement theory and neo-institutional theory. Specifically, I will discuss the theories of framing, resource mobilization and political opportunity that come from the larger social movement literature. I will then provide an overview of neo-institutional theory, and explain the concepts of isomorphism and legitimacy as they relate to this study. After discussing these concepts, I grapple with the question of whether these two theories, used in concert, can provide more explanatory power to my case study than either theory could provide alone. I discuss Davis and McAdams' (2005) attempts to use both theories, and provide examples of how

this approach can be used in my current research. Finally, I will turn my attention to two theoretical issues that were salient in my work: nonprofit relationships to power, and nonprofit relationships to "the public good". I will discuss the issue of power in the nonprofit sector, drawing on a Weberian conceptualization of power to guide my work. I will also highlight key arguments in the philosophical debate about the public good, and how (or whether) nonprofits contribute to it.

A. Social Movement Theory

Tilly and Tarrow define a social movement as "a sustained campaign of claimsmaking, using repeated performances to that advertise the claim, based on organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities" (2007: 8). While the nonprofit lobbying effort under question shares many characteristics with a social movement, I believe it can more accurately be described as an instance of collective action. Tilly and Tarrow's definition highlights the importance of advertising their claims to the general public through marches, rallies, demonstrations and other public performances. While members of the lobbying coalition did attempt to prick the consciousness of the public through media coverage, the overwhelming majority of efforts went into informing and educating public policy makers who were responsible for the Bill. Regardless, the concepts and ideas falling under the jurisdiction of social movement theory are an appropriate means of analyzing the Bill 1 lobbying campaign. The coalition made claims about the value of nonprofit advocacy, and of nonprofit organizations in general, and they used their organizational networks to promote these claims to the appropriate policy makers. Moreover, Binder (2001) stresses that social movement actors can choose to target their focus on policy makers, rather than the general public.

The study of social movements encompasses an enormous amount of subject matter;

providing a full summary of the literature is not practical in this context. The study of social

movements has been pivotal to Canadian sociology, as many classic sociological works examine

social protest movements within this country (Carroll, 1992). In the 1950s, Seymour Lipset and

C.B MacPherson both wrote treatises relating to protest movements in the Canadian prairies. The

1960s saw a surge of interest in social movement studies, a trend mirroring the increase in social

and political activism at that period in time. Carroll (1992) argues that Canadian sociological

studies of social movements tend to be idiographic, examining substantive topic areas rather than

theoretical issues (ibid.). While my research is also idiographic in nature, I attempt to address

some of the theoretical issues pertaining to my case study as well. Specifically, I will be testing

the utility of three social movement concepts: framing and frame analysis, resource mobilization,

and political processes and opportunities. Below I describe each of these concepts, and discuss

how I anticipate they may illuminate the lobbying process pertaining to my case study.

1. Frame analysis

The concept of frame analysis originates from Erving Goffman (1974), who perceived

frames as "schemata of interpretation" (pg. 4) enabling people to provide meanings for

occurrences in their lives and the outside world. In the time since Goffman introduced this

concept, social movement theorists have used frame analysis to examine the creation of meaning

and the "struggle over the production of mobilizing and counter-mobilizing ideas and meanings

(Benford& Snow, 2000: 613). Movement actors are understood to produce and maintain

meanings for constituents, antagonists, and bystanders. Framing is used to recruit new members

to a cause, to mobilize adherents, and to acquire resources.

Frame analysis has been used previously to explain the success of lobbying efforts. Davies

(1999) discusses framing in his examination of Ontario religious organizations efforts to lobby

the provincial government for more private school funding. The group succeeded in gaining

government support by framing their argument not as a religious issue, but as an issue of

multiculturalism and parental choice. Rather than lobbying the government on a platform based

on religious beliefs, they framed religion as a crucial component of a multicultural society.

Grounded in this rationale, they argued that parents living in a multicultural society should be

free to send their children to whichever school they choose.

My research reveals that issue framing played an important role in the success of the Bill's

alteration. The provincial government framed Bill 1 as a mechanism for improving government

accountability and transparency (Muttart Foundation, 2006). The nonprofit lobbyists, however,

"counter framed" the Bill as a threat to democracy and a distraction from the core missions of

nonprofit organizations (ibid.). Volunteer Alberta later described the alteration of Bill 1 as a

"crowning achievement" of the nonprofit sector (Volunteer Alberta, 2007). This suggests that

framing was important not only as a tactic during the campaign, but as a motivational tactic after

the campaign ended as well.

2. Resource Mobilization

The concept of mobilizing structures was introduced by Zald and McCarthy (1973) in an

attempt to emphasize the "resources, beyond membership and consciousness and manpower that

may become available to potential movements" (pg.1). In contrast to earlier social movement

theories that emphasized the importance of movement participants, resource mobilization

accentuates the institutional and structural characteristics of a movement that facilitates or

hinders success (Zald& McCarthy, 1973). Financial capacity, and access to information through

diverse networks are both considered valuable resources for social movement organizations. This

concept also facilitates explanations of why certain organizations take on leadership roles.

Resource mobilization can help social movement theorists explain the development and outcome of political challenges. Strong et al. (1990) used resource mobilization as one explanation for how blacks in the Southern United States were able to influence educational policy. In order to build new schools, Black communities in Alabama and North Carolina pooled their resources with funds from Northern philanthropists. Collaborating with established philanthropy organizations increased the legitimacy of the Black communities in the eyes of their state governments, and allowed them to "leverage the state" in order to secure ongoing funding for the schools.

This case study has important implications for my current research. Strong et. al. (1990) demonstrate that groups with little to no political power (Southern Black communities in the mid-twentieth century) can use their resources in ways that allow them to have an impact on government policies. While the situation in my research is less extreme, many of the nonprofits involved in the campaign against Bill 1 had little to no power without the support of other lobbying organizations. The Black communities in Alabama and North Carolina mobilized what resources they had by partnering with philanthropists who had legitimacy in the eyes of the state. In my own case study, I will examine whether there were particular, well-established nonprofit organizations that acted as a collective vehicle for the entire lobbying campaign.

3. Political Opportunity

Political opportunity is a concept nestled within the political process perspective, a perspective most commonly associated with Charles Tilly (McAdam & Scott, 2005). Political opportunity structures are "sets of formal and informal political conditions that encourage, discourage, channel, and otherwise affect movement activity" (Campbell, 2005: 44). These structures have been found to impact the strategy and ultimate success of social movement

activities (ibid.). Simply put, "changes in political opportunity structures encourage some actions, [and] discourage others" (Tarrow, 2008: 237).

While Eisinger first formulated the term "political opportunity" in 1973, it was Tilly who applied this concept to the American political landscape (Meyer, 2002.). Building on Eisinger's concept of "open" and "closed" institutions, Tilly argued that governments "manage the expression of dissent" (Tarrow, 2008: 161) by promoting accessible channels of participation and protest ("open" systems) or repressing protest entirely ("closed" systems). The end result of this theory is the idea that governmental policies of dealing with dissent directly impact the types of and tactics of protests that emerge in society. More radical tactics will be deemed necessary when the government is more closed, and few allies exist between state and movement members.

Of course, Canada and the United States share relatively "open" governmental systems. Yet despite the relative stability of our political institutions, and the channels of government access provided in democratic nations, opportunities for dissent fluctuate (Meyer, 2002). The fluctuation of opportunity is also impacted by changes in political climate, and electoral shifts. During times of political unrest, or shifts in political power, some protestors can find windows of opportunity in which they may be more successful at reaching their goals. Political alliances may be less stable, allowing opportunities for challenger groups to gain traction they might not have in a completely stable political situation (Tilly &Tarrow, 2007).

Adherents to the political process perspective might view the success of the Bill 1 lobbying campaign in the context of the recent provincial election. After 13 years in power, Ralph Klein had been succeeded by Ed Stelmach as the premier of Alberta. As illustrated earlier, Stelmach was determined to market his premiership to be markedly different to that of his predecessor. He openly touted the importance of transparent governmental activities, and the value of bipartisan

partnership. The bipartisan committee appointed to study and evaluate Bill 1 was the first bipartisan committee that Alberta's legislature had ever seen. It is possible that within this new climate of openness and (relative) cooperation, the government was more likely to be responsive towards, and heed the concerns of the nonprofit coalition lobbying against Bill 1.

C. Neo-institutional Theory

While social movement theorists generally focus on the active processes that occur within groups, organization theorists tend to emphasize the role of structure and stability (McAdam & Scott, 2005). Neo-institutional (NI) theory distinguishes itself from more traditional organization theories by stressing the importance of environmental influences on organizations (Aurini, 2006). According to Powell and DiMaggio (1991), the emergence of NI theory dovetailed with a renewed interest in organizations amongst social scientists. Unlike conceptions of institutionalism prevalent in some other disciplines, "institutions" here are not necessarily consciously designed or agreed upon by a society. Rather, institutionalism is a "state of affairs" (Zucker, 1983:9) in which there is cognitive agreement about "what has meaning and what actions are possible" (ibid: 2). This provides a wide range of phenomena that can be analyzed and described as "institutional". As Powell and DiMaggio assert, "Sociologists find institutions everywhere, from handshakes to marriages to strategic-planning departments" (1991:9). This differs markedly from earlier institutional theory, which understood institutions as primarily those organizations, patterns, and processes that are consciously designed by human efforts (ibid.).

NI theorists tend to reject rational-actor explanations for collective behavior, emphasizing the role that conformity plays in organizations. Specifically, NI theory emphasizes similarities that emerge between different sectors and industries, on both a national and international scale.

Rather than focusing on rational, opportunistic choice-making, neo-institutionalists focus on "taken-for-granted expectations" (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991:10) that lead to many organizations looking more similar than different. Individuals make choices by referring to examples from other around them, and from what is constituted as acceptable and legitimate in their cultural and historical context. In other words, conformity plays a large role in the development of institutional forms and cultures. NI theorists explain this conformity through the concept of isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

1.Isomorphism

Isomorphism is the process by which organizations become more similar to other organizations in their "structure, culture, and output" (DiMaggio& Powell, 1991: 64). DiMaggio and Powell differentiate between three types of institutional isomorphism: normative, mimetic, and coercive (ibid.) *Normative isomorphism* occurs when a particular occupational field is becoming established as a professionalized field of work (ibid). Normative isomorphism has occurred within the nonprofit sector over the years, as certain standards of conduct and professionalization have become common-place. One example of this can be seen in the growth of university and college programs offering programs in Volunteer Management, Nonprofit Management, and Fundraising. Increasingly, nonprofit hiring committees seek job candidates that have professional training at least one of these areas. It is increasingly assumed that one must receive specific training in these areas before embarking on a relevant job in the nonprofit sector. As increasing numbers of nonprofits begin to hire employees with these credentials, obtained in similar educational settings, the cultures of these nonprofits become more similar. As nonprofits conform to these trends in order to retain "credibility" in the eyes of their colleagues and funders, these trends become embedded in the culture of nonprofit organizations.

While normative isomorphism has applications within the nonprofit sector, coercive and mimetic isomorphisms are more applicable to this study. *Coercive isomorphism* occurs when organizations respond to pressures to conform to certain standards or procedures. This type of isomorphism can be experienced as "force or persuasion" (ibid: 64), such as when the Government of Alberta attempted to impose *The Lobbyists Act* on the province's nonprofit sector. Ramanth (2009) notes that nongovernmental organizations experience this type of isomorphism when they are pressured to work alongside the state. In order to be seen as "legitimate" organizations, today's nonprofits must conform to a variety of regulatory frameworks. One example of an increasingly common framework is the existence of lobbying registries, which require lobbyists to account for the time and money they spend appealing to political figures. The introduction of Alberta's *Lobbyists Act* was an example of coercive isomorphism in that it forced all lobbying organizations to comply with homogeneous reporting and lobbying procedures, regardless of the time spent and nature of their lobbying.

Nonprofit organizations were not the only entities affected by isomorphism during the Lobbyists Act Campaign. *Mimetic isomorphism* was also in effect, as the Government of Alberta attempted to draft an effective Lobbyists Act. Unlike the other variations of isomorphism, mimetic isomorphism occurs in response to organizational or environmental uncertainty (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). DiMaggio and Powell (ibid) stress the role mimetic isomorphism plays at the governmental level. For instance, Japanese innovators in the 19th century sent imperial officials to other countries in order to adopt other systems they perceived as particularly successful (ibid.) Organizations and governments tend to model their systems on those seen to be legitimate and successful in the larger policy-making community. For this reason, the Government of Alberta used Quebec's lobbying regulations to help craft their own Lobbying

Registry. Specifically, it was Quebec's inclusion of a Public Good Amendment which provided the inspiration for Alberta's own similar legislation.

C. Using Social Movement Theory and Neo-Institutional Theory in Concert

There is increasing overlap in the areas of interest of social movement and organizational theorists. For instance, Campbell (2005) points out that both social movement and organizational theorists currently demonstrate an interest in political opportunity structures. Organizational theorists use the concept of "open" and "closed" institutions as a variable explaining he development of different organizational arrangements (ibid). Social movement theorists, however, tend to perceive political opportunities as motivating factors for dissidents to increase, decrease, or redirect their efforts. This is one example of how theorists from both traditions can illuminate different aspects of a particular concept.

Following sociologists such as Gerald Davis and Doug McAdam (2005) I plan to use both theories in concert to develop a richer, more multifaceted understanding of nonprofit lobbying in Alberta. The theoretical question I ask is as follows: What, if any, added understanding emerges about my case study by utilizing concepts from both theoretical traditions? Davis et al. (2005) argue that social movement and organization theory can be synthesized in such a way that each theory complements and enriches the other. Sociologists are beginning to use both theories to analyze problems that have traditionally fallen under one theoretical jurisdiction.

McAdam and Scott (2005) detail five similarities between the theories that make this amalgamation possible; I will discuss the two of these most relevant to this research. First, much organization theory explores how organizations develop in path-dependent ways. Similarly, social movement literature discusses how movements are dependent on previous movements' repertoires of activities and protest techniques. In sum, theorists from both camps value the role

that historical context can play in social processes. Organizational theorists point out how the choices made by organizational actors in the past shape the menu of options available at the present. As will be demonstrated later, the precedent of nonprofit lobbying legislation crafted in other jurisdictions greatly influenced the outcome of the coalitions' lobbying effort. By mirroring Quebec's method of addressing nonprofit advocacy, the Alberta government had a solid foundation on which to build an alternative path forward. Social movement theorists, on the other hand, might point to the actual lobbying tactics that the nonprofit advocates decided to use as influential on the success of the lobbyist. Perhaps the coalition consisted of organizations and individuals who had experience with lobbying the government, and had developed a repertoire of tactics proven to be particularly effective.

A second commonality between the two camps of theorists is their interest in mechanisms, specifically those mechanisms through which information is diffused through organizations or social movements. As I will expand upon later, the efficient sharing of information (both between lobbyists and between lobbyists and the government) played a crucial role in the amending of Bill 1. Organizational theorists study "diffusion" to understand how practices flow through institutions. In the context of my current research, this "diffusion" would be the sharing of information through a variety of networks and ties that exist within the nonprofit community. In a relatively short period of time, a large number of geographically and professionally diverse organizations were made aware of the concerns about Bill 1, and rallied around a common cause that provided the coalition with unity. Similarly, social movement literature illustrates how certain practices and techniques "flow" through networks of activists. The technique shared by members of the coalition was primarily one of framing; coalition members not only agreed upon a unified message but effectively and jointly articulated this

message to Members of the Legislation Assembly, and particularly to members of the Committee charged with evaluating Bill 1.

Like other organizations, nonprofits can be examined in terms of their stable, institutionalized characteristics, or by the change processes that occur within the group. Sociologists often struggle with presenting work that adequately explains both organizational structure and individual agency. Organizational theory and social movement theory respectively provide tools to help explain both of these factors. Organizational theories tend to privilege and explain issues of structure, and tend to emphasize already established organizations and institutions (McAdam& Davis, in Davis et al. Al, 2005). Social movement theory, conversely, focuses on process rather than static structure, and tends to study emerging organizations. (ibid.). By using both theories in concert, I will be able to illustrate both the lobbying process itself, and the larger structural context in which the lobbying was situated.

D. Nonprofit Organizations and Power

Social science literature generally approaches the concept of "power" in one of two ways: either "power-over" (the ability to influence an actor or group to do something he or she would not do otherwise) or "power-to" (the ability to utilize agency) (Dahl, 1958). My research examines a case where nonprofit actors attempted to influence the government to do something it would have done otherwise (amend *The Lobbyists Act*). Therefore, the "power-over "conceptualization is a more appropriate place for me to begin. This conceptualization of power finds a sociological home in the work of Max Weber, who defined power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance…" (1978: 53).

Weber's conceptualization of power was echoed by Dahl (1958), who critiqued Mills' concept of the "power elite" on the grounds that the theory was not set up to be empirically refutable. If an overt power elite does not visibly exist in a particular setting, it can always be argued that a second, covert group, is "pulling the strings" from behind the scenes (ibid.). Secondly, Dahl argues that claims about a group's power or lack of power are meaningless if not put into a larger context. That is, who is more powerful than whom, under what circumstances, and according to what other actors (ibid.). In response to Mills, Dahl offered a distinctly Weberian definition of power: "A" has power over "B" to the extent that "A" can get "B" to do something "B" would not otherwise do, where "A" and "B" represent groups, individuals, or organizations" (Tsasis, 2008: 266).

This definition of power is contrasted with Weber's definition of authority, specifically rational-legal authority. According to Weber, rational-legal authority exists when an individual accepts the authority of a superior simply because of his or her place on the hierarchy of an organization or society (Peters, 2005). Generally speaking, nonprofit employees do not have this type of authority in the political or governmental arena. Of course, nonprofit organizations, particularly large ones, can consist of rational-legal hierarchies like one finds in the public sector. However, there is no cross-over between the nonprofit bureaucracy and the public sector bureaucracy; the rational-legal authority held by nonprofits in their organizations does not translate outside of the workplace hierarchy. Therefore, while nonprofit organizations may very have the "power-to" (the power to engage in advocacy work, for instance), they do not generally have the rational-legal authority (or formalized power) necessary to impose their will on outside organizations.

E. The Role of Nonprofit Lobbying in Civil Society

Sociologists and philosophers alike have considered how, and whether, voluntary organizations (including nonprofits) contribute to the "public good". DiMaggio and Anheier note that nonprofits can act as centres of influence for citizens who are marginalized from political processes (ibid.). In this sense, nonprofits can be seen as serving the public interest, as they provide structures through which disenfranchised groups can organize. This idea is echoed in Reid's (1999)assertion that "nonprofits help bring the norms and values of society to public decision-making" (p.251).However, other scholars (Collins, 1987; Calhoun, 1998) have tempered this enthusiasm with warnings that, in addition to bringing people together, nonprofit organizations can reinforce social boundaries. While nonprofit organizations have the capacity to contribute to the public good, this outcome is certainly not guaranteed.

The debate about the role of nonprofit organizations in society can be traced back to de Tocqueville's discussion of "voluntary associations" in *Democracy in America* (Jenkins, 2006). While our current understanding of nonprofit organizations was of course unrealized in his time, de Tocqueville regarded the nonprofit sector as "the embodiment of certain values that are crucial to democracy and good government" (ibid: 229). Civil society in this case refers to "the network of associations, groups and informal activities that exists apart from the state and the market" (ibid.). Tocqueville saw voluntary organizations as crucial in their role of being an intermediary presence between the government and individual citizens. They "provided a vehicle for citizens to come together to influence public policy" (ibid.). Berry and Arons (2003) have elaborated on this idea. They argue that nonprofits should not regard lobbying as an occasional event, necessary only when a significant problem arises. Rather, lobbying should consist of regular dialogue between the nonprofit sector and government officials. Elshtain (1995) includes

nonprofit organizations in her vision of what is a healthy civil society. She describes civil society as "the many forms of community and associations that dot the landscape of a democratic culture". These groups are "mediating institutions" between individuals and the government. This reinforces Berry and Arons' argument that nonprofits can play a vital role in democratic conversation. Lobbying should not simply be a reaction to a crisis, but should be part of the democratic process.

However, Berry and Arons are quick to point out that the presence of nonprofit voices is not enough to ensure that these voices are effective (2003).They concede that the United States is "theoretically" a pluralist society", and that "in an ideal pluralist democracy all relevant interests have a voice in the policymaking process" (2003:150). This does not, however, mean that all voices in the political arena will have equal influence (ibid). Berry and Arons articulate three conditions under which nonprofit voices will most likely influence the political process. First, nonprofit organizations must have the resources (financial and human) channel into their advocacy efforts. (This obviously relates to the concept of "resource mobilization" discussed above). Second, nonprofit organizations must take full advantage of the opportunities to lobby which they are afforded. Elson (2008), Hall et al. (2005), and others have stressed the fact that many nonprofit organizations do not take full advantage of their lobbying opportunities. This is due not only to lack of resources, but also to lack of knowledge about what constitutes as "lobbying" according to Canadian law (Elson, 2008). Third, Berry and Arons (2003) highlight the importance of having an employee or employees who explicitly work in the area of government relations and advocacy.

Many citizens view nonprofit organizations as vehicles for enriching the lives of Canadians. A 2006 study conducted by the Muttart Foundation found that that 70% of

Canadians believe charities do a better job than the government at providing for the needs of Canadians. Of course, defining the "public good" is a difficult endeavor. Mansbridge (1998) asserts that settling on an operational definition belies the fact that "the public good" should constantly be contested and challenged. Calhoun (1998) refers to the public good as a cultural project, created through constant dialogue rather than discovered as a found object. Both Mansbridge and Calhoun note the danger of excluding minority voices in this dialogue. It must be remembered that the dominant cultural group has the privilege of constructing what the "public good" means in society. However, lack of a solid definition does not diminish the importance of exploring the concept of public good. Mansbridge contends that the concept of "the public good" gives us a site to discuss what we collectively value as a society

Understandings of the "public good" often emerge during collective action and social movements. Social movement actors appeal to a concern for "public goods" such as clean air and water, and other things that presumably have value for all members of society. For instance, the ability of citizens to communicate openly and voice concerns with public officials is a "public good" which presumably benefits all citizens. However, not all citizens will necessarily have equal access to these goods. Calhoun (1998) reminds us that minority voices will tend to have a more difficult time accessing channels of political influence. This is particularly the case for low income individuals. A 1997 study found that only 2% American welfare recipients report belonging to organizations concerned about the program (ibid.).

Despite it's lack of a concrete definition, the concept of "the public good" resonates strongly in our society. Later in this study, I argue that the notion of nonprofits as "public good providers" was an effective frame used by the Lobbyists Act Campaigners. Before delving into the results of my research, I will describe the methodological design that guided this study.

Chapter III. Methods

My research examines how nonprofit organizations, with little formal power, influence public policy decisions. To examine this process, I conducted a case study of nonprofit lobbying that occurred in Alberta, Canada, in 2007. I interviewed 15 stakeholders in Alberta's nonprofit sector, as well as one civil servant and one political consultant who were involved in the campaign. In order to gain additional perspective to supplement my interview data, I also read and analyzed government transcripts in which elected officials discussed the campaign, *The Lobbyists Act* itself, and the role nonprofit organizations play in in society.

This chapter outlines the methods I used to examine nonprofit lobbying in Alberta. I will begin by elaborating on why I chose the Lobbyist Act Campaign (LAC) as a compelling case. I will then discuss my use of the qualitative case study methods, my recruitment methods and data collection procedures, and my data analysis procedures. This will be followed by demographic description of my interview participants and the nonprofit organizations who partook in the LAC. I will conclude by discussing some of the limitations of my research.

A. Choosing The Lobbyists Act as an Appropriate Research Topic

I decided to conduct research on the Lobbyist Act Campaign (LAC) for theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically, studying this particular lobbying campaign adheres to Yin's (2003) assertion that atypical cases are particularly useful for generating new knowledge. Atypical or unusual cases generally provide more information, and make more compelling sites of study, than cases that follow a typical pattern (Yin, 2003).

The LAC was unique in that it unified nonprofits with a wide variety of mandates and causes. Organizations came together from various "subsectors", as some of my interviewee respondents referred to them. Usually nonprofit advocacy issues carry little weight outside of a very narrow set or organizations. Instead of lobbying about specific issues like forest

preservation, orchestra funding, or services for persons with disabilities, nonprofits coalesced around a concern that transcends these specific mandates: the right of nonprofit organizations to engage in lobbying activity. This makes the lobbying initiative unique in the landscape of Albertan nonprofit lobbying initiatives. Interview participants emphasized the uniqueness of the LAC time and time again, as I will discuss later. This case allowed me to study the relatively novel process of nonprofit organizations networking and building alliances beyond their usual scope and reach.

I deemed the LAC to be an appropriate research site for practical reasons as well. The LAC took place over only nine months – from March to December 2007. The campaign began after *The Lobbyists Act* was announced in March 2007 commenced after the introduction of the Public Good Amendment in December 2007.   The relative brevity of the LAC means that it has been possible to me to study it in a comprehensive and timely manner. In addition to being bracketed by definitive boundaries, the LAC focused upon one particular goal – exempting nonprofits from *The Lobbyists Act.* These constraints of time and scope provided me with concrete guidelines of what to include and what not to include in my study – something that would be difficult had the campaign been longer, or defined by vaguer goals.

B. Case Study Methodology

Yin (2003) suggests that case study methodology is especially useful when the researcher is posing "why" or "how" questions about a social phenomenon. Because my research examines how that lead to the success, and a case study design fits well with this purpose. Yin (ibid.) also stresses the suitability of case study design when the researcher has relatively little control over events. As I began my research approximately one year after the LAC ended, I obviously had no control over the events or the outcome of the lobbying process. Rather, I can study the event, in

its entirety, from a distance.

Another incentive for the case study method is the fact that I am studying, as Yin describes it, "complex social phenomena" (2003:2). Lobbying is impacted by the social and institutional environment in which it takes place, the relationships that exist (or don't exist) between lobbyists and also by the government that is in power. Case studies offer an opportunity to collect multifaceted data from a variety of sources (Yin, 2003). The data gathered from a case study will be used to explore these possible social influences, and identify other social factors that may become evident during the research process. Yin (2003) distinguishes between single-case and multiple-case studies. Due to my time and financial constraints as a graduate student, I concentrated my efforts on a single "case": the Alberta nonprofit lobbying campaign against Bill 1.

Researchers often encounter the struggle of how to achieve a useful balance between "breadth" and "depth" in any project. Generally speaking, a researcher chooses whether to examine a relatively small event in substantial depth, or to study a more far-reaching phenomenon in a more superficial manner. By choosing to study a specific lobbying process that lacks a great deal of breadth, I have been able to devote more time to conducting relatively in-depth, multifaceted research. I believe that the theoretical and substantial potential of my chosen case more than makes up for the lack of breadth that exists in my current research.

C. Recruitment Methods

My first step was to compile a list of all the nonprofit organizations that contributed their time and effort to the campaign. I compiled this information from two sources. First, the Standing Committee on Government Services prepared a Report on Bill 1 that provided a list of all organizations (forty-three) that submitted commentary, endorsements, and objections to *The*

Lobbyists Act. Approximately half of these organizations were for-profit businesses or trade unions, and therefore not included in my master list. While a number of businesses objected to Bill 1 on various grounds, I focused specifically on nonprofits that coalesced around and protested the Bill. My second source was a list of campaign endorsers complied by a key participant in the Lobbyists Act Campaign. This list cites 158 nonprofits who endorsed that organization's official submission to the government. After removing duplicate organizations from this list, the total number of organizations involved came to 177.

It is important to note that, of all the voices that commented on Bill 1, only three endorsed the Bill and encouraged the Alberta Legislative Assembly to let it pass unaltered. The first of these supporters was a private citizen, the second was a lawyer based in Ottawa, and the third was a national "government watchdog" organization situated in Ottawa. I unsuccessfully attempted to contact this organization by phone and by email multiple times for an interview. This is unfortunate; I believe this project would have benefited from having an "opposing voice" represented.

However, I have made up for this shortcoming by analyzing the legislative transcripts of conversations that took place during between these supporters and government representatives.

I began recruiting participants shortly after receiving ethics approval in June, 2009 with the help of Mr. Lewis[6], a nonprofit employee who was involved in the LAC. Mr. Lewis acted as a gatekeeper during the initial stages of my research. He provided me with the names of people (and organizations) who had played critical roles in the lobbying campaign. He contacted twelve nonprofit stakeholders, and sent each one an introductory letter informing them of my research. My hope was that a letter sent on my behalf from a well-known community insider would grant me legitimacy in the eyes of potential interviewees. I followed up this email with a second email

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[6] An acronym.

and/or phone call. Nine of these contacts eventually led to an interview.

I was reluctant to rely solely on Mr. Lewis to facilitate my contact with potential interviewees, as I felt that this would restrict me to reaching only his network of contacts. For this reason I ceased relying on Mr. Lewis as a gatekeeper after the initial nine interviews were conducted. In addition to relying on Mr. Lewis as a gatekeeper, I recruited additional participants using two methods. First, I used referral sampling to gather potential participants. Second, recruited from my master list of 177 nonprofits that had participated in the LAC. The majority of the 177 organizations involved worked were engaged in work on environmentalism, social services, advocacy, and volunteer promotion. For this reason, I attempted to recruit participants from these four subsectors of the nonprofit sector. I also attempted to recruit from both urban and rural nonprofit organizations. Due to my small sample size and the nature of my research, I was unable to make quantitative comparisons between these four subsectors. However, I wanted to attempt to capture the range of organizations involved in this lobbying process.

D. Demographics of the Lobbyists Act Campaign

I used the International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations (ICNPO) to categorize the nonprofits who participated in the Lobbyists Act Campaign, as well as those nonprofits that I interviewed. The ICNPO was developed during the extensive Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, and has been used in reports issued by Imagine Canada (Hall et al., 2005) and Heritage Canada. It is also the classification system mentioned by two of my interviewees, fortifying my belief that ICNPO is a well-recognized method of classifying nonprofits. Each area of "civil society organization activity" (Hall et al. pg 5). The categories used in the ICNPO are presented in the table below.

Table 1. International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations System (ICNPO).

ICNPO Classification Number	ICNPO Description of Classification
1	Culture and Recreation
2	Education and Research
3	Health
4	Social Services
5	Environment
6	Development and Housing
7	Law, Advocacy and Politics
8	Philanthropic Intermediaries/Voluntarism Promotion
9	International
10	Religious
11	Business/Professional Associations, Unions
12	Not Elsewhere Classified

I spoke with representatives from fifteen nonprofit organizations over the course of my interviews. (My other two interviewees, a political consultant and an Alberta civil servant, were also closely involved in the Bill 1 lobbying process.) Almost half of my interviewees worked for organizations devoted either to philanthropic endeavors, or voluntarism promotion. Two interviewees worked I organizations primarily mandated to do advocacy work, while an additional two worked in the area of community development and housing. One interviewee worked with culture and recreation and environmental organizations, while one interviewee apiece worked in health and social service organizations. In addition, one employee worked for

library, which I categorized under 12 (Not Elsewhere Classified) in the ICNPO system. Libraries are not officially nonprofit organizations, as they are not regulated under the Canadian Society's Act (ANVSI, 2007). However, a number of libraries endorsed the efforts put forth by the lobbying nonprofits, and I interviewed one library employee whose efforts were employed.

Of course, there is some overlap between categories. For instance, one interviewee worked at a nonprofit dedicated to environmental law; I classified this organization as both a 5 and a 3 under the ICNPO system.

Approximately 170 organizations were involved in the Bill 1 lobbying effort. I say "approximately" because I was told the number was higher (around 230) during interviews. However, after looking through government submissions and reports, I was able to identify 177 nonprofit organizations involved in the lobbying effort. Table 2 categorizes the participating nonprofits by their primary area of activity.

E. Interviews

I conducted 17 semi-structured interviews between June and December of 2009. Interviews took place by phone and in person, and ranged from 27 minutes to 80 minutes long. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions in order to cultivate what Yin (2003) refers to as a "guided conversation" (pg. 89) rather than a more rigid interview structure. A copy of the interview schedule is included in Appendix A.

Each interview began with me explaining that all interviews would be kept confidential, and that any quotes used from their interviews would not be associated with any particular interviewee. I then asked each interviewee if s/he had any questions for me before starting the interview. A few participants took this opportunity to ask me for more information about the purpose of my research, and about my role as a graduate student.

Table 2. Nonprofit Organizations Participating in the Lobbyists Act Campaign, as Categorized

by the ICNPO.

ICNPO Classification Number	Description of Classification	Number of Interview Participants	Number of Nonprofits who Participated in the lobbying effort
1	Culture and Recreation	1	20
2	Education and Research	0	22
3	Health	1	23
4	Social Services	1	55
5	Environment	1	5
6	Development and Housing	2	12
7	Law, Advocacy and Politics	2	13
8	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion	7	12
Group 9	International	0	0=
Group 10	Religion	0	3**
Group 11	Business and Professional Associations	0	8
Group 12	Not elsewhere classified*	1	4

Each of the "not else classified" organizations are Libraries or private citizens.
*** The three religious organizations were primarily social service organizations affiliated with particular religious denominations.*

The interviews ran smoothly, and almost all participants spoke freely and without

inhibition. One participant asked me to turn off my recorder for part of the interview, in order to

answer a question "off record". However, this "off-record" information was later openly shared

by several other interviewees. Moreover, the information one participant was reluctant to share

can be found publically in the ALA transcripts found on the Alberta Government's website.

While I obviously did not record what this participant told me "off record", the public nature of this information emboldened me to include it in my analysis when the topic came up in other interviews.

The interviews took place during a tumultuous time for Alberta's nonprofit sector. The provincial government made dramatic cuts to nonprofit funding during the summer of 2009. An advantage of this was the fact that many nonprofit stakeholders were delighted to speak with me about the relationship between the nonprofit sector and the government. My interview topic was particularly salient in Alberta during the time of my research, and this may have helped me recruit interviewees more easily than I would have otherwise. However, the tumult in the sector made it more challenging for me to keep the interviewees on topic. Many participants wanted to talk at length about the latest issues in the sector, rather than their relatively distant memories of the Lobbyists Act Campaign. I often had to make a deliberate effort to keep the conversation focused around the lobbying efforts related to Bill 1.

Initially, I was concerned that lobbying and informal networks might be a sensitive topic for some interviewees. Specifically, I wondered if stakeholders be defensive when I asked them about the role that informal networks play in lobbying efforts. I worried that participants might think that by asking about informal networks, I was implying that they operate "under the table" and are not sufficiently accountable to their constituents. However, this concern did not actually materialize. Interviewees talked quite openly about the informal processes through which they initially gathered to plan their lobbying efforts. One interviewee abstained from answering a question, but every other interviewee appeared willing to answer all of the questions I posed.

I conducted five face-interviews through the course of my research. Each of these interviews took place at the participant's workplace. The in-person interviews had the advantage

of providing me richer visual information. Twelve participants chose to be interviewed by phone. Phone interviews were useful because they allowed me to interview stakeholders across the province of Alberta. They also allowed me to continue my interviews once I returned to Ontario in August, 2009.

F. Methods for Ensuring Confidentiality and Anonymity

The University of Waterloo's Office of Research Ethics provided me with full ethics approval for my research on June 10, 2009. In receiving this approval, I agreed to conduct my research under the guidelines for anonymity and confidentiality provided by the University of Waterloo. Berg (2009) distinguishes between anonymity and confidentiality, and notes that the two terms are often (erroneously) used interchangeably. Confidentiality is the attempt to "remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subjects' identities" (ibid: 90). Anonymity, in contrast, is the process of ensuring that participants "remain nameless" (ibid.). I began each interview by informing participants about my protocol for ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. When transcribing interviews, I applied pseudonyms to all participants and their associated organizations. I also filed and organized my interview field notes according to pseudonyms, so that no interviewees were ever associated with their real names. Audio files from the interviews were stored on an external hard drive, to which only I had access.

G. Document Analysis

The second method by which I gathered data was through a long process of document analysis. I primarily studied what Denzin (1978) refers to as "public archival records" (as cited by Berg, 2009: 271); that is, documents that can freely be examined and obtained by members of the public. These include discussions of Bill 1 that took place in the Alberta Legislature, early

drafts of the afore-mentioned bill, and reports submitted to the Standing Committee on Government Services on behalf of the nonprofit coalition. Document analysis is a relatively unobtrusive way of gathering data (Berg, 2009). All of the documents I analyzed were available online, and could be found conveniently and cost-effectively. The Government of Alberta provides transcripts of all Legislative and Committee meetings through their website; this was an invaluable source of information for me throughout this research.

Transcripts from the Alberta Legislative Assembly's discussion of Bill 1

Bill 1 was first introduced in the Alberta Legislative Assembly in March, 2007. Between this date and the final passing of the Bill in November, the ALA discussed Bill 1 on eleven separate occasions. These transcripts provided a wealth of information about how Alberta's elected officials articulated their understandings of Bill 1, and of nonprofit lobbying in general. These transcripts also elucidated how ALA members conceptualized the role of Alberta's nonprofit sector. While reading these transcripts, I identified and recorded broad themes that were pertinent to my analysis.

Transcripts from meetings of the Standing Committee of Governmental Services (SCGS)

The Standing Committee of Governmental Services (SCGS) was a bi-partisan group born out of the Alberta Legislative Assembly in May 2007. The Committee was responsible for examining Bill 1, inviting feedback from interested stakeholders in the province, and holding public hearings during which nonprofit leaders could voice their concerns. The transcripts of their meetings, as well as the two days of public hearing with nonprofit leaders, are the lengthiest and most important documents examined for this project. The Alberta Legislative Assembly makes all Committee meeting transcripts publicly available on their website. Because of this, I acquired the transcripts of all nine days of meetings very easily.

These transcripts, 189 pages in total length, were remarkably useful. They allowed me to examine the manner in which government officials viewed the Bill, and how they understood the arguments being made by the lobbying coalition. Additionally, they provided me with detailed accounts of exactly how 19 different nonprofit organizations made their case for why they should be exempted from the Bill.

Governmental Reports

In March 2007, the Alberta Government also released its first draft of Bill 1. Five months later, the Committee submitted an official report to the Legislative Assembly with their suggestions for how to improve Bill 1. Studying these two governmental reports clarified the details of how the original Bill was structured, and how the amended Bill differed from its original form.

Reports submitted to the Standing Committee of Governmental Services

In addition to the nineteen nonprofit organizations that attended public hearings on Bill 1, 29 organizations presented written submissions to the SCGS. Some of these submissions were made by union groups, which fell out of the boundaries of this research. Three submissions however, were particularly comprehensive. One was submitted on behalf of 158 separate nonprofit organizations across the province. The other was a comprehensive legal analysis of the Bill conducted by a legal resource centre in Edmonton. The submission with 158 signatories was useful in that it conveyed the joint concerns of stakeholders from a variety of perspectives within the nonprofit sector. The legal analysis was useful in that it provided me with information on how Alberta's Bill 1 differed from other provincial lobbying acts that have been implemented across Canada.

Newspaper articles about The Lobbyists Act

Using the Google search engine, I also began looking for old news articles related to Bill 1 in April 2009. My interest in finding these articles was twofold. First, I was interested in seeing which organizations had been speaking to the media during the lobbying campaign. I hypothesized that those organizations that had made an effort to contact the media about the Bill might have been especially involved in the campaign. Second, finding news articles detailing the timeline of campaign events could help corroborate (or contradict, potentially) the timelines proposed by interviewees.

I also acquired newspaper articles through one of my interviewees, who had kept a file folder of articles relating to the lobbying campaign. Between my own search and the sources provided by this stakeholder, I found fifteen news articles and two letters to the editor published in *The Edmonton Journal, the Calgary Harold*, and *The Edmonton Sun*. Due to the small number of articles found and the limited scope of this research, I did not engage in any official analysis of this material. Rather, these articles enhanced my understanding of the key players and the timeline of the Bill 1 lobbying campaign.

H. *Strengths and Limitations of Research Design*

Criticism of case study methodology

My use of case study methodology is accompanied by two main challenges. First, case studies often have a negative connotation. Yin (2003) notes that case studies are often assumed to lack rigour, and are assumed to be sloppily conducted, and evade systematic procedures, and "allow biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions" (pg. 10). I have tried to disabuse this notion by constructing a valid, reliable and rigorous case study design. By adding a political consultant and a public policy maker to my list of interviewees, I was able to

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corroborate and compare perspectives from both the nonprofit sector and the Government of

Alberta. Examining transcriptions from the Legislature and Committee meetings was particularly

useful in this regard. Rather than rely solely on the memories and beliefs of my respondents, I

gained a first-hand knowledge of how nonprofits are understood and conceptualized in Alberta's

political arena.

Sample size and generalizability

A second challenge before me is the tenuous relationship between case studies and

generalizability. One of the main criticisms made of case studies is that their findings cannot be

generalized to a larger population. However, it is important here to distinguish between two

types of validity: statistical generalizability and analytical generalizability (Yin, 2003). Statistical

generalizability is what we generally associate with scientific experiments: the use of a

quantitative, randomly assigned sample to generalize to a larger population with a certain degree

of statistical confidence and accuracy. Because a case study is not a sampling unit, this type of

generalizability is impossible to achieve using this methodology. However, analytical

generalizability is indeed possible to achieve using a properly constructed case study design.

Yin's (2003) description of analytical generalizability is worth quoting at length:

> *...a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare empirical results of the case study. If two or more cases are shown to support the same theory, replication can be claimed. The empirical results may be considered yet more potent if two or more cases support the same theory but do not support an equally plausible, rival theory* (pg.33).

As noted previously, my current research only constituted a single case study. According to

the previous definition, this would not allow me the opportunity to generalize broadly from the

study. However, this study could be a first step in a larger, comparative study between different

lobbying initiatives.

While I must be careful not to imply generalizability from my current study, I also want to highlight the fact that case studies can in fact elaborate sociological theories. Studying particular organizational processes and dynamics can provide concrete evidence of larger theoretical ideas found in the literature. A number of case studies have added to our sociological understanding of social movement and organizational theory. Douglas McAdam is one sociologist who has been especially adept at choosing case studies that elucidate larger sociological theories. In a series of papers using 1964's "Freedom Summer" as a case study, McAdam (1986; 1984) demonstrated how gender and the risk-level of social movement participation influence participant involvement. More recently, Evans and Kay (2008) use the political mobilization of environmental groups during NAFTA negotiations to advance current sociological understandings of social movements. Specifically, they suggest that less-powerful actors (like the nonprofits discussed in my research) can leverage greater strength by coalescing and brokering with other organizations outside of their immediate field. In sum, a great deal of sociological depth can spring from well-developed case studies.

Participant recall

A significant limitation constraining interviews is the fact that participants were being asked to remember events that had occurred approximately two years in the past. Foddy (1990) cites many instances in which participants' memories become less accurate with the passing of time. However, Foddy (ibid.) also cites Sudman and Bradburn's (1982) assertion that more salient events are more likely to be remembered accurately. Sudman and Bradburn define salient events as those that are particularly unusual, that reap "high social and economic rewards or costs", and that have "continuing consequences" (as cited in Foddy, 1990: 93). According to these criteria, the lobbying campaign associated with Bill 1 can be considered to be salient.

Stakeholders reported the campaign as "unusual" because of the high number and diversity of the organizations involved. The success of the campaign was reported to have a strong unifying social effect on Alberta's nonprofit sector. And finally, the successful modification of Bill 1 has had continuing consequences in the lives of Albertan nonprofit workers. For these reasons, it is reasonable to think that participant recall of the lobbying campaign is relatively accurate. Additionally, the potential memory lapses of my interviewees can be compensated for by the information I have gathered from other sources. For instance, the governmental documents I've analyzed provide specific dates, figures, and other incidental facts that might be forgotten by interview participants.

Neither qualitative interviews nor document content analysis is a foolproof method of gathering data. Interviews can be subject to problems of bias and participant recall, as have discussed. Berg (ibid.) also stresses that archival records can contain erroneous statements, and can reflect the biases of whoever authored the document. Because of this, he recommends that document analysis be used in concert with other methods of data gathering,

By gathering data from both interviews and public documents, I am able to enhance and expand the range of my research. Yin (2003) notes that one of the main advantages of the case study is this freedom to consolidate information from multiple sources. This strengthens what Creswell (2009) refers to as the qualitative validity of this study. Legislative transcripts are templates against which I can contextualize participants' recollections of the LAC. Whereas interviewees can intentionally or unintentionally provide misinformation, public documentation of Bill 1 will provide a more objective description of the event under study.

Additionally, incorporating more than one data collection procedure into research can foster congruence, but also illuminate divergences in findings. Instead of simply using multiple

methods to corroborate the stories of interviewees, this approach also allows for the possibility that discrepancies in my findings will emerge (Greene, Caracelli& Graham, 1989). Technically speaking, the design of my research may serve both a complementary (illuminating cohesion) and an initiative (illuminating paradox) function (ibid.)

I. Data Analysis

To analyze my interview and legislative transcripts I used NVivo, a software program that assists in organizing and categorizing qualitative data. My analysis covered both interview transcripts, and legislative transcripts. Though these documents were analyzed separately, often similar categories and themes were found in both sources.

I began my first cycle of coding by carefully rereading the transcripts and field notes from my 17 interviews. (One of my interviews was not transcribed, due to a technical problem, but I wrote detailed field notes, including quotes from my interviewee, during and after the interview.) I used attribute coding (Saldana, 2009) to categorize the activities undertaken by the nonprofit organizations that I interviewed. Like the for-profit sector, the nonprofit sector is broad enough to require smaller subfields to categorize the "civil society organization activity" (Hall et al, pg 5) undertaken by different organizations.

I began analyzing my interview data by structuring my coding according to interview schedule. My interviews addressed four broad themes, and I initially coded data according to which theme it related. The four themes covered in my interviews were a) how the nonprofit became involved in the LAC; b) the LAC lobbying process; c) the nonprofit's previous lobbying experiences; and d) the meaning of lobbying.

I initially coded each of these themes descriptively. As I spent more time with the interview transcripts, I used value and conceptual coding (Saldana, 2009) to further organize the data. Simultaneous coding was very useful here, as often interviewees simultaneously discussed multiple meanings and ideas. For instance, descriptions of the lobbying process were often infused with comments about perceptions of their organizations, and their perceptions of their relationship with the government and other nonprofit sector members. However, simultaneous coding can prevent qualitative researchers from focusing and refining their coding categories (Saldana, 2009), as it can be tempting to apply two labels to a difficult passage, instead of thinking deeply about which label would be most appropriate. For this reason, I tried not to over-rely on simultaneous coding, and refined many of my simultaneous coding decisions during my second coding cycle.

In the second cycle of coding, I built on this work by applying more abstract, theoretical codes to the data. I moved the analysis forward by assigning theoretical concepts (for instance, "neo-institutionalism" or "framing") – to the data. This process was guided by my pre-established hypotheses that social movement and neo-institutional concepts would be useful in understanding this case study. At the same time, however, I was open to the possibility of different codes and concepts emerging from the data. I did this by conducting a careful and thorough analysis. Rather than simply searching for justifications of the theories I chose to use, I allowed myself to acknowledge other, unpredicted concepts that occasionally emerged.

My coding of government transcripts was more conceptual in nature. My main goal in analyzing these transcripts was to get, in the legislators' own words, comments on the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of the nonprofit lobbying efforts. However, upon studying these transcripts more thoroughly I realized they also contained a wealth of information about

governmental deliberation. In particular, I found that conceptual themes relating to neo-institutional theory were evident in the transcripts. Therefore, I decided to broaden the scope of my analysis, and code instances in which MLAs used legislation in other jurisdictions to guide their decision-making processes.

In the following two chapters I will present the findings of my current research. The first chapter examines the lobbying tactics and strategies used by members of the Lobbyists Act Campaign. The second chapter examines the processes by which Bill 1 was eventually amended. I conclude by discussing the implications these findings have on our understanding of power in the nonprofit sector.

Chapter IV. Findings:
Lobbying Strategies Used by the Lobbyists Act Campaign

I began my research with the following question in mind: How do organizations with little or no formal power influence public policy? Strong et al. (2000) pose a similar research question in their investigation of the evolution of public education for African Americans. The researchers delineate their findings by not only the strategies used by African Americans to acquire greater access to education, but also the conditions that made their efforts possible.

This chapter explores the dynamic interplay between key non-profit and government actors. First, I examine the specific strategies that nonprofit organizations used to lobby the government to change Bill 1. This chapter explicitly outlines the resource mobilization and framing tactics used by the Lobbyists Act Campaigners. In the next chapter I will outline the political conditions and networking factors that facilitated their efforts. I will argue that the success of the lobbying tactics discussed below would have been unlikely without the corresponding political work described in the following chapter. However, the tactics described below were necessary precursors to the political work that would follow.

A. Resource Mobilization: "Capacity" and "Endorsing" Organizations

The resource mobilization perspective underscores the importance of organizational structures, leadership, and administrative structure in the success of a movement (McAdam & Scott, 2005). My research found that the Lobbyists Act Campaign was, in many ways, an exceptionally well-coordinated and efficiently mobilized effort. Thanks to a handful of resource-rich organizations, a structural path was created to link and unite diverse nonprofit organizations in a common cause. Before I discuss the strategic messaging that was created for and by the LAC, it is important to acknowledge how organizational network developed in order to facilitate communication about lobbying strategies and tactics.

"Capacity Organizations"

"Capacity organizations" are those nonprofits that held the financial and informational resources to spearhead the Lobbyists Act Campaign. Throughout my interviews, two organizations were consistently named as the campaign's organizing forces In particular, the Jubilee Association and Community Directions were instrumental in gathering support for the campaign, and directing the information flow to other nonprofit organizations throughout the province. All interviewees named at least one of these organizations when telling me how they first heard about the Lobbyists Act.

For a variety of reasons, these nonprofit organizations were well positioned to take on a leading role. Jubilee's financial resources allowed them to oppose the government without fear of retribution.Not heavily dependent on government funding, Jubilee was able to challenge government policy without fearing backlash in the form of funding cuts. This allowed them to advocate for the sector on behalf of the many nonprofits that enjoyed less financial independence. Jubilee took advantage of their unique position by submitting a detailed report to the Committee charged with evaluating Bill 1. This report, which was endorsed by 158 nonprofit organizations, demonstrated the LAC's unity to Committee members. It also allowed smaller nonprofits to express their disapproval without "sticking their neck out". By endorsing the report of a large and credible organization, these smaller organizations were protected from any fear of financial fallout.

Moreover, Jubilee had the financial resources to commission a legal analysis of Bill 1. Written by an Associate Dean at the University of Alberta, this report compared Bill 1 to similar lobbyist regulations in other Canadian jurisdictions and found it lacking. Talking points from this

report were used not only in the Jubilee's Committee submission, but by other organizations participating in the Lobbyists Act Campaign.

A second nonprofit organization, Community Directions, was also well positioned to act as a mobilizing force behind the campaign. As an umbrella organization with ties to nonprofit organizations across the province, Community Directions was able to disperse information to a wide network of nonprofits. Community Directions also had access to nonprofit stakeholders in both urban and rural settings. As the Alberta Legislature primarily consists of rural constituencies, it was strategically important for the campaign to reach nonprofits in rural Alberta as well as the two urban centres of Edmonton and Calgary.

Community Directions also submitted an analytic report to the Standing Committee of Government Services. While Jubilee articulated primarily technical and legal qualms with the Bill, Community Directions emphasized concerns with the Bill's underlying philosophy. Specifically, they expressed concern that the Bill "put nonprofit lobbying requirements in the same competitive market-based model as industry". They argued that this demonstrated a lack of understanding of what makes the nonprofit sector unique; rather than lobbying on their own behalf, nonprofit organizations generally advocate on behalf of "the public good".

Like the Jubilee Association, Community Directions had the financial capacity and political astuteness to hire outside help with their lobbying efforts. They hired a political consultant to help shape their arguments and develop their main talking points. The talking points articulated by Community Directions also flowed through the network of nonprofit lobbyists involved in the LAC. While the primary arguments of these two capacity organizations differed somewhat, they complemented each other well, and permeated the presentations and submissions put forth by other LAC members.

Many interviewees referred to Jubilee and Community Directions as the "capacity organizations" because they had the resources and the expertise to coordinate a large campaign, and the networks to be able to disseminate information to other nonprofits across the province. The capacity organizations themselves were also well aware of the importance of their efforts to coordinate the lobbying effort. Don, the executive director of Community Directions, stressed the crucial role that his organization played in motivating and mobilizing the sector. He explains,

"...We did what [the other mobilizing organizations] did which was you know mobilize the forces. We got a communication plan, we shared it, our key messages with our sector. We had, I don't know, 1000 organizations, maybe more, telling what the concern was. It was really the first test since I had come here of the power of the three capacity organizations to mobilize and motivate the sector. We'd never been able to do that before."

The importance of these capacity organizations was recognized other nonprofit leaders as well. Deborah, an executive director of a rural community organization, explained,

"...In respect to Bill 1, of course, um we became aware of that through Community Directions and became much more aware of the implications of what that would do through Community Directions."

Corine, an executive director of a large urban nonprofit organization, explained that her involvement with the LAC came through Jubilee. She found their commissioned legal analysis to be a particularly useful starting point.

"... through the initiative of Jubilee...They had taken the initiative to have [a legal centre] do an analysis of that legislation."

It is important to note that the capacity organizations did more than just formulate and distribute their submissions to other organizations. Both capacity organizations went took great pains to translate the legal and philosophical arguments into terms and talking points that community organizations could use when contacting their MLAs. This effort facilitated lobbying

in two ways. First, it diversified the network of nonprofits who took the initiative to speak to their MLAs. Not only were politicians hearing from large organizations that "normally" participate in lobbying efforts – they were hearing from small nonprofits in their own communities as well. Second, by crafting broad, understandable arguments out of technical terms, the capacity organizations increased the sector's understanding of the Bill. The Jubilee Association, in particular, required more than just tacit approval from endorsing organizations. Rather, they strove to communicate and cultivate real understanding of the flaws that they saw as existing in Bill 1. Hank, the executive director of Jubilee, stressed how crucial it was for organizations to be fully informed before endorsing their submission to the Standing Committee of Government Services. Rather than automatically giving support, endorsers were asked to contact him, stating that they were aware of Bill 1 and its implications for the sector.

"...we said, "Here's the concern, here's the research, here's the brief. Um, please familiarize yourself with the research before you start endorsing it". Because in this sector we have this nasty habit of when someone asks for a letter of support, automatically giving one....People were phoning and saying "add our names", and we said no, you know, we want an email from you saying you've read the material, you understand what it is that you're endorsing, and that you endorse it. We want to hear it from [an executive director] or board chair."- Hank

Charles, the executive director of an urban volunteer centre, echoed the importance of having fully informed members on board with a campaign. Only after being properly educated on an issue can nonprofit organizations accurately assess how they can best contribute to the cause.

"...it's the ability to move information out into the community and to inform people and really try to do two things. Number one is to say "this is what's going on", and explain it in a way that [they'll say] "Okay, I understand. I understand what it means to me andour organization. And here's what I can do."- Charles

In addition to spreading useful information, both capacity organizations made strategic use out of their knowledge of government processes in Alberta. Most importantly, they strived to facilitate the participation of rural organizations across the province. 42 of the 83 constituencies in the Alberta Legislative Assembly are located outside of Calgary and Edmonton, and these rural constituencies are an extremely important base for the Conservative party. Rural communities tend to be quite conservative, and generally there are strong, long-term relationships with their MLAs. Both capacity organizations realized that their campaign would have limited impact if the Lobbyists Act was perceived by MLAs as a "city issue".

Don stressed the fact that politics operates differently in urban and rural Alberta, with rural politicians generally having more personal relationships with their constituents.

"Our contacts were really really strong and they, people would pick up the telephone and say "Hey Jack". You can't do that so much in the city 'cause you don't have personal relationships. But in rural Alberta you do. And so the rural Alberta voice was really really strong."- Don

James, the executive director of a provincial nonprofit organization, noted that lobbying efforts in rural constituents and ridings in Alberta tend to attract more attention than those that take place in the city.

"...If your local nonprofit group is raising awareness and you're an MLA from Brooks or Lethbridge or wherever, then that tends to get their attention more than, you know, meetings taking place in Edmonton." -James

Hank echoed this sentiment, underlining the different interests that prevail in rural and urban Albertan ridings. He emphasized the fact that the LAC could not have been successful without the support of rural Members of the Legislative Assembly.

"...we have a whole mess of rural MLAs whose interests and knowledge are different than the people living in the corridor. And there are far more, I mean, the rural MLAs. If we had not gotten the rural MLAs, we were dead. We could have gotten every MLA in Edmonton, Red Deer

and Calgary on side, and we would have been screwed. So that introduces some additional challenges." – Hank

The previous examples demonstrate how capacity organizations mobilize financial and information resources in their efforts to spearhead the Lobbyists Act Campaign. By initiating the lead in voicing these arguments and commissioning reports, Jubilee and Community Directions were able to shield more government-dependent nonprofits from the fear of political retribution for their opposition. By soliciting the help of a legal analyst and political consultant, the capacity organizations were able to develop a list of legal and philosophical objections to the Lobbyists Act. Their next step was to disseminate this information throughout the larger nonprofit community in Alberta.

"Endorsing Organizations"

After developing their strategy, the capacity organizations disseminated their information to "endorsing" organizations" – a second, much larger group of nonprofit organizations. These organizations contributed to the LAC in two key ways. First, they contacted their Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), and used the messaging created by the capacity organizations to communicate their reservations about Bill 1. Some organizations wrote letters to the editor of their local newspapers, and informed their members about how the Bill would impact their organizations. Many of these organizations also made presentations and contributed reports of their own to the Standing Committee of Government Services.

The endorsing organizations' second contribution was the use of their networks to disseminate information about Bill 1. Upon learning about the Lobbyists Act, many endorsing organizations passed the information along their own networks. The nonprofit sector is rife with umbrella organizations linking nonprofits located in a particular region, or sharing a similar mandate. In fact, every nonprofit involved in the LAC shared group membership with other

nonprofits in the province or the country. Richard, the executive director of a volunteer centre in

central Alberta, stressed the intermediary role that his organization played. Not only did he

channel information about ground-level efforts information "upwards" to the capacity

organizations, he also passed information horizontally to the larger nonprofit community.

"We communicated with our local nonprofits to let them know what was going on and to encourage them to talk to their MLAs and support their provincial associations, where that was available. Um, and primarily acted as communications vehicle in both directions, whether it be back to the nonprofit community or upwards to Community Directions."

Corine's organization also acted as an intermediary tie between the spearheading and

endorsing members of the LAC. She articulated how nonprofit network structures enabled

information to be passed quickly between a large number of organizations. She described the

process as "quite viral", in that increasing numbers of organizations began passing the

information throughout their own networks .

"We were able to get the information out, and then it becomes quite viral in terms of people passing it on, you know, within their networks and within their communities. And that meant that in a very short period of time, we had reached into communities…we never anticipated it would be as effective as it was." – Corine

B. Arguments used in Opposition to The Lobbyists Act

The Lobbyists Act Campaigners used two broad conceptual arguments when voicing

their opposition to Bill 1. The first message was based on the premise that Bill 1 was a flawed

piece of legislation. By articulating legal and practical concerns with the Bill, LAC members

were able to ground their campaign in rational, practical terms that they hoped would resonate

with policy makers. Although the message that Bill 1 was bad policy was consistently used by

LAC members, this argument is not technically a "frame", in the sociological sense. A second

message, however, falls directly under the definition of a collective action frame. This message

was based on the premise that nonprofit organizations, unlike for-profit organizations, contribute

to the "public good". By distinguishing their sector as unique from other sectors in the economy, LAC members were able to argue that their should be treated uniquely as well. By using this frame, LAC lobbyists attempted to redefine the role that the nonprofit sector plays in Albertan society. In the following pages I will analyze both of these arguments as utilized by LAC members.

Bill 1 as Flawed Public Policy

The foundation of this argument came from a legal analysis commissioned by the Jubilee Association. Written by a University of Alberta law professor, this analysis outlined the perceived weaknesses of Bill 1 in great detail. A primary concern noted in the report, and echoed by LAC supporters, was that Bill 1 would impose a great administrative burden on nonprofit organizations. Already short on resources and time, nonprofits would need to devote more employee hours to recording and accounting for their lobbying activities.

This concern was mentioned repeatedly by nonprofit representatives who participated in the public hearings. One nonprofit representative who spoke at a public hearing stressed the negative impact the bill would have on his organization's efficiency.

"...Bill 1 directly impacts the best use of networks, and our growth and efficiency will be stifled. The administrative burden required to adhere to the provisions of this Bill will strain an already overloaded sector."-

The idea of Bill 1 as an "administrative burden" was emphasized by all but one of the nonprofit representatives with whom I spoke. Ruth, the executive director of a volunteer centre in a mid-sized town, noted that Bill 1 would cut into and both time and money, resources that are scarce in the nonprofit sector.

"We would have had to register as a lobbyist. We would have had to document every time we talked to the MLAs. And exactly what was talked about and the time and etcetc. Um, which when

you're talking to nonprofits, most of the nonprofits, don't have time to even make presentations, let alone do the documentation that the government was going to require, and also pay to be a lobbyist."

-Ruth

This intertwined with a second concern: the notion that nonprofit organizations, particularly charities, are caught in an "embedded regime" of accountability regulations. In addition to registering as lobbyists, nonprofit organizations are responsible for complying with two other regulations: the *Income Tax Act* and the *Charities Act*. Both of these regulations require nonprofits to report on the amount of money they spend on advocacy work, as well as other information about the their financial operations. All charitable organizations are required to publically disclose financial information through the Canadian Revenue Agency's Charity Directorate. By disclosing their T3010 returns on the website, charities already make public their revenue, expenses, employee compensations, and "whether they conduct political or foreign activities" (Blumberg, 2009).

Additionally, organizations that operate both national and provincial levels would now be forced to comply with two separate lobbyists registries. This is a relatively common occurrence, as many nonprofit organizations have branches at both the national and regional level. Hank noted that Bill 1 originally conflicted with federal lobbying regulations, confusing the issue of what was and what was not acceptable lobbying practices.

"Bill 1 conflicted with the federal act, both the old one and the new one. Um, and both of them have problems as they relate to [the Canadian Revenue Agency's] definition of what's acceptable and unacceptable. So, we had at least three different regimes, in addition to federal government departments since Harper became prime minister… - Hank

Nonprofit representatives participating in the public hearings stressed that the Lobbyists Act was redundant, as information about their organizations' financial dealings is already made

public through other mechanisms. Charities would have to comply with and report similar financial information to three separate reporting mechanisms.

"Our organization is a registered charity, so we're already obliged to provide financial information. Information a to where we're getting our funding is publically accessible in relation to our annual filings with Canada Revenue Agency as a registered charity. Our information is there...Our members would be affected by three pieces of legislation if this goes into effect: the Lobbyists Act, the Income Tax Act, and the Charities Act. So we would have three separate reporting mechanisms to report to."

While the afore-mentioned arguments highlighted perceived flaws in the policy of Bill 1, they did not consist of a collective action frame, in the sociological sense. Gammon reminds us that collective action frames are not simply aggregations of opinions, but the result of "negotiated shared meaning" (1992: 111). While all LAC members had technical and legal qualms with Bill 1, these critiques were not embedded in any larger meanings about the nonprofit sector. It is not uncommon for citizens and organizations from all sectors to express concern about a piece of legislation. In this sense, the LAC's arguments did not accentuate anything particularly unique or special about the nonprofit sector in Alberta. While the technical arguments put forth by LAC members were weighty and well-considered, they did not contribute to any new understandings of the nonprofit sector's role in Albertan society. However, the second message used by the LAC did just that. By framing the nonprofit sector as "public good providers", lobbyists act campaigners infused an alternative understanding of the sector into political discussions of the Lobbyists Act.

C. Framing Nonprofit Organizations as Public Good Providers

Guidelines from the Canadian Revenue Agency provided an avenue for LAC members to solidify the nebulous idea of "the public good". Rather than simply an abstract concept, "public good" is a construct used by the CRA to differentiate between charities and non-charitable organizations. While many organizations, both for and non-profit, can claim to be working for

the public good of citizens, charities need to provide the CRA with proof of their public good

work. This proof comes in the form of what the CRA refers to as a "public benefit test"

(Canadian Revenue Agency, 2009). Specifically, nonprofits must show that their "purposes and

activities provide a measurable benefit to the public" before they can receive charitable status"

(ibid: nap).

This point was made repeatedly by nonprofit representatives who spoke at the public

hearings, and was used to justify why nonprofit organizations should not be held under the same

lobbying laws as for-profit organizations. He reasoned that charities receiving funds from the

government were necessarily providing a benefit to Albertans at large, rather than for their own

organization members.

"Registered charities, as a matter of law, exist to provide public benefit. Otherwise, they cannot be registered charities. They should not be treated in the same way as commercial or professional interests…Those voluntary sector organizations which receive money from the province, do so to improve the quality of life of a community and/or to deliver a mandated government service."

However, the "public good" frame encapsulated not only registered charities; many

organizations argued that non-charitable nonprofits could contribute to the public good as well.

During the public hearings regarding Bill 1, government committee members were inundated

with comments stressing the public good that nonprofits provide to Alberta.

The public good argument was put forth at public hearings by representatives from a variety of

nonprofit organizations – not just charities. One nonprofit representative stressed the fact that the

organizations within her sector lobby only to improve some aspect of life for Alberta residents.

"We strive to improve the quality of life for Albertans. Therefore, when we talk to government…we do so to affect some aspect of Alberta society, to make Alberta a better place to live."

One LAC member stressed that nonprofits generally provide public services that the government has already deemed are necessary for society. The money nonprofits receive go towards these public services, rather than to nonprofit employees themselves.

"…The point is whether or not there needs to be an act that governs the relationship between elected officials and nonprofit, voluntary sector organizations…They're not asking for themselves. You do realize that. In most cases nonprofit organizations deliver services that government has deemed that they want them to deliver. It's not a question that we're putting those dollars in our pockets and walking away."

Throughout my interviews with nonprofit representatives, interviewees stressed the wide variety of ways in which the nonprofit sector contributes to the public good. James stressed the wide array of services and benefits that the sector provides. He also stated that the nonprofit sector plays a much more vital role than many citizens, and even government officials, realize.

"…Nonprofits are everything from running child care to the arts to, you name it, the 4H club in rural Alberta. But, it is a huge sector. The government has not paid close attention to the nonprofit community and I don't even think fully understand how dynamic and important a role nonprofits play in all different aspects of our society." - James

Corine, executive director of a volunteer advocacy organization, emphasized the important role than nonprofits play in helping citizens become engaged in their communities. Nonprofits provide citizens opportunities to develop specific interests and allow them to connecttheir communities.

"It's part of the culture of how people work together.It [doesn't] matter what your interest [is], really. You [can] find some kind of a group. If you want to do service, you [can] find something. Around a personal interest, there [is] sure to be some group here that you could get involved with. Those are really important things for community building and integrating people and helping them build connections. I mean, they're positive assets of how we engage in society and that happens primarily through the activities of the voluntary sector. –Corine

Corine leads an organization with the broad mandate of promoting volunteerism throughout the entire nonprofit community. It was striking, however, that even organizations

serving a relatively small or specific population had a well-defined idea of how they contribute

to the public good. Consider, for instance, the words of Caroline, a disability rights activist. She

argues that her organization's work improves the lives of not only persons with disabilities, but

other citizens as well.

"Just kind of in a blanket statement, I'd say that if you make communities more for people who are most excluded, they tend to work for everyone. Do you know what I mean by that? So people that are most marginalized and most on the outside, if we can create communities that work for them, then it also works for others. So, I'll give you an example, if we do advocacy about the need to put ramps in sidewalks, it will also work for people who are elderly and use a can, also for moms and dads pushing baby carriages, they work for lots of people. Um, I mean that's just kind of a very physical example. So that's a positive relationship that's created that has reverberations throughout the community."

While the Canadian Revenue Agency only vouches for the public benefit of charitable

organizations, the "public good" frame appeared to register with charities and non-charitable

nonprofits alike. Interviewees consistently stressed that the Lobbyists Act Campaign united a

diverse group of nonprofit organizations – organizations that generally do not share the same

networks or collaborate on the same issues. Generally, Alberta's nonprofit sector is

compartmentalized into what interviewees referred to as "silos". These silos generally

correspond to the categories outlined by International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations

discussed earlier in this paper. The "public good" frame used by the LAC was successfully

united organizations with a wide variety of mandates and interests. Simply stated, this had never

happened in Alberta's nonprofit sector before. Rather than targeting one Ministry (for instance,

the Ministry of Child and Family Services, or the Ministry of Seniors and Community Support),

the coalition contacted multiple Ministries about the implications of including nonprofits under

the Lobbyist Act.

D. Alberta's Nonprofit Sector as a "United Front"

Don describes how the Lobbyists Act Campaign taught Alberta's nonprofit sector about the importance of having a "united front". She also notes that the LAC was the first instance in which this "united front" was successfully created, encompassing nonprofits from all areas along the nonprofit spectrum.

"…The learning of the sector for me is the fact that we really need to have a united front, and sometimes you need to put your organizational stuff aside and just do it for the sector….Organizations [should] put aside their organizations mandate and their reputation to actually subvert all that into the greater good…Everyone was on the same page. Everyone felt exactly the same thing. There hasn't been another lobbying effort where people felt like that." – Don

Hank also noted the great variety of nonprofit voices that were included within the Lobbyists Act Campaign. He felt that the large scope of the nonprofit sector was well-represented by the participating organizations.

"We ended up with more than 200, which I thought was not bad, and covered everything, I mean, from the Edmonton Public Library to a small conservation group in Northern Alberta." – Hank

It is important to mention that the composition of the Lobbyists Act Campaign participants differed from the composition of Alberta's overall nonprofit sector. A striking difference was the dearth of religious organizations involved in the LAC. Virtually no religious organizations were involved with the campaign, despite the fact that 19% of Alberta's nonprofits are categorized as religious organizations (ibid.).

The lack of religious involvement in the LAC was noted by two interviewees. The first, Hank, stated that the nonprofit sector has been negligent at incorporating religious organizations into its advocacy work.

"...one of the things the sector, and this is true across Canada, have never been good at involving places of worship in any of the work that the sector has done. And that's something, I mean...that's one of my issues that I've got. What are we doing for small charities, because we seem to be doing a lot of service for very big charities, but what about the small guys who represent the majority of the sector? And religious stuff. The [name of denomination] will occasionally get involved, but it's iffy. Um, so we haven't done a good job of it. – Hank

Don also mentioned the lack of involvement on the part of religious organizations. Rather than blaming the efforts of the nonprofit sector as a whole, she focused her attention on what she saw as a lack of interest on the part of religious groups.

"They don't actually participate in anything…You know, the large Pentecostal organizations have volunteer coordinators but the Catholic Church doesn't, the Muslims don't, the Jewish people, the Synagogues don't. Did we have any…no we wouldn't have had any churches [involved]."

Another noticeable difference between the Bill 1 lobbyists and the larger Albertan nonprofit sector is the proportion of social service organizations. While social service organizations consist of only 9.3% of Alberta's nonprofits (ANVSI, 2007), almost a third of the Bill 1 lobbyists came from these organizations. This may reflect the lobbying strategy of trying to include organizations from a wide variety of Albertan constituencies. While research and philanthropic organizations tend to be housed in larger urban areas, almost all small communities have a number of nonprofits that provide services to local citizens. As I will discuss later, many of the mobilizing organizations noted that involving rural communities in the lobbying profess was an important strategy in a province with a primarily rural legislative caucus. The larger number of social service organizations involved may be in part due to the fact that these organizations were often specifically targeted to be included in the unified voice of the lobbying efforts.

It is important to note that having representatives from each subsector of the nonprofit arena was not a specified goal of the lobbying efforts. Rather than attempting to attain equal

representation, from each type of organization, an emphasis was placed on having the "right

people in the room". Hank emphasized the importance of partnering with individuals who could

understand legislation and help craft persuasive arguments, rather than presenting a

representative sample of nonprofit organizations.

"...I mean, some people were being involved because they needed to be, and there were, you know, my view is on something like this I want the right people in the room, I don't care if I have all the constituency's covered, I need people who were smart, who could read legislation, who could understand it, and could help marshal the arguments, and we got that."

In sum, the Lobbyists Act campaigners utilized several strategies to clearly communicate

their concerns to the Alberta government. Initially, a few resource-rich nonprofit organizations

took the initiative to seek out expert opinion on the proposed Bill. Lawyers from within one

organization commissioned a legal analysis of the Bill. This document was used as a starting

place from which the organization built its official repudiation of the Bill – a brief that was

submitted to the government, and circulated to supporting organizations. A second resource-rich

nonprofit solicited the help of a consultant to produce a second brief opposing the Bill. This

brief, in addition to citing the legal qualms addressed by the first brief, stated that nonprofits, as

public good providers, should be treated separately from for-profit organizations when they

engage in lobbying activities. These two arguments – the legal-rational and the "public good"

arguments – were used throughout the campaign by mobilizing and supporting organizations

alike.

Once these documents were produced and circulated, endorsing organizations began

engaging in traditional lobbying activities: contacting and meeting with members of the

legislative assembly, speaking at public hearings, and sometimes submitting briefs of their own.

By using the arguments and messages put forth by the mobilizing organizations, the entire lobby was able to articulate themselves concisely, and provide a united front.

However, as the following chapter shall make evident, the lobbying tactics described above were not enough to achieve the Bill 1 amendment. In November 2007, the Standing Committee of Government Services submitted their final report to the Legislature, in which they recommended that nonprofit organizations should *not* be provided exemption from the Lobbyists Act. The political work that facilitated the eventual achievement of the Lobbyists Act Campaign's goal – exemption from the Bill – will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter V. Findings: Political Influence and the Amendment of *The Lobbyists Act*

The previous chapter explained the social movement processes that were evident throughout the Lobbyists Act Campaign. LAC members created an efficient system of information sharing, and developed well-articulated frames that resonated with the nonprofit community at large. In this chapter, I examine the impact of these strategies on the final outcome of the Lobbyists Act Campaign. LAC's resource mobilization and framing techniques alone proved to be insufficient for the purpose of achieving exemption from the Lobbyists Act. The lobbyists finally achieved their goals by collaborating with political insiders, looking beyond the borders of Alberta, and crafting an alternative way of handling nonprofit lobbying based on Quebec's "Public Good Amendment". By feeding policy makers a legislative idea that had proven successful in another jurisdiction, nonprofit leaders gave the government a safe "out" through which they could concede to the desires of the nonprofit sector. Rather than appearing to have betrayed the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Government Services, senior legislators portrayed themselves as complying with political precedents set in similar jurisdictions.

In the following chapter, I demonstrate how mimetic isomorphism played a crucial role in the alternation of Bill 1. First, I will describe the mimetic isomorphism that occurred as the Standing Committee on Government Services originally attempted to alter the Bill. The Committee's lack of certainty and knowledge about the nonprofit sector led them to model Bill 1 on previously crafted legislation. However, Lobbyists Act Campaigners countered with the same tactic after when the Committee's recommendations did not meet their desires.

I will also use this opportunity to shed more light on the power dynamic that exists between the government of Alberta and that province's nonprofit sector. Bill 1 was altered not because the nonprofit sector "forced" the government to do so. Rather, by identifying political

insiders who were sympathetic to their concerns, LAC members worked with policy makers to produce an amendment that pleased actors from both sides of the debate.

"Power" proved to be an enormously important concept to my interviewees. If the nonprofit sector has no "formal" power, what type of power are they able to exercise, and under what conditions? The relationship between the nonprofit sector and the government has often been described in dichotomous terms, either as a relationship of collaboration or of conflict (Boris & Steuerle, 1999). My findings demonstrate that the power dynamic between the nonprofit sector and the government changes depending on the particulars of the issue being discussed. Discussions about financing and funding tend to lead to strong lines being drawn between the two parties. Additionally, collaboration within the sector is made difficult when funding is on the line, as nonprofits then feel (often accurately) that they are in competition with one another. Collaboration between government and sector representatives was possible because the LAC were not explicitly lobbying for more funding. Similarly, collaboration within the sector was possible because nonprofit funding was not contingent on the outcome of the lobbying efforts. As we shall see, efforts to unite Alberta's nonprofit sector have been far less successful when nonprofit funding is the issue of contention.

A. Mimetic Isomorphism and the Standing Committee of Government Services

Isomorphism describes the "process of homogenization" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 149) that occurs between organizations exposed to similar environmental conditions. As organizations gradually develop and grow, they display a tendency to become increasingly similar to other organizations within a particular field. Isomorphic tendencies can stem from three phenomena: organizational uncertainty, the professionalization of a field, and coercion and regulations. Specifically, mimetic isomorphism is the name attributed to the first type of

isomorphism - when organizations or institutions are unsure of how to act or react to a particular situation. Ironically, mimetic isomorphism led to two distinct events in the Lobbyists Act Campaign. Initially, it contributed to the Standing Committee on Government Services' decision to include nonprofit organizations in the Lobbyists Act. Unsure of how to respond to the challenges of the nonprofit sector, Committee members drew on and mimicked legal precedents from other jurisdictions. Citing the fact that five Canadian lobbying registries do encompass the nonprofit sector, the Committee decided that this would be the most logical path to follow. However, nonprofit challengers countered this decision by pointing to Quebec, the one Canadian jurisdiction that does not include nonprofits in its lobbying registry. By mirroring Quebec's policy, the challengers argued, the Government of Alberta could preserve the public good provided by nonprofit organizations while still achieving the legitimacy and credibility that would follow from complying with a legal precedent.

Transcripts of meetings held by the Standing Committee on Government Services illustrate the uncertainty experienced by Committee members. This uncertainty stemmed in large part from a lack of familiarity with and lack of knowledge about the nonprofit sector. The first two meetings of the Committee contained elaborate discussions about how nonprofit organizations should be defined. One MLA asked whether nonprofits with paid employees were really "nonprofit organizations" since "staff are being paid". Another MLA wondered if there were any mechanisms to check whether the nonprofits lobbying to be exempt from the Bill were "actually" nonprofits. A third MLA was unsure what activities should be constituted as "charitable activities", seemingly unaware of the fact that this information is available through the Canadian Revenue Agency. A fourth MLA, quoted below, was unaware of already existing measures of accountability that exist in the sector. He wondered whether it was possible to

determine where a nonprofit allocates its funding, seemingly unaware of the financial reports that nonprofits are obliged to make public.

> *"How do we determine the difference between charitable organizations that give most of their one to charities and those that give most of their money to the organization?"*

These comments reveal a fundamental lack of knowledge about the nonprofit and charitable registration procedures in Alberta. Many nonprofit organizations have paid staff; it is the non-distribution constraint (DiMaggio &Anheier, 1990) that makes nonprofit organizations unique, rather than their lack of paid staff. Under the Income Tax Act, The Canadian Revenue Agency specifically outlines what constitutes as charitable and non-charitable activities, as well as what constitutes "political activities". Similarly, anyone can visit the CRA website, search for a registered nonprofit organization, and learn about its financial activities. On a provincial level, the Committee was unaware that nonprofit organizations in the province are registered and regulated through Alberta's Society Act.

I highlight this lack of knowledge not to criticize the Committee, but to illustrate the mood of uncertainty that pervaded Committee meetings. Proponents of mimetic isomorphism would expect a group in this situation to look outwards, to other jurisdictions, for solutions to their problems. And indeed, the Committee began (quite reasonably) comparing the Bill with similar legislation in different jurisdictions. Other jurisdictions were a point of comparison during the Committee's more detailed discussion of the Bill's amendments. For instance, other jurisdictional rules were often referred to as the Committee tried to settle on an appropriate fine for organizations violating Bill 1. A first time offence fine of $25,000 was eventually agreed on by the Committee. One MLA argued for this fine amount because it was similar to fines levied in other provinces.

"...I think the point to make would be that with respect to the administrative penalty set at $25,000, Alberta is right in line with the other jurisdictions

Specific comparisons to legislation were made during discussions about the possibility of "reverse onus" – that is, requiring politicians to record and register who lobbies them, rather than the lobbyists themselves doing the work. This was considered a plausible option early in the Committee process, as it would have reduced the so-called "administrative burden" the Bill supposedly placed on nonprofits. However, the idea was eventually abandoned due to the lack of precedent in other Canadian jurisdictions. One Committee member argued against reverse onus on the grounds that no other Canadian lobbyist legislation contained this requirement.

"As you can see, a few submitters actually asked committee members during the public consultation period to consider…that the onus be placed on government rather than on the lobbyist to report lobbying activities. The first to point out here is that no other Canadian jurisdiction has a like provision, so no reverse onus provision exists anywhere else in the country in any other jurisdiction that has lobbying legislation." – SCGS Meeting, October 9, 2007

Most importantly, jurisdictional comparisons were also made while discussing the basic idea of whether or not to exclude nonprofits from the Bill. Committee members regularly pointed out that most Canadian jurisdictions *include* nonprofit organizations in their lobbying registries. This was cited as a reason for including nonprofits in the Bill 1 legislation. One MLA pointed out that nonprofits in other jurisdictions had been included without incident.

"I'm a little concerned that all the other jurisdictions that adopted a lobbyist act did not exempt nonprofits, and they seemed to have survived it quite well. I haven't seen any testimony that it was erroneous for any other them to have it."

Jurisdictional comparisons were also made by one of the few public hearing participants in favour of including nonprofits in Bill 1. This participant, a lawyer from Ontario, also appealed to the fact that most lobbyist registries include nonprofit organizations.

"In other provinces, starting with Ontario, we've had lobbying legislation for almost a decade…leading through to the legislation adopted in 2001 in Quebec and in British Columbia and most recently in Newfoundland and Labrador, and nonprofits there are by and large, with one exception, all covered."

The "one exemption" mentioned in passing by this lawyer was Quebec. Excluded from

Quebec's Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act are *"…any person whose job or function*

consists, even substantially, in lobbying on behalf of an association or other non-profit group not

constituted to serve management, union or professional interests" (2003:66). This exemption was

never mentioned by the previously quoted public hearing participant or by any members of the

Standing Committee on Government Services. As mentioned, the Committee ultimately decided

that nonprofits should be included in the Lobbyists Act. It wasn't until members of the Lobbyists

Act Campaign learned about Quebec's Public Good Amendment that a similar Amendment was

proposed as a possibility in Alberta.

B. Creation of The Public Good Amendment

While the Standing Committee on Government Services' final report did not destroy the

Lobbyists Act Campaign, it did deliver a serious blow. While the Committee's report ended the

official policy discussions, conversations about the Bill continued privately amongst politicians

and public servants. Bryan, a provincial civil servant, confirmed that despite the Committee's

recommendations some politicians had reservations about including nonprofits in the Bill. While

the Committee members had actively encouraged input from the nonprofit sector, they

ultimately, in the words of one civil servant, "got it wrong".

"The Committee…it was the early days of the bipartisan committees, and they were still figuring things out. They got it wrong. They listened and encouraged engagement. But I don't know if they actually heard anything. If people had been listening, it would have been an easy fix."

As a result of the Committee's decision, discussions moved beyond this policy committee

to a more political level. Bryan stressed that the government was getting "political flack" for its

stand on Bill 1, both from the Conservative party and the opposition. While the Committee

favoured including nonprofits in the Lobbyists Act, a smattering of politicians from both

political parties disagreed with this decision. However, it was the support of one politician,

Alberta House Leader Dave Hancock, that provided the nonprofit sector with the support it

needed to receive their exemption.

Bryan and several other informants referred to Dave Hancock as the "political champion"

of the nonprofit sector's cause. Quoted below, Hank explains what he heard of the political work

that Hancock began after the initial defeat of the Bill 1 lobby. After learning about the

Committee's decision, Hancock began speaking to his colleagues about his reservations. Hank

stresses the haphazardness with which the Lobbyists Act was initially written, and how this

impeded the Act's ability to provide appropriate guidelines for the nonprofit sector.

"And um, what we understand, and no one has ever confirmed this to me officially, but what we understand happened was that when it went, first of all, Dave Hancock as house leader was going in to caucus to saying, or one of the cabinets and saying "this is crazy". And the premier reportedly said "my intention was never to cover the not for profit sector". I mean, this bill was drafted on about two weeks notice. And they just copied things from other places." – Hank

Don corroborates this story, stating that once Hancock realized the implications the

Lobbyists Act would have for the nonprofit sector, he worked towards convincing his colleagues

to amend the Bill.

"...So when Dave Hancock understood, when he looked at this and saw what the ramifications were in terms of law, for citizen engagement, that's when, uh, the caucus changed their mind and Bill 1 went through with the amendments. And he] is someone who understands the challenges of the nonprofit sector. If it had been almost any other minister, we wouldn't have gotten that." - Don

Andrew also acknowledges the importance of Hancock's support, stating that the

government was initially reluctant to alter Bill 1.

"…. You have to find political champions. The political champion for this Dave Hancock. He took on the role of shepherding the legislation. Shepherding amendments through to change the legislation. The government was resistant to doing it themselves on a straight up basis.-Andrew

Imagery of the "political champion" mirrors the "insider" concept used extensively by Binder (2002). Binder defines an insider as "those vested with [the] authority to make decisions, and who have routine access to resources of all sorts in the system" (ibid: 131). Binder uses this concept in her case study examination of the effectiveness of fringe educational movements' in the United States. Binder compares challenges that the Afrocentric and Creationist movements have brought to school boards in different states, and evaluates their impact and effectiveness. She argues that these challengers experienced their greatest successes when bolstered by institutional insiders who believed in and supported their causes. She notes that school boards, like other institutions, have rifts and cleavages within their memberships. Astute challenger groups can exploit these cleavages by targeting their lobbying efforts towards those institutional members who share, or have a proclivity to share, their interests. Binder cites the presence of institutional insiders as one of the key factors that helped Afrocentric challenges in Washington D.C and Atlanta, Georgia, garner greater success than Afrocentric challengers in New York.

As an institutional insider who agreed with the challenge articulated by the Lobbyists Act Campaign, Hancock had the political and the institutional power to bring forth the Lobbyists Act changes desired by the nonprofit community. It is important to stress the distinction that Binder (ibid) makes between institutional and political power. Raw political power is gained when one is voted into political office. In the context of the Lobbyists Act Campaign, members of the Standing Committee on Government Services held this political power. Each member was elected as an MLA for a constituency in Alberta, and with this power was able to be appointed to the Committee. As such, they were institutional insiders who had the political power to evaluate

the arguments put forth by the LAC, and decide not to acquiesce to their desires. However, as Binder asserts, "certain insider positions have greater capacity to advance challenges and draft revisions than do others" (ibid: 228). In addition to the political power that accompanies the position of MLA, Hancock held the institutional power to overrule the decision of the Standing Committee on Government Services.

Both of these factors – the existence of institutional "insiders" and the distinction between political and institutional power - underscore the heterogeneity that exists within many institutions. To portray social movement challengers and their institutional targets as polarized opposites is overly simplistic. Fissures did exist between members of the LAC, as we have seen in the previous chapter. While LAC mobilizing forces framed nonprofits as "contributors to the public good", there was insider debate about whether all nonprofits (i.e, labour unions and professional associations) truly contributed to this cause. Additionally, as my interviewees and the eventual amendment of the Act exemplify, not all government insiders were opposed to the arguments put forth by the nonprofit sector. In addition to the competing points of view that existed within the Government of Alberta, institutional insiders held varying amounts of political and institutional power. By only examining the social movement factors (framing, resource mobilization) that contributed to the amendment of the Lobbyists Act, we exclude the crucial institutional and organizational factors that allowed the amendment to go forth. The lobbying activities practiced by the LAC were necessary, but not sufficient, in helping the LAC achieve their desired goals.

While Dave Hancock had the political and institutional power to shepherd the legislation, it was still necessary for him to propose a specific way of amending Bill 1. The amendment, which came to be known as the Public Good Amendment, was drafted in concert by a civil

servant who worked with the House Leader, and one of the leaders of the LAC. Hank describes

the process below, beginning with his discovery of Quebec's Public Good Exemption. Quebec's

legislation was crucial as it gave Hank, Dave Hancock, and the nonprofit community a specific

precedent for excluding nonprofits from lobbying regulations.

> *"At about this time we went back and I was surfing the net, and the research from the [legal report we commissioned], which excluded Quebec because of the civil law component, and because it was so different. I go onto Quebec's website and suddenly see what became known as the "public good exemption". And I said that's exactly what we want, and now we've got a precedent, there's another province, so we're not breaking new ground.*

Previously, the Standing Committee of Government justified including nonprofits in the

Lobbyists Act, stating that most other jurisdictions included nonprofits and that there had been

no detrimental impact on the sector. Here, Hank uses the same logic to justify excluding

nonprofits. Pointing to the one jurisdiction in which nonprofits are exempt, he stresses that

Quebec's Public Good Exemption has not negatively impacted that province's government.

> *"...um, I think part of the reason we got the Public Good Amendment is because someone else had written it. And Quebec society as we know…has not come to a crashing end because of the Public Good Exemption. So those people who wanted to support us were able to support that and say, "It's okay, we will somehow survive".*

After drafting an amendment based on Quebec's Public Good Amendment, Hank and a

collaborating civil servant passed the amendment on to Dave Hancock. Hancock proposed the

amendment in the Alberta Legislative Assembly on November 21, 2007.

In Hancock's introduction to the amendment, he emphasized two points that were

consistently made by the Lobbyists Act Campaigners. First, he noted that the Bill as it stood

could "over-encumber voluntary organizations with unnecessary accountabilities" (p.52). He

expressed concern for the fact that nonprofit organizations already account for their financial and

lobbying activities in other government processes.

"In essence, Mr. Chairman, the voluntary sector in this province does a lot of work…and sometimes – and, I think quite accurately – are concerned what with all of the accountabilities that are build into the governance process, we make them spend about a third of their time applying for money and a third of their time accounting for it, and if we have a registry act with which they have to comply, they would spend the other third of their time complying with the registry act."

Secondly, Hancock reinforced the notion that nonprofit organizations work for the public good of Albertans and the province as a whole. In a thinly-veiled criticism of the Standing Committee on Government Services, Hancock stressed that the differences that exist between the for-profit and not-for-profit sector.

"I believe the committee did some very good work on this bill, but I think I would have hoped that they would have gone just this little step further and recognized the presentations that were being made with respect to [nonprofits]…While it's very important for Albertans to…know who's talking to their government, when we're talking about the public good, we do want to encourage the public debate. We certainly do want to encourage Albertans to engage in voluntary organizations, to be unleashed to give their capacity back to their community, and we don't want to restrict them in any undue way."

C. Assessing the "Success" of the Lobbyists Act Campaign

In the following pages we have reviewed the initial decision of the Standing Committee on Government Services, and seen the political processes that lead to their recommendations being overruled. The question that arises at this point is whether the lobbying efforts by Lobbyists Act Campaigners were effective. Would the Public Good Amendment have passed with just the political maneuvering done during the last stage of lobbying? It is difficult to ever ascertain causation in qualitative research; and evaluating the objective "success" of the Lobbyists Act Campaign is not my intent. However, as I will expand upon in the next chapter, this campaign was exemplary in that both sides of the challenge perceived themselves as winners. The nonprofit sector ultimately achieved their goal of being offered exemption from

Bill 1. The Conservative Party of Alberta was able to successfully pass a Bill signaling a new era

of governmental openness and transparency.

While the social movement strategies described in chapter four, while not single-

handedly successful, did contribute to the outcome of the Lobbyists Act Campaign. . The

lobbying efforts helped legitimate the amendment. The sector's unified front ensured that the

LAC was not perceived as serving only a few elite interests. Rather, the lobbying efforts ensured

that the concerns about Bill 1 were heard from a diverse array of nonprofits from around the

province. This effort helped the Conservative Party save face – in the eyes of the opposition, and

in the eyes of their own caucus. By modeling a Public Good Amendment after an existing piece

of legislation, the Government of Alberta could defy the Committee's recommendations while

retaining their legitimacy. Charles, the executive director of a volunteer advocacy organization,

stresses the importance of gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the government through a joint

lobbying effort.

> *"The effort of getting, calling the community to action, having the community respond gives legitimacy, that it's not just a couple of people yipping. You've got six or seven hundred people yipping. Right? The community is not happy with this. One of two people, so what? And then, to have the ability to politically get things done, frankly, to get things done, to have the right connections. To be able to position the things the right way at the right time, you know, I think without that, I don't think we would have gotten the result we were looking for. So we needed both. It was fortunate that both were available. So, full credit all around."* – Charles

Corine emphasized how a variety of different circumstances came together to help

facilitate the success of the Bill 1 amendment. She reinforced the multifaceted nature of the

LAC's success, and argued that the omission of any one factor would have prevented the

outcome that ultimately occurred.

> *"I think if any one element of the things that contributed to making this a successful intervention had been missing, if we hadn't had the original work done by the Jubilee and*

the [legal centre] we wouldn't have had enough knowledge about what the potential problems were that we could then articulate in a less legalistic fashion and be able to get that stuff out. But that wouldn't have had very much impact if it hadn't been for the distribution network. And none of that might have counted if it hadn't been for some very high level political work that some people were able to do. So it was a great and interesting convergence of many different strengths." - Corine,

This idea – that there were many necessary but not sufficient components that combined to help the Amendment succeed – is also supported by transcripts from the legislature. Each member of the Standing Committee on Government Services spoke about the pressure they were receiving from nonprofits in their communities. Most of these comments were made quite casually, like the following comment made by a member of the committee on October 25th:

"I'm still, you know, getting a lot of feedback from the nonprofits. I'm still getting a lot of feedback in terms of discomfort from them."

The efforts of Lobbyists Act Campaign members were also acknowledged during discussions in the Alberta Legislative Assembly. On November 21st, opposition MLA Laurie Blakemen commended the lobbyists on their efforts to educate the government on the implications of Bill 1. She specifically named someof the capacity organizations, mentioned in this study, as a "key individuals" in the sector's lobbying efforts.

"...there are clearly some individuals who were introduced in this Assembly when we started into the debate on Bill 1. I'm thinking of [name of the executive director of a capacity organizations]. There were a number of key individuals who really worked hard and poured heart and soul into helping government understand how important this [Bill 1] was."

Interviewees also noted the unusual lack of political interest generated by the Lobbyists Act Campaigners. Claire, executive director of a provincial environmental organization, expressed surprise when a provincial politician praised her organization for the work they had contributed to the campaign.

"I ran into on the street the chair of one of the provincial boards that makes decisions on resource matters. And I had, because I had sent copies of our brief to various

environmental contacts that we had including the Environment Minister, the heads of many of these boards, that type of thing. And I had become so used to the government wouldn't agree with us anyhow that when I ran into this fellow…he said to me, " Oh, thanks for sending your brief. I read it and I agree with it. This is a big concern, this is a big problem, and I've let people know about it". –Claire

The pressure that MLAs were feeling from constituents worked to the lobbyists' advantage. Nonprofit organizations are generally well-respected within a community, particularly charitable organizations that work with vulnerable or sympathetic populations. As Hank stated during our interview, *"The fact [was] that every MLA was being beaten up by organizations they don't want to get beat up by."*

While the initial lobbying tactics performed by the LAC were not sufficient to change the Bill 1 legislation, quotes like these demonstrate that their efforts did create a ripple in Alberta's political community. Albertan politicians felt pressure from nonprofits in their constituencies, who sent them emails, letters, and reports outlining the effects Bill 1 would have on the nonprofit sector. While their efforts alone did not alter the Bill, they created fertile ground by which the Public Good Amendment was eventually able to garner support. Message framing and information sharing put the sector in an ideal position to take advantage of the opportunities available once Dave Hancock threw his support behind the efforts, and once the Public Good Amendment was drafted as a viable alternative to the original legislation.

D. Power and Alberta's Nonprofit Sector

Permeating my interview data, as well as legislative transcripts, are two conceptualizations of the government-nonprofit relationship: on emphasizing the existence of collaboration, the other emphasizing conflict. A collaborative nonprofit/government relationship implies that some power is shared between the two parties. At the very least, collaboration implies that nonprofit ideas and concerns will be actively listened to and considered by public

policy makers. While collaboration provides no opportunity for nonprofits to exert power over

the government, the very act of participating in collaborative processes allows nonprofit

organizations to exercise their agency.

Overwhelmingly, the interviewees I spoke with understood their relationship with the

government as one of collaboration. The importance of collaboration was also emphasized time

and time again by nonprofit representatives participating in public hearings. One participant

described civic engagement as occurring when citizens participate together with the government

to set provincial agendas.

> *"There are many different descriptors of civic engagement. One that we particularly like is: active participation recognizes the capacity of citizens to discuss and generate policy options independently; it requires government to share in the agenda setting and to ensure that policy proposals generated jointly will be taken into account in reaching a final decision."*

A second participant emphasized the compatibility inherent between the agendas of the

government and nonprofit sector are, as both entities strive (ideally) to increase the quality of life

for Albertans.

> *"That agenda, as we share it with government and the not for profit sector, is really totally compatible,…around the notion that we want to create a better circumstance for Albertans. We want to create better child care. We want to create better social programs…We want Alberta to continue to be a place where people want to live, work and play."*

Interviewees also emphasized the importance of working collaboratively with the

government. Charles emphasized the fact that cross-sector understanding can ideally grow out of

collaborative processes. Ideally, nonprofit-government collaborations can increase each party's

understanding of the other's positions.

> *"Coming at this through, you know, a collaborative table, is an important strategy…That's a better model, in theory, because what it develops is understanding. We understand better the governments' issues, the government understands the sector's*

issues…so you're trying to do business together instead of two camps that are apart, eyeing each other across the river…"

Corine, executive director of an urban voluntary organization, astutely describes the fundamental difference between how nonprofit and government stakeholders perceive their relationship. While nonprofits generally value their access to politicians, politicians tend to see this access as a problem. Rather than seeing an opportunity for a new perspective on a social or policy issue, politicians see yet another organization attempting to gain influence and funding.

> *"What happens is that we have access [to politicians] so that they understand the impact of public policy. So I didn't look at it as a problem, that we had access to government. Government looked at it as a problem…I remember [politician] saying to be in the elevator, 'there's too many nonprofits asking for money'."*

While the nonprofit sector tended to highlight the collaborative nature of their relationship with the government, government officials perceived their relationship as one mired in conflict especially about funding. Government officials feel that they are continuously being lobbied for money, and do not view the nonprofit sector as being unique in this regard. One committee member expressed her perception that most government money is given to nonprofit organizations. This feeling of constantly being lobbied for money by the nonprofit sector contributed to her skepticism about excluding the sector from Bill 1.

> "*The way I've looked at this whole this is, where are we as a province? Where is the majority of our money going? Where are we actually handing out money? When I try to answer that question, what I see is that money that's being handed out is being handed out to the nonprofits"*. (pg. 43).

A second committee member echoed this sentiment, noting the large numbers of voluntary sector organizations that have come to her "asking" for money. The amount of money asked for by the sector, she argued, necessitated its being included in the Bill 1 legislation.

"I do have to make the point that most of the lobbyists who come before me are from the voluntary sector, and in terms of the asks, it's in the billions of dollars of money that is being asked from the voluntary sector. That's part of why [the sector] is included [in the Lobbyists Act]." (pg. 57)

In addition to viewing nonprofits as lobbyists, many Members of the Legislative Assembly expressed skepticismabout whether nonprofits actually contribute to the "public good" of Albertans. During the public hearings, one committee pointed out that almost all lobbyists whether for-profit or non-profit, claim to be improving Alberta in some capacity. In this sense, the committee member saw no distinction between for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

"Okay, I'm going to put my foot right in it. Nobody has ever come to me and said: "Hey, we want this. Our group wants this." Everybody who has ever come to me has always said: "This is what Alberta needs. This is how we make Alberta better"...."Whether you're being paid by a nonprofit or whether you're being paid by an organization, I don't see any difference in the people." – [p. 79]

Despite the conciliatory tone coming forth from the nonprofit sector in both the public hearings and my interview data, many interviewees expressed frustration with being viewed as primarily concerned with funding acquisition, rather than improving society by fulfilling their organizational mandates. Richard, executive director of a mid-sized volunteer centre, wryly expressed his view about the government's perseveration on money.

"...I believe that the government feels that the nonprofit sector, when they want to come talk to government, it's always about money. And so when it is not about money, the government still thinks it is about money."

Deb, a volunteer coordinator in a mid-sized town, challenged the notion that nonprofits only participate in the political process when asking for money. She highlighted the role that nonprofits can play in educating politicians about social issues, and the implications of various policies.

"It's not necessarily that we're always out there trying to attract the dollar. Sometimes just talking about the challenges we face and what kind of implications that can have on

public policy and decision making…because we're nonprofit doesn't mean that we hand our head low and our hands out."

Financial conflict not only puts a wedge between the nonprofit sector and the government; it can create strife within the nonprofit sector as well. A number of interviewees talked about the increasing competitiveness within the nonprofit sector. When the Alberta government cuts social program spending, the result is increased competition between organizations for government dollars. In fact, some interviewees suggested that part of the reason different nonprofits were able to rally around this issue is because the Lobbyist Act was *not* about funding. Normally when the government cuts funding to nonprofit programs, it is far more difficult for nonprofits to come together and protest. For instance, the government made some very deep cuts to programs for adults with developmental disabilities this past autumn. These cuts had garnered strong criticism from disability nonprofits, but not from other nonprofit organizations. Andrew, a political consultant who worked with members of the LAC, noted that the nonprofit sector tends to "look at each other differently" when government funding is on the line.

> *"….When we did Bill 1, they all got together, and they had power in numbers. Um, it wasn't about the money, it was really about the principle. When it's about the money, I think the sector looks at each other differently."*

Hank echoed this sentiment, noting that no individual organization stood to lose money if Bill 1 was altered. Organizations realized that Bill 1's effects would be felt across the entire sector, rather than in one substantive area. Bill 1 was not labeled as "health" issue or a "social services" issue, but as a sector issue. This allowed organizations to put aside their individual differences and develop a united front.

> *"…there was no room for individual interests in it, because no one was going to get any funding out of this, no one was going to get any contracts. So it was the sector operating as a sector….by the time the [legal centre] had done the research and written the report,*

which I think was a really good piece of work, um, and easily understandable, people understood what the consequences were, and it was going to effect all of us the same."

Don described this process – the development of a united front – one of the most important lessons that came out of the Lobbyists Act Campaign. She stressed the importance of putting aside organizational differences in order to focus on those marked similarities that connect all nonprofit organizations.

"…The learning of the sector for me is the fact that we really need to have a united front and sometimes you need to put your organizational stuff aside and just do it for the sector."

Which nonprofit organizations are best positioned to pose a serious challenge to *The Lobbyists Act?* My research reveals that the more dependent a nonprofit organization is on government funding, the less confident it feels in challenging the government in any way. Foundations, which usually have strong financial profiles independent of government help, are often able to criticize the government in ways that other nonprofits cannot. The Jubilee Association, which is well-resourced and not particularly dependent on the government, shielded many less powerful nonprofits by acting as a sort of organizational "Trojan Horse". Jubilee invited provincial nonprofits to endorse the submission they sent to the government voicing their concerns with Bill 1. By merging their concerns into a submission spearheaded by Jubilee, smaller and more financially dependent nonprofits were able to shield themselves behind the power of a relatively stable and impervious organization. Virtually all interviewees mentioned this as a crucial piece of the lobbying strategy. Capacity organizations, particularly philanthropic foundations who are not directly dependent on government monies, can empower more dependent nonprofits to speak out. Ruth, the executive director of a mid-sized nonprofit that signed onto Jubilee's submission, mentioned the fact that Jubilee is further removed from the government than many other nonprofit organizations.

"I think a lot of the process was being driven or some of the information was initially being driven by the Jubilee because they are a little bit hands off [from the government]. In not being, a uh, a not for profit in the same way as other organizations because they are a foundation."

Hank succinctly expressed the value of having a well-resourced organization like Jubilee take a leading role. Because their money comes from non-governmental sources, the organization does not have to fear losing funding if they displease the government in any way. In his words, Jubilee does not have to fear "payback".

"…One of the advantages of having the Foundation do something like this is that there is nothing government can do to us. We are a private foundation. We get no money from government, um, the worst thing that can happen is they can get pissed off at us but other than that life will go on…we're in a unique position because what does payback mean? We're co-funding something with [Ministry Name] and the worst thing they were saying, they would say "We're not going to co-fund." And our board said, well, fine, we'd cover it ourselves; it's not a big issue. It was only $50,000." – Hank

Despite the nonprofit community's ability to influence the alteration of Bill 1, my interview data overwhelmingly portrayed a nonprofit sector feeling powerless in the shadow of a strong government. All but one of my interviewees referred to Alberta as a "one party state" at some point during our conversations. The Conservative party has ruled in Alberta, with a firm majority, for 40 years. Many interviewees felt that this has an impact on lobbying in the province, as it makes MLAs feel less fearful of being voted out of office. As one interviewee put it, "Our politicians aren't looking over their shoulders at the opposition." Other interviewees were more forceful, saying that this reality makes the government "arrogant", and "thinking they can do whatever the hell they want, frankly." These words belong to Charles, who expressed a belief that Alberta's political context makes advocacy and lobbying in that province more difficult. According to Charles, the massive majority held by the Conservative party leads politicians to become overly complacent.

"...sometimes dong advocacy work, it's, in Alberta's political context as well where there's just such a massive majority, and there's such a sense from this provincial government that they can do whatever the hell they want, frankly. It's the attitude that comes out often. And they do. So when that's the political context, it just makes doing advocacy that much more challenging." –Charles

Corine noted the inertia that can set into a political system that has very little turnover. Because new politicians from non-Conservative parties are rarely elected, there are very view alternative strategies for nonprofit workers who find little political interest in their cause.

"You know, I think in some ways that political stability and the lack of really viable opposition parties has made the lobbying in Alberta for the sector far more difficult. Because there's um, there aren't a lot of options. You can take forward your position. And if the government isn't interested in responding, it's not really as though there's a really viable other voice that can take up that call. And so, um, it creates a different dynamic..." – Corine

Many interviewees expressed concern about potential backlash against nonprofits that are critical of the government. This concern does have some basis on reality. For instance, in the summer of 2009, a nonprofit representative was fired from a governmental committee for being critical of the government's changes to nonprofit funding (Cheng, 2009). This incident was mentioned by many interviewees, along with a general wariness of being perceived as criticizing the government. Don opined about the fact that nonprofit-government relationships have become very "personal" – a fact that has diminished the initiative of nonprofit organizations to speak with the government.

"Nobody wants to wiggle the wagon and bite the hand that's feeding them. And there's just a real fear. Absolutely. Because so much of it has become very personal."

James also discussed how a separate lobbying campaign, one that his organization helped develop, had negative political repercussions for some participants. He believes that this fear of political payback prevents nonprofit organizations from being willing to participate in advocacy and lobbying efforts in the future.

"Well I think...there's a political culture that's created because of the one party rule. And that is that people are generally afraid to speak out. Particularly thinking back to our [name of campaign] Campaign.. These sectors are heavily dependent on government funding. So are afraid to bite the hand that feeds them. And they were very nervous about doing the campaign. And there have been repercussions, actually, from that. Um, and so, uh, the one party state and their arrogance about they can do whatever they want, then translates into people who are afraid to do any advocacy."

Hank referred to the increasing role that nonprofits play in delivering services no longer provided by the government. He argues that the sector has given up some of its independence in this regard, and that this can lead to nonprofits prioritizing the needs of the government over the needs of clients.

..."the sector has given up some of its independence and the government is seeing it as a service provision arm of government. Um, and we need to say, that's not what we are. Because if push comes to shove, we should be standing up for our clients. We are not an agent of the government of Alberta...and if we were their agent they'd be funding us a hell of a lot better." – Hank

Other interviewees supported the idea that the old governance model, where nonprofits act as service providers, lingers in the minds and actions of policy makers. Brian, the civil servant who participated in the crafting of Alberta's Public Good Amendment, admits that the voluntary sector does "things we [the government] doesn't want to, quite frankly."

These respondents suggest that the sense of futility some nonprofits actors feel when communicating with the government is part of why the Lobbyists Act was so important to Albertan nonprofits. Feeling like they have very few avenues to influence the government, it is logical that nonprofits would want to hold tightly to whatever avenues of governmental influence they do have. When the Lobbyists Act threatened to restrict their access to policy makers, LAC instigators reasoned that their sector could not afford to lose their ability to freely lobby the government.

E. Opportunities for Nonprofit Organizations to Acquire Power

The nonprofit informants with whom I spoke consistently expressed feeling at a significant power disadvantage when attempting to interact with the provincial government. They felt that the overwhelming majority held by the Conservative party prevented politician from However, despite this perceived disadvantage, nonprofit challengers succeeded at making their objections to Bill 1 salient to some Members of the Legislative Assembly This suggests that, despite the real fears of retribution that nonprofits harbour, there are still opportunities for such organizations to influence public policy. Two opportunities for influence were particularly salient in my data: the opportunity to cultivate long-term relationships with politicians, and the opportunity to educate policy makers.

As discussed above, many interviewees lamented the lack of political turnover that exists in Alberta. However, the political longevity of Alberta politicians also provides an opportunity for nonprofit organizations to cultivate long-term relationships with politicians. In fact, while the government's stability was viewed as an impediment to the success of nonprofit lobbying efforts, it also provided opportunities for nonprofits to cultivate ties within the province's political structure. The stability of Alberta's political system allows politicians to (ideally) develop long-term relationships with their community, and learn about the work nonprofit organizations are doing in their jurisdiction. Lines of communication between nonprofits and their MLAs can remain relatively stable. Community organizations have consistent relationships with their political representatives, as these representatives often stay in office for a great number of years. In a more fluid political climate, where the popularity of political parties fluctuated more regularly, these relationships might not develop to the same extent.

Relationships between individual politicians and nonprofit organizations have important implications for the effectiveness of nonprofit lobbying. Many of the nonprofit employees

spearheading the Lobbyists Act campaign stressed that sporadic, issue-based lobbying is far less

effective than establishing an ongoing relationship with the government. In fact, I argue that

these long term relationships are an important component to understanding the success of the

LAC. On a personal level, one key LAC member was a long-term friend of a politician who

contributed to the amendment of Bill 1. However, these long-term relationships were generally

business-like in nature rather than personal. The mobilizing organizations behind the campaign

did not suddenly begin participating in the lobbying process when Bill 1 emerged as an issue.

Regardless of whether they acquiesced to their challenges raised by nonprofits, politicians were

accustomed to hearing from and responding to these challenger voices. Charles noted that

nonprofits play an important role when they continuously watch and respond to the

government's actions.

> *"…The message [here] is that while you may have those who can be vigilant, somebody*
> *needs to be watching the legislation, you need to be watching what's coming on the dock.*
> *You know, what kinds of things are being proposed. What kinds of conversations,*
> *decisions and so forth. And then, um, you need the resources to be able to do something*
> *about it."*

However, other interviewees emphasized the importance of choosing issues to lobby

about carefully. Hank cautioned against the urge to automatically sign up for or contribute to

every cause that comes down the political pipeline. Rather, he chose his battles carefully,

knowing that if he contacted his government contacts too often about too many issues, they

would probably stop returning his phone calls.

> *[We] can do some of what it does because as a general rule we keep our cover dry. We're*
> *not out every week criticizing somebody and saying this or that. Thus, when we do speak*
> *up, people tend to listen more. I mean, that's been a long standing policy of [ours]. I*
> *think it's served us well. And it also means that if I phoned a cabinet minister I'd likely*
> *get my call returned. And that's, that's one of they keys. I can do absolutely nothing if I*
> *can't get to the people who have the authority to make it happen. – Hank.*

Of course, before learning how to be effective lobbyists, nonprofit stakeholders must learn a more rudimentary lesson: the fact that they do, in fact, have the right to lobby. In their efforts to educate the nonprofit sector about Bill 1, LAC leaders also re-emphasized the fact that nonprofits have the right to participate in some lobbying activities. Changing federal legislation, lack of a clear communications strategy, and limited interest on the part of some nonprofits have all contributed to lack of the sector's understanding of its own lobbying rights (Elson, 2007). Not all nonprofits are aware of the full extent of their rights to lobby. This was highlighted by one interviewee who has led workshops on nonprofit lobbying laws. He blames misinformation, changing legislation and the nonprofit sector's lack of initiative for the dearth of nonprofit lobbying awareness.

> *"...That problem was exacerbated a few years ago when a group called [name] existed and was going around, it was calling for an end to all rules on advocacy by charities. Um, which I think was a silly position. But they were going around talking about how awful the rules were, and how restrictive they were….Um, and so I'd go into a meeting after [name] had been there and they'd been going on about, "you know, why aren't you changing the rules", and I said, Okay, what is it you want to do that you think you can't do. And people would give examples, and I'd say, "You can do that". Doesn't even count in the 10%. You can do that. You can do *that*. So people started suddenly realizing that they could do a lot more than they thought they could. But there's still not good understanding."*

Nonprofit lobbying is constrained not only by lack of information, but also by the memory of previous, more restrictive lobbying regulations. Caroline, an employee at a small urban disabilities organization, noted that old legislation continued to haunt nonprofits. Many organizations, she argued, still feel intimidated by formal lobbying rules and processes.

> *"And so, even today, like, that still, people are still really threatened by that, and don't understand their rights. And that's not just [our] community that's the nonprofit sector period…. Most people are very threatened by those formal processes- Caroline*

Lobbying and public education

Interviewees consistently described their relationship to the government as a relationship of education. Nonprofits educate the government by providing knowledge about particular social and community concerns. Nonprofits also educate the government about the role of the nonprofit sector – something that, many interviewees stated, the government knew little about prior to the Lobbyists Act Campaign. James notes that, while politicians are often aware of nonprofits in their own constituencies, this knowledge does not translate to a broader knowledge about the nonprofit sector's role in Alberta.

> *"What we find is that a lot of those MLAs…They know of certain nonprofits in their communities, but they don't really understand their work, per se, and the challenges they face. So a big part of it was an education process of the MLAs, just about the sheer diversity of work that the sector does."*

Don described the "disconnect" that exists between the public and nonprofit sector. Most government officials, she believes, are not aware of how much nonprofits contribute to the lives of Albertans.

> *I truly believe that there is a real disconnect, uh, in what the real cost/benefit of our sector is to the province…And so, I don't think that they clearly understand the contributions of how many people are actually employed and actually contributing tax dollars back to the province, as well as, if the sector were not to exist, then, would the government be prepared to pick up the services that need to be delivered to continue to have healthy communities. – Don*

Above, I describe the caveats needed to fully explain the "success" of the Lobbyists Act Campaign. While the lobbying tactics used by nonprofit organizations were effective in providing a unified message to the government, a few key individual efforts facilitated the actual amendment of Bill 1.However, there is one way in which the LAC was an unqualified success: as a confidence booster for Alberta's nonprofit sector. After Bill 1 was amended, nonprofit annual reports and news articles began triumphing the success of the LAC's efforts. On their website, one nonprofit organization stated that the amendment "was drafted in response to

concerns we raised about the negative implications of including Alberta's nonprofits and

charities under this legislation…" (CCVO, 2007). In their 2007 annual report, another

organization described the Public Good Amendment as a "crowning achievement":

"The success of the modification of Bill 1, the Lobbyist Act, was a crowning achievement last year. Working closely with its partners in the sector, Volunteer Alberta was able to convince the Provincial Government to remove nonprofits from the impending legislation that would have silenced many crucial voices. This would not have been a success without the unprecedented outpouring of support from membership." [pg. 2]

This enthusiasm about the impact of the LAC was echoed by many interviewee

respondents as well. Susan, executive director of a social services organization, reported that the

Bill 1 success made agencies feel like they were being listened to by the government.

"You know, I think that the agencies are staring to say "Hey, if we do speak out as a solid voice of many, they, there's a good chance they will listen to us." – Susan

Corine also attributed the amendment of Bill 1 solely to the lobbying efforts of the LAC. She

mentions how much discussion, both inside and outside of the committee, was dominated by

conversations about the nonprofit sector.

"It was the breadth and the extent to which these issues where being raised everywhere, and politicians react to that. I have no idea just how many organizations they heard from any particular constituency, but you know when you, you read the transcripts, when you start going through those transcripts you appreciate the fact that most of the conversation at the committee level had to do with the nonprofit sector. It dominated it. " - Corine

However, some interviewees were still uncertain bout whether the sector had gained any

real power through their lobbying efforts. Charles, while impressed by the efforts of the LAC,

has doubts as to whether the nonprofit community actually gained any power through the Bill 1

situation. While he admits the sector was bolstered by their exclusion from Bill 1, he doubts

whether that success could be replicated again in a different situation.

"I think the folks from the sector were bolstered by the notion that the goal got accomplished. "Oh yay, we did it." (laughs.) So that was good. Does that mean now that

you've got this new found power? No. Um, does it mean that the government got caught
on one where the sector stepped up to the plate and let 'em have it? Yeah." – Charles

The previous two chapters have provided a detailed analysis of the Lobbyists Act

Campaign. By portraying their sector as a "public good provider", nonprofit challengers

marketed themselves as a unique and necessary component to civic life in Alberta. By

identifying and working with "political insiders", LAC members were able to contribute to the

development of Alberta's Public Good Amendment. However, as the next chapter will illustrate,

the unity of Alberta's nonprofit sector was short lived. I will offer a coda to the Lobbyists Act

story, demonstrating that the tactics used during the LAC have not been generalized to other

challenges within the nonprofit sector. Finally, I will discuss the theoretical implications of this

research, and suggest potential areas for future research.

Chapter VI. Conclusion

A. *Summary of Findings*

Most research on nonprofits highlights the role that these organizations play in service provision. This research lies on the assumption that service provision is "the core function of the sector" (Andrews & Edwards, 2004:484). However, nonprofit organizations are increasingly delving into the arena of political advocacy. In order to contribute to the understanding of nonprofit advocacy work in Canada, I have examined a 2007 nonprofit lobbying campaign that occurred in the province of Alberta. In doing so, I have attempted to illuminate how non-state actors, with little or no formal power, influence or challenge state policies.

The results of this research emphasize the utility of using both social movement and organizational theory concepts to explain advocacy work. Using both theories in concert contribute to a bifurcated understanding of lobbying processes, neglecting neither the role of the challengers nor the institution being challenged. Social movement concepts illuminate how the Lobbyists Act Campaign developed both its structure and its arguments. Resource mobilization privileges information about how organizations make use of the resources available to them (Tarrow, 1998). I have argued that the strategic use of financial and informational, and network resources facilitated the Lobbyists Act Campaigns' coalescence. Drawing on their ample financial resources, mobilizing organizations were able to commission legal information from a provincial legal centre, and political assistance from a political consultant. With this information in hand, these mobilizing organizations were able to develop a well-informed lobbying strategy. Once this information was summarized concisely and accurately, these mobilizing organizations began disseminating this information to other nonprofits around the province. After learning about Bill 1 and its implications for the nonprofit sector, these organizations began diffusing information throughout their own networks. The financial ability to conduct research, the

information gleaned from this research, and the networks that disseminated this information were all crucial resources for the Lobbyists Act Campaign.

While resource mobilization illustrates the structural composition and information diffusion of the LAC, framing emphasizes how ideas and meanings about lobbying were produced and articulated by coalition members. Framing is the activity through which actors produce ideas and meanings to mobilize a collectivity (Benford& Snow, 2000: 611). The mobilizing organizations spearheading the LAC crafted a collective action frame emphasizing nonprofits as "public good providers". Like all collective action frames, this conceptualization of the nonprofit sector was designed to "mobilize potential adherents and constituents" (ibid:614). This frame bypassed nonprofit divisions based on mandate, location, or financial resources. All LAC participants, regardless of their specific mandate, their location in a rural or urban constituency, and their budget size, could see a benefit in portraying themselves as "public good providers". Not only was the "public good provider" frame salient within the nonprofit community, it helped garner support outside of the sector as well. Alberta House Leader Dave Hancock eventually introduced and successfully passed the Public Good Amendment – an amendment that would satisfy the LAC's goal of achieving exemption from Bill 1.

It is important to note that not all arguments made against the Lobbyists Act can be described as sociological frames. A distinction must be made between arguments based on rational, legal, or logical arguments, and frames, which create and perpetuate meanings about a particular phenomenon. For example, LAC members argued vehemently that Bill 1 would place a great "administrative burden" on the nonprofit sector. While the LAC used particular rhetoric and arguments to make this case, they were not attempting to develop or expand the "meaning" of administrative burdens. The "administrative burden" argument, therefore, does not fall under

the jurisdiction of a "frame", and does not hold the same sociological interest as that held by the "public good provider" argument.

However, neither the resource mobilization nor framing strategies of the LAC were enough to ensure their exemption from the Lobbyists Act. In order to understand how this exemption eventually came about, it is necessary to incorporate the neo-institutional concept of isomorphism. Mimetic isomorphism, specifically, describes the tendency for uncertain organizational environments to foster imitation between organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The Committee charged with evaluating Bill 1 held very little knowledge of nonprofit regulatory processes. This limited knowledge compelled the Committee to mimic nonprofit lobbying regulations as it existed in other jurisdictions. Equipped with the knowledge that most Canadian lobbyists registries included nonprofits, the Committee reasoned that Alberta's registry should do the same. However, the Lobbyists Act Campaigners countered with decision by providing a counter-example. Pointing to Quebec's Public Good Amendment, LAC members argued that there was political precedent for excluding nonprofits from lobbyists registries.

Without support from inside the Government of Alberta, it is likely that the Lobbyists Act Campaign would have fizzled at this point. However, the assistance of an "institutional insider" (Binder, 2001), kept the possibility of a Public Good Amendment on the table. Politicians and civil servants who disagreed with the Committee's decision saw Quebec's Public Good Amendment as a viable alternative. By exempting nonprofits from Bill 1, the Government of Alberta was able to appear to have conceded to the Lobbyists Act Campaign. This lead to Alberta's nonprofit community perceiving that they had been "successful" in their efforts to influence a piece of legislation. However, the Government of Alberta could also claim to have "succeeded" in introducing a Lobbyist Registry to the province, pleasing the politicians who

wished to turn over a new leaf of transparency in the provincial government. Ed Stelmach "succeeded" in passing his first Bill as the Alberta Premier. In sum, the ultimate solution to the problem of Bill 1 left all actors feeling like they had "won" their desired results.

B. Recent Developments in Albertan nonprofit/government Relationships

Following the introduction of the Public Good Amendment in December 2007, Alberta's nonprofit sector was brimming with optimism. Sector members had hoped that the campaign would herald in a new era of collaboration, both between the government and the sector, and within the sector at large. Unfortunately for the nonprofit sector, neither of these hopes has materialized. To the deep chagrin of the nonprofit community, the Lobbyists Act Campaign did not have a long-term impact on nonprofit/government relations in Alberta.

In April 2009, without any warning or consultation with the nonprofit sector, the Department of Culture and Community affairs eliminated one of the primary sources of funding in the province. The loss of The Wild Rose Foundation, which provided 8.2 million dollars annually in nonprofit funding, was devastating for the sector. For 25 years, the Wild Rose Foundation provided grants, based on a lottery system, to 250 nonprofit organizations annually. The decision to discontinue the Wild Rose Foundation came as a complete shock to the nonprofit community. Even the chairwoman of The Wild Rose Foundation was blindsided by Minister Lindsay Blackett's decision to eradicate the organization (Pratt, 2009). Additionally, even the more politically involved nonprofits in Alberta received no forewarning of these cuts being made. Many of my interviewees, including those that regularly met with government officials, informed me that the Wild Rose Foundation's elimination came as a complete surprise. This lack of consultation rattled the sector's belief that they could, in fact, work collaboratively with the

Alberta government. From this example, it is clear that the notion of a closer

nonprofit/government collaboration has not materialized as expected.

In the weeks following the Wild Rose Foundation's elimination individual nonprofit

organizations expressed their consternation and opposition to the Government of Alberta.

However, the smattering of opposition from nonprofits never developed into a unified lobbying

effort to the extent that occurred after the Lobbyists Act was introduced. Two likely reasons exist

for this lack of coalescence. First, as noted in the previous chapter, nonprofit organizations seem

to be less likely to create a unified force when funding is on the line. Rather than seeing one

another as united allies, it is possible that the Foundation's elimination led to nonprofits seeing

one another as funding competitors. After Blackett announced his intention to axe the Wild Rose

Foundation, nonprofit organizations were left scrambling in their efforts to secure new sources of

funding. In this environment of sudden uncertainty, it is unlikely that nonprofits would feel

confident enough to initiate and launch a unified political challenge.

Second,it is likely that many nonprofit organizations felt too intimidated to speak out

against the government in this instance. Minister Blackett swiftly "let go" nonprofit director

Karen Lynch from her position on a government committee after she criticized the government's

decision to discontinue the Foundation (Cheng, 2009). Lynch was well known and respected in

the nonprofit community and the government alike. She had enjoyed a lengthy and amicable

relationship with the Alberta's Conservative Party in particular, and her dismissal shocked many

within the nonprofit community. In fact, slightly more than half of my interviewees brought up

this issue of her dismissal during our conversations; this was clearly a move that had a negative

impact on nonprofit/government relations. These interviewees reported a sense of impotency

after Lynch's dismissal. If someone as well connected and respected as Karen Lynch could be

admonished for opposing the government, what hope did "ordinary" nonprofits leaders have in

contributing to governmental policy? Sadly, Lynch's dismissal, partnered with the elimination of

the Wild Rose Foundation, have contributed to the crumbling of the optimism and confidence

that were briefly enjoyed by the nonprofit sector. One quote in particular encapsulates the sense

of lost opportunity that has pervaded many nonprofit organizations. Towards the end of our

conversation, Hank lamented the fact that the sector's united front has dissipated since the days

of the Lobbyists Act Campaign.

 "Um, [the Lobbyists Act Campaign] was one of the most satisfying sector activities I've been
engaged in, because the sector did come together. And the fact that we haven't been able to make
hay of that just depresses the hell out of me."

C. Discussion

I add this coda to the story of the LAC not to diminish the work executed by Alberta's

nonprofit community. Rather, I aim to demonstrate that the "successes" achieved by challenging

groups can be short-lived. Binder discusses this extensively in her study of Afrocentric

challenges to the educational systems in Atlanta, Washington D.C, and New York State. Binder

notes that, in all three cases, "school system bureaucrats acknowledged that the claims of their

Afrocentric Challengers had some validity" (2001: 102). After all, they promoted their case in

an extremely compelling (and accurate) manner: Black children in the United States consistently

under-perform compared to other children. Incorporation of Afrocentric curricula was posed as a

potential solution to this undeniable problem. In this context, one can easily comprehend why

school boards would provide at least tacit support and understanding to their cause.

Atlanta and Washington D.C educators solidified this abstract through concrete decisions

to incorporate some Afrocentric curricula into their school. However, in both of these cases, the

school systems ultimately delivered far less than what was originally promised (ibid.). Atlanta

teachers, immersed in an educational environment that emphasizes the importance of

standardized test achievements, were unwilling to spend class time on supplementary Afrocentric

material. While the Washington D.C superintendent agreed to incorporate Afrocentric material

into the curriculum, he did so with such restrictive stipulations that any potential utility of the

curricula changes were greatly diminished.

As in Binder's case study, the case I present demonstrates the gap that can exist between

the potential and the actual successes garnered by a challenger group. The frame used by the

Lobbyists Act Campaign was more contentious than that used by the Afrocentric challengers.

Virtually all educators in the United States would acknowledge that racial achievement gaps are

a problem, and that events in the country's history have contributed to it. However, it is possible

to argue that the nonprofit sector, or at least elements within it, does not contribute to the "public

good". Nevertheless, the Government of Alberta does, at least in name if not in spirit,

acknowledge the sector's contributions to the public good. It is difficult to deny that some

charitable and nonprofit organizations do contribute to communities and the individuals who

reside in them. By supporting the nonprofit sector, politicians can portray themselves as caring

individuals who embrace the spirit of voluntarism and community building. However, like the

educators who agreed in principle with Afrocentric challengers, this agreement does not

necessarily transfer into practical changes. In sum, persuading state actors to agree or identify

with a collective action frame does not necessarily lead to the frame's realization. State actors are

generally more willing to agree to a challenger groups' claims than adopt their suggestions. Tacit

government acceptance of a challenger frame is a necessary first step to influencing public

policymakers, but without a supportive political and institutional context is required for demands

to actually be met. Non-state actors are capable of influencing public policy by aligning salient

frames with fruitful political opportunities, and carefully considering the institutional climate in which the actors are situated.

In their pinnacle work on frame analysis, Benford and Snow (2000) emphasize how political opportunity can facilitate or constrain the efficacy of a particular frame. Political opportunities, especially changes in how the political systems are structured, can lead to opportunities for new frames and meanings to gain currency in society. Initially I hypothesized that Ed Stelmach's new role as Alberta Premier might have facilitated the LAC's success. However, it appears that this was not the case; the advent of a new Premier did nothing to catalyze the LAC's "public good" frame. Fresh into office on the tail of a controversial Premier, Stelmach was eager to portray himself as a transparent politician eager to increase lobbyists' accountability. This emphasis on transparency holds considerable value in contemporary democratic societies. "Transparency" is increasingly being held up as a necessary component of a free and democratic society. Individual citizens call for government to be transparent, while politicians regularly opine about the need for more transparency in business and nonprofit organizations. While the concept of the "public good" sounds appealing to politicians and constituents alike, I would argue that the idea of "improving transparency and democracy" is far more salient in the minds of most Albertans. By calling for exemption from the Lobbyists Registry, nonprofits risked being portrayed as opaque and anti-democratic. Stelmach's intent to clarify the opaque lobbying relationships present under the previous Premier would have only solidified his position. Indeed, The eventual amendment of Bill 1 came about not because of this political climate, but in spite of it.

However, the Lobbyists Act Campaign was able to exploit more subtle divisions within the Conservative Party of Alberta. During the course of the campaign, nonprofit lobbyists

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learned of political insiders who opposed the Committee's final decision. By, for all intents, lobbying a one political insider who held considerable political and institutional power, the LAC finally gained access to the decision making processes. By tailoring the Public Good Amendment to similar legislation in Quebec, the LAC's "public good" frame gained the legitimacy that follows from political precedence.

This discussion illustrates the fact that political opportunities need not be dramatic political overhauls. Rather, political opportunities they can result simply from subtle tensions and divisions within an institution. (Binder, 2001). Again, Binder's description of political opportunities presented to the Afrocentric movement provide are useful for thinking about the opportunities presented to the Lobbyists Act Campaign. Binder contends that Afrocentric challengers in the United States capitalized on rifts amongst school system members, "rendering these systems more vulnerable to their demands." Similarly, the Lobbyists Act Campaign profited from cleavages within the Conservative Party of Alberta.

This discussion of political opportunities also demonstrates that collaboration between Alberta's nonprofit sector and the government does in fact occur under the right circumstances. While my interviewees strongly desired the opportunity to collaborate with the provincial government, many also expressed disappointment in the lack of opportunities for collaboration provided to them. Certainly, the stories of the Wild Rose Foundation and Karen Lynch's dismissal demonstrate why my interviewees felt unable to communicate openly with the government. However, with a compelling frame, and the support of a financially independent organization and political insiders, it is clear that collaboration can occur. One of the great ironies of the Lobbyists Act Campaign is that, while nonprofits often perceive the government of Alberta as a homogenous, impenetrable force, the very existence of variation within the

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government is what led to their eventual success. This echo's Binder's assertions that institutions, such as governments, are often far more heterogeneous than some social movement literature would suggest (2001). Neo-institutional theory allows sociologists to draw attention to the divisions, the cultures, and the attempts to "make meaning" that permeate institutional organizations. A complete examination of any lobbying effort must consider the institutional characteristics that face challengers, and how these characteristics might influence the outcome of the challengers' efforts.

D. Conclusion

Political lobbying processes are multifaceted and complex. The result of any challenge or appeal to the government depends on a complex set of factors both internal and external to the challenging group. Successful lobbyists are able to astutely maneuver those elements that are within their control, while responding astutely to opportunities within political structures.

In addition to revealing the multifaceted nature of lobbying campaigns, this research specifically draws attention to the complexity of nonprofit lobbying. Contesting ideas about the appropriateness of nonprofit lobbying, partnered with concern about the sectors' transparency, further complicate matters. Exacerbating this difficulty is a lack of awareness about the rights and responsibilities of nonprofit lobbyists. This ignorance exists not only within the government, but amongst some nonprofit organizations as well. Many political and nonprofit stakeholders are unaware of how much lobbying is allowed by these organizations, and what types of activities are constituted as "lobbying". This lack of information further complicates the contentious issue of nonprofit lobbying practices in Canada. Many politicians decry a lack of transparency within the sector, unaware of the regulatory measures already in place to monitor the sector. Simultaneously, many nonprofit incorrectly submit tax information to the government, and do

not know what proportion of their budgets can go towards advocacy work. This debate will not

be resolved until both parties acquire more information about nonprofit lobbying regulations.

Only after developing an understanding of the lobbying regulations that guide Canadian

nonprofits can these two parties begin to truly understand one another.

Appendix A: Introduction/Invitation Letter

June 1, 2009

Dear _____,

 This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Sociology at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professor Janice Aurini. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

The purpose of my research study is to learn more about how nonprofit organizations are able to influence public policy. In order to answer this question, I am studying the efforts that Albertan nonprofit organizations undertook to alter Bill 1 (The Lobbyists Act) in 2007. I am contacting you because you, or an organization with which you work, participated in this lobbying effort. Because of your experience participating in the campaign against Bill 1, I would very much like go get your perspectives on the topic of nonprofit lobbying in Alberta.

This study will focus on the strategies that nonprofit organizations use to try to influence public policies. I am also interested in learning what other factors (political, cultural, etc.) contribute to the success of nonprofit lobbying efforts. In order to answer these questions, I respectfully ask for the opportunity to interview you, either in person, or over the phone, at a time of your choosing.

Participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of between forty minutes and one hour in length, and will take place in a mutually agreed upon location. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis.

I will ensure to the best of my ability that the organizations interviewed will not be identified in my final paper. I will do this by using pseudonyms to describe each of the organizations. However, because the non-profit community in Alberta is well-connected, there is always the possibility that community insiders may be able to identify which groups participated in the study.

Neither your name, nor the name of your organization, will appear in any thesis or reports resulting from this study, however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. If interview quotes are included, pseudonyms will always be used. At no time will the actual identities of participants be linked to their interviews. Only researchers associated with this project (myself and my thesis committee) will have access to your interview transcripts. All data will be securely stored at the University of Waterloo in the Department of Sociology. The information gathered will be kept on a password-secured computer for ten years, after which time it will be erased. Any hard copy data will also be kept in a locked, secure office at the University of Waterloo for ten years, after which time it will be shredded. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study. However, a possible benefit could be getting the chance to reflect on your experiences with, and contribute to the academic understanding of nonprofit advocacy work.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at 780-449-5277 or by email at kdshackl@uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact my supervisor, Professor Janice Auriniat 519-888-4567 ext. 38343 or email *jaurini@uwaterloo.ca.* This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. However, the final decision about participation is yours. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, of this office at 519-888-4567 Ext. 36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.

My goal in conducting this research is to not only contribute academically to the field of sociology, but to provide insights to nonprofit organizations who are interested in learning more about effective lobbying practices and strategies. I hope you will consider participating in this research project, and sharing your knowledge in this area.I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours Sincerely,

Krista Shackleford

Appendix B: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Krista Shackleford of the Department of Sociology at the University of Waterloo. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses.

I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the thesis and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher.

This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. I was informed that if I have any comments or concerns resulting from my participation in this study, I may contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics by email (ssykes@uwaterloo.ca) or at 519-888-4567 ext. 36005.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

YES   NO

I agree to have my interview audio recorded.

YES   NO

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

YES   NO

Participant Name: _____ (Please print)

Participant Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____ (Please print)

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Feedback Form

July 16, 2009

Dear (Insert Name of Participant),

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to learn about the strategies that nonprofit organizations use in their efforts to influence public polities. This study will also uncover the specific strategies that made Alberta's nonprofit sector's lobbying again Bill 1 particularly successful.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant will be kept confidential. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, I plan on sharing this information with the research community through seminars, conferences, presentations, and journal articles. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at either the phone number or email address listed at the bottom of the page. If you would like a summary of the results, please let me know now by providing me with your email address. When the study is completed, I will send it to you. The study is expected to be completed by April 2010.

As with all University of Waterloo projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Should you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study**, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, at the Office of Research Ethics by email (ssykes@uwaterloo.ca) or at 519-888-4567, Ext. 36005**. **You can also contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Janice Aurini, at jaurini@uwaterloo.ca or 519-888-4567, Ext. 38343.**

Krista Shackleford

University of Waterloo
Department of Sociology
kdshackl@uwaterloo.ca
780-449-5277

Appendix D: Interview Schedule

1.   Tell me about how your organization decided to become involved in the campaign against Bill 1. Describe the experience for you and your organization.

a)   What steps did you take to get involved?
b)   What change, specifically, were you hoping to effect?
c)   Did you work with other organizations? If so, how?
d)   What do you suspect was the most important causal factor of the alteration of Bill 1?
e)   How, if at all, do you think your efforts contributed to the alteration of the Bill?

2.   Did certain organizations take a leadership role in the campaign against the Bill? If so, why do you think that those particular organizations "stepped up to the plate"? (Financial resources, more employees and therefore more available person hours, etc.)

3. How would Bill 1 have affected your organization's ability to lobby?

a) Do you suspect that "mission drift" might have occurred? If so, how?
b) How similar were your concerns to the concerns of other nonprofit organization involved in the campaign against Bill 1?

4. How did the nonprofit organizations involved communicate amongst themselves about campaign planning, strategies, and actions? How often? Which organizations provided most of this information?

5. How is lobbying important for your organization's success?

a)   For what causes do you generally lobby the government?
b)   Tell me about a specific instance in which your organization lobbied the government. How did you go about doing this? What change were you trying to affect? For whom? What was the end result?

6. Do you think there are political dynamics unique to Alberta that make lobbying in this province different than in other provinces?

7. What does the phrase "public interest" mean to you and your organization? How, if at all, do you feel that your organization serves the public interest?

Appendix E: Summary of Analyzed Documents

Document Type	Description	Rationale for Use
Alberta Legislative Assembly Transcripts	Transcripts from the 11 occasions in which Bill 1 was discussed in the Alberta Legislative Assembly	Provides information about how the Alberta Legislative Assembly spoke of Bill 1, and how the reaction from the nonprofit sector impacted their views on the legislation
Standing Committee on Government Services Transcripts	a. Transcripts from the 8 meetings of the Standing Committee on Government Services, the committee created to advise the final drafting of Bill 1 b. Transcripts from the 2 public hearings during which nonprofit organization representatives addressed the Standing Committee on Government Services	a. Provides understanding of how the Committee discussed the details of Bill 1, and how they assessed the arguments brought forth by the nonprofit sector b. Illustrates the issue framing and arguments made by nonprofit representatives in efforts to persuade the Committee to amend Bill 1
Policy Documents	a. Bill 1 (first draft, March 2007) b. Standing Committee of Government Services Final Report on Bill 1 (November 2007)	Demonstrates how Bill 1 developed from its initial formulation to its final Committee draft
Reports submitted to the Government in opposition of Bill 1	Nonprofit organizations were invited to submit written documents to the Committee, highlighting their concerns with Bill 1.	Provides more examples of how nonprofit organizations articulated their opposition to Bill 1.

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