



CAMILLA NOTHHAFT (b.1976) is a researcher and teacher at the Department of Strategic Communication (ISK) at Lund University. *Moments of lobbying: an ethnographic study of meetings between lobbyists and politicians* is her doctoral dissertation.

What makes a professional lobbyist? Where do lobbyists and politicians meet and how do they talk? In what ways do lobbyists engineer chance encounters with politicians, build relationships and gather soft intelligence? Is information the currency of lobbying-interaction, wining and dining or something else? Why is the timing of issues crucially important and why do some politicians rather rely on a lobbyist when they need to get hold of official documents? What is the game played in Brussels about?

Camilla Nothhaft shadowed lobbyists and politicians in Brussels. For seven weeks, she followed three MEPs and four representatives of Swedish companies from early morning to late evenings. She took part in public hearings, office meetings, receptions, seminars and events. She was there when lobbyists encountered politicians in cafés and corridors and listened in when matters were taken further ‘over a sandwich’. After office hours, many more impressions were gathered at receptions or over drinks at *Place Lux* with the vital assistants of MEPs.

‘Moments of lobbying’ is a unique ethnographic study of professional interest representation in the European Union. Drawing on Erving Goffman’s ideas about impression management as well as current neo-institutional theory, the researcher reconstructs the unwritten rules of professional lobbying in Brussels. The results illuminate why professional lobbying gravitates towards a backstage-mode of interaction and help us understand why the European Union’s current transparency-initiative might be counter-productive.

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