



THE TIMES

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Is RANDY HAYNIE *the* Most POWERFUL Person in Baton Rouge?

*From tobacco, gambling and
cockfighting to interior decorators,
rental cars and eyewear, this
superlobbyist represents them all.*
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INSIDE:

Superintendent Owen Bush Moves on to Greener Chalkboards. **Page 6.**
Ashley Gordon Laces up Her Social Climbing Boots. **Page 17.**



AGENT of INFLUENCE

There may or may not be people in Baton Rouge who outweigh lobbyist Randy Haynie in Power and reach - but it's almost certain that there's no one outworking him.

BY DAVID KURTZ

He is the political spawn of Sonny Mouton and Raymond Blanco and probably surpasses his mentors at the height of their power and influence.

Those who like him say he's the best lobbyist in the state — a tireless solidier on his clients' behalf, with a brilliant grasp of the details of issues and a keen appreciation for the broader political picture. Those who don't like lobbyist say he is the epitome of all that is wrong with the profession, that he's a gunslinger-for-hire who will work for anyone on any issue as long as the price is right.

The three biggest components of Randy Haynie's success are that he is thorough, thorough, thorough. He reads everything from newspapers to pending bills — and knows just where a comma should be to make a piece of legislation do what he thinks it should. He returns all his phone calls, even if he's on two other lines while he's doing it. He glides from issue to issue, scarcely pausing to gather himself. Haynie is classically compulsive, but in his job, that's not a character flaw — it's a career.

"I guarantee there's not a lobbyist in Baton Rouge that gets to the office at 7 in the morning and leaves as late as I do," Haynie says. "No one works as hard as I do." Few would argue.

Haynie's 20-year political career has been a steady, yet relentless, rise from an assistant sergeant at arms in the Senate to the most sought-after lobbyist in the state — to the point now that Haynie often surpasses in influence and stature the very people he's been hired to lobby.

In addition to the lobbying from Haynie & Associates, he owns a publishing company that issues respected guides to the Legislature, another company that burns discarded oilfield board roads and is an investor in several other ventures. Donald Trump has nothing on him for working the art of the deal.

And can he deal. As soon as he discovered I was writing a profile of him, Haynie quickly went to work, trying to influence the outcome of my reporting. He made inquiries through third parties into my motives and those of the newspaper. He phoned the publishers and the editor, and requested others to do so on his behalf, which they did. He even pre-emptively called people he thought I might use as sources.

This time the client was himself, and the issue was his reputation. He bombarded me with information he had generated about himself and about his clients. I received a package containing some 35 photocopies of photographs showing Haynie with Bill Clinton, the last four governors and countless legislators, and more than three dozen photocopied pages of newspaper articles mentioning Haynie.

While expressing his concerns about the direction of the story, Haynie dropped jokes about eventually being my boss, implying that he'd win ownership of the newspaper through a libel suit. The comments were made jokingly, but he had contacted his attorney about that possibility when he first learned that a story was in the works.

It became a lesson in how Randy Haynie does

what he does that any legislator or fellow lobbyist who has experienced it directly could appreciate. He was so thorough that I had reams (literally, reams) of information on many of the most sensitive topics we discussed, was so focused that we spent most of the time talking about the things he wanted to talk about, and was so persistent that I never had a moment's doubt about how he would want a story about him to read. Like with any good massage, you leave feeling invigorated, but a little unctuous.

Hold Harmless

In 1989, when Haynie was only 33, the *Times-Picayune* ranked him along with lobbyist Jim Harris "at the top of the heap." But if you haven't heard of Haynie, you're probably not alone. For all the power and influence Haynie has wielded at the highest levels of state government, he remains — outside of political circles — still relatively unknown in Lafayette. That is starting to change.

Trading in his low profile behind the scenes for a more public role on the civic stage, Haynie has immersed himself in fund-raising for the local Boy Scouts (he's an Eagle Scout), for Our Lady of Fatima School, which his two children attend; and as this year's fund-raising chairman of the Bishop's Charity Ball.

Haynie's father moved the family to Lafayette from Houma in 1971. Haynie met his wife, Daynese, when they were sophomores at Acadiana High School. Among his peers, Haynie has developed a reputation as a family man, rushing back to Lafayette from meetings in Baton Rouge or New Orleans in time to catch his son's basketball games and even do some coaching.

He put himself through USL working offshore as a galley hand and roustabout during the summers and as a dorm counselor during semesters. The pre-med major eventually came to the attention of Raymond Blanco, then dean of students. We were going to redo a bunch of old buildings, but we had no money," Blanco recalls. Unemployment in Lafayette was practically zero, and Blanco couldn't find anyone to do the work over the semester break. "We were desperate."

Along came Haynie, who recruited foreign students to do the renovations. "I put those dorms together in 30 days with Coca-Colas, cigarettes and Whoppers — and some minimum wage," laughs Haynie. When the work was finally done, in typical Haynie fashion, he threw a party.

Pleased with the results, Blanco recommended Haynie to then-state Sen. Sonny Mouton, who was about

to start his 1979 campaign for governor. Haynie became Mouton's driver and bodyguard. "He'd carry the gun; I carried the bullets," remembers Mouton. That's a true story — I didn't want to shoot any of my voters."

During the summer of 1978 and 1979, Haynie learned the ways of the Legislature as an assistant sergeant at arms. Mouton, a masterful legislative technician, was attempting to pass major legislation for oilfield contractors looking to get out from under an onerous provision in their contracts with major oil companies. The "hold harmless" clause prevented contractors from holding the majors liable for any damages accrued while working on their platforms. Contractors were paying exorbitant insurance premiums, but legislation repealing "hold harmless" couldn't get past the House.

After Mouton's defeat in 1979 a group supporting the legislation, the Louisiana Oilfield Contractors Association, approached Haynie about becoming the group's executive director and lobbyist. Mouton advised Haynie to represent LOCA but to retain his rights to take other clients. Haynie led the charge against big oil and scored a major victory that made him an instant player and a rising star in Baton Rouge. He was barely 26 years old.

HAYNIE GOT HIS START IN POLITICS

AS AN AID TO THEN - SEN. EDGAR

"SONNY MOUTON"





Taking the Long View

As Sonny Mouton explains it, the Legislature used to be concentrated in the Capitol building and one or two hotels in Baton Rouge. Then in the 1970s, legislators began to spread out, renting apartments and spending less time at after-hours barbecues and crawfish boils. Relationships among legislators were not as close.

But now there's a new place for them to meet. In 1988, Haynie purchased the home built by Earl K. Long for his wife, Blanche, during his last term as governor in 1958. Named Long-View by Haynie, the home sits on the banks of Capitol Lake. It is the third point in a triangle formed by it, the Governor's Mansion and the Capitol.

He has renovated the home extensively to serve as an office, a second home, a conference center and banquet hall. During legislative ses-

sions hundreds, if not thousands, of solons, lobbyists, corporate executives and clients pass through Long-View's marble-floored interior.

With its tennis court, massive furniture, framed outdoor scenes and tongue-in-groove paneling, the home is very clubby. It was decorated by members of the Louisiana Association of Interior Designers, one of Haynie's clients, in return for his lobbying services — and a plaque on the mantle listing the designers.

The original *Blue Dog* hangs behind his desk up-

stairs. Ever the deal-maker, Haynie buys reprint rights when he purchases George Rodrigue's paintings and sells the signed prints himself to recoup his investment. Photographs by Philip Gould are prominently displayed throughout the house (Haynie has partly financed some of Gould's books), along with several paintings by

Robert Dafford. He keeps Clementine Hunter originals at his new Lafayette home.

The landscaping at Long-View is dictated in part by the timing of legislative sessions. During session, the flower beds are planting in red, green or yellow to correspond with Haynie's method of color-coding legislative districts (red is no, green is yes, yellow is undecided).

Long-View is wired to both chambers of the Legislature and all the committee rooms so Haynie can monitor debate on the floor or testimony in committee hearings. He makes it open to legislators for fund-raisers, to clients for strategy meetings and for a host of other functions.

"He became not only a good lobbyist but a good friend of legislators," says Mouton.

Haynie was close to former Senate presidents Michael O'Keefe and Sammy Nunez and to other members of the Old Guard in the state Senate, like Armand Brinkhaus and Don Kelly. His sympathies still lie there. "People who campaign as reformers have done more to hurt our democracy and make the public cynical," Haynie reflects. "The white hats have to make the other guys look bad."

"Interrupt Me..."

Haynie arrives at Long-View from Lafayette most mornings at 7 a.m. By 8 a.m. he has absorbed the New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lafayette and Alexandria newspapers (someone in Shreveport faxes him any relevant articles that appear there). He also subscribes to *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*. As a service to all his clients, he regularly mails out batches of newspaper clippings tailored to the particular business interests of given clients.

Like a casino, Haynie's office offers no natural light; time never changes. An air purifier hums on the shelf above his desk, where he sits chain smoking Merit 100s (a Philip Morris brand). A thermos of coffee within reach, Haynie lives on the telephone. He juggles two and three calls simultaneously all day long, switching effortlessly from discussing auto insurance to the gill net ban to the Harrah's deal.

"Paying clients and legislators — interrupt me no matter what," he tells his overworked secretary.

Turnover on Haynie's small staff is high; it's hard to work at his obsessive pace. He's not easy to work for and seems uncomfortable about doing much delegating. Unable to quickly put her hands on a file we need to see, his new secretary is visibly nervous. "She's in her first 30 days," he says in front of her, as if to apologize. Later, as Haynie gives his assistant instructions, he watches to make sure the correct names are being written down.

As soon as Haynie picked up the phone or begins attempting to spin you in person, there a noticeably higher pitch to his voice. He is reassuring, ingratiating, sometimes so overtly manipulative it'll make you squirm, especially when he falls into referring to "Randy" in the third person.

FATIMA FUND-RAISER:

HAYNIE WITH WIFE

DAYNESE, SON

RYAN AND

DAUGHTER DAYNA



"Here's what we have cooking today."
 "I'll be reaching out to you in the next several days."
 "I reached out to you yesterday, but we missed each other."
 "You're still on my list."

He talks like someone doing you the favor of letting you in on his secret. It's much harder to say no to a friend, and he is a friend, a good friend, to many. He doesn't hesitate to be blunt, particularly if he's dealing with an unrealistic client who needs to hear the truth. But his talents lie in making you feel comfortable, even as he's delivering bad news. "He doesn't have to be abrasive; he's so entrenched," says one legislator who hasn't always gotten along well with Haynie. "You're got to give the devil his due. Whether you agree with his mode of operation or his tactics, he's pretty effective."

MIKE FOSTER
"RANDY IS AN OLD,
OLD DEAR FRIEND."

Still, handling client and legislative calls he estimates is only 50 percent of the load. The rest of the time he's talking with former clients who still turn to him for advice, friends looking for his take on the pulse of the Legislature, and colleagues looking for business he can throw their way. "There is very little going on in that building that I don't know about, very little," he says, motioning across the lake toward the Capitol.

Now that his old friend Mike Foster is governor, Haynie is as wired into the process as ever before. But their relationship has been something of an issue, causing some gambling opponents to speculate about Haynie's role in shaping the governor's own often ambiguous anti-gambling stance.

"Mike and I have an agreement where I don't

talk gaming. That's one issue we don't talk about. For PR reasons," Haynie says. "It's too hot an issue. Everybody thought it would be best."

If he needs to talk gaming he goes to Cheney Joseph, the governor's executive counsel, he says. He and Foster talk about tort reform, auto insurance and the oilfield. "Randy Haynie is an old, old dear friend," Foster told *The Advocate* last year. "He was my only lobbyist when I was in the construction business."

Surrounded by policy wonks on his staff, Foster reaches out for political advice to Haynie, consultant Roy Fletcher and pollster Bernie Pinsonant. "I think when he wants a dose of reality and to get something done, he calls Randy," says a close observer.

Freedom of Choice

Look at who Haynie is representing and you have a pretty good indicator of what the most important issues in the current session of the Legislature will be:

* He has dropped his other gambling clients (Louisiana Downs and Casino America) to devote his considerable energies to shepherding the Harrah's deal through the Legislature. With Harrah's racking up \$1 million a week in legal fees over the past several months, it's now up to Haynie to close the deal.

* In concert with several other lobbyists, he represents People for a Fair Legal System, which is pushing for auto insurance reform, a key component to the Foster administration's agenda.

* He is captain of the lobbying dream team for utility-giant Entegy, which is seeing to defeat enabling legislation that would accelerate the deregulation of the electricity generation industry in Louisiana and allow customers to choose power companies — something Entegy would like to see delayed for seven years.

THE CHOSEN SEVERAL Randy Haynie's Client List

Acadian Ambulance
 Alamo Rental Car
 America's Best Contacts and Eyeglasses
 Business Records Corporations (markets solution to the year 2000 computer bug)
 Cash America International Inc. (a pawn broker company)
 Coalition to Manage Louisiana Seafood (opposes gill net ban)
 Colonial Companies Insurance
 Corrections Corporation of America
 Crescent River Port Pilots Association
 Entegy Corporation
 Greater Baton Rouge Port Commission
 Harrah's Entertainment Inc. (New Orleans land-based casino)

Haynie & Associates Inc.
 Louisiana Association of Interior Designers
 Louisiana Motor Vehicle Rental & Leasing Dealers Association
 Louisiana Oilfield Contractors Association
 Louisiana Pharmacists Association
 Louisiana Public Defenders Association
 Louisiana Travel Promotion Association (promotes Louisiana tourism)
 People for a Fair Legal System (advocates auto insurance reform)
 Pfizer Pharmaceuticals
 Philip Morris Inc. and Philip Morris Management
 Southern Energy Inc.

Traver Oil Company Inc.
 United Gamefowl Breeders' Association, Louisiana Chapter (cockfighting)
 U.S. Liquids of Louisiana (formerly Campbell Wells Inc.)
 University of Southwestern Louisiana Alumni Association
 * Until last month, Haynie also represented Louisiana Downs Inc. and Casino America Inc. (Isle of Capri). At the request of Harrah's, he dropped his other gambling clients to concentrate on the deal that would reopen the New Orleans casino.
 ** Haynie & Associates recently signed a \$3,000-a-month contract to provide lobbying services for the new Lafayette City-Parish government and is negotiating to represent the Lafayette Economic Development Authority.

Evangeline Downs in its effort to win legislative approval for slot machines.

Haynie's clients have included some of the largest, and sometimes controversial, companies in America. His biggest client is Philip Morris, a huge conglomerate (Kraft, Miller Brewing Co.) with interests in a multitude of agricultural products, including, most famously, tobacco. He has also represented Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corp., RJR Nabisco Inc., the American Tobacco Institute, and Lorillard Tobacco Co., according to lobbyist reports filed with the state Board of Ethics.

Haynie has contracted with Chemical Waste Management Inc. and Waste Management Inc. He represents the cockfighting industry, at the request of Brinkhaus, who is from Sunset, a little town where some are proud to claim the title of cockfighting capital of the world.

His gambling clients, in addition to Harrah's, have included riverboat casinos and horse tracks, on whose behalf he lobbied for video poker. Until earlier this year, Haynie and Bares combined represented Evangeline Downs, Louisiana Downs, Delta Downs and The Fair Grounds.

Haynie has been criticized for not being more selective in his choice of clients. Says one lobbyist, "Randy has no convictions. It is strictly business. Everything is strictly business."

"My whole job is not to be popular but to keep my clients happy," Haynie says. "There's some things I've helped pass in this state that I don't partake in. But that's my business life. My personal life is separate.

"Personally what's happened to me philo-

sophically as I've gone through my career, I became a freedom of choice person. As long as people want to smoke, they should be able to. As long as they don't overdo it, people should be allowed to gamble."

With so many clients involved in a multiplicity of issues, Haynie runs the risk of encountering conflicts of interest at every turn. "I have more clients than anybody, and I'm woven in and out of so many issues," Haynie acknowledges. But he contends that 90 percent of the time he sees the conflict in advance and addresses it before it becomes a problem. Only rarely does he step aside and remain neutral on an issue. "A person who says there is a conflict is not looking beyond it to a solution. To me a conflict of interest is a mind-set. If you think there's a conflict if interest, there will be."

Never Anything Illegal

"Nothing will get your attention more than the guy who comes to you with a \$2,500 check and doesn't ask for anything then. But when he comes back later, you remember what he did for you," says a former candidate who has been on the receiving end himself.

Haynie, who is very active in the Democratic Party, played elections like you would wager on horses until the 1994 debacle when Senate President Sammy Nunez handed out campaign checks from Louie Roussel III on the Senate floor. Haynie represented Roussel's Star riverboat casino and had delivered the dozens of checks to Nunez and to

House Speaker John Alario, who didn't hand them out to House members on the floor but rather had them line up outside his office.

HAYNIE WORKED OFFSHORE BETWEEN SEMESTERS AT USL AND LATER REPRESENTED "LITTLE OIL" IN ITS BATTLE AGAINST THE MAJORS



OUR MAN IN HAVANA

Why is Randy Haynie So Interested in Cuba?

Randy Haynie calls it his personal research and development project. He's been to Cuba three times in the past three years under the auspices of the U.S. State Department.

His mother's family is Cuban and immigrated in the 1920s, well before the 1959 communist revolution. Surveying the reams of documents Haynie has produced on Cuba, it's clear that he is aggressively positioning himself as a key figure in the economic development of post-embargo Cuba. "I have invested a lot of time and income in it. It's a special project."

Haynie has been in meetings with, variously, President Bill Clinton, Fidel Castro and Castro's brother. He has lobbied Congress to loosen restrictions on doing business with Cuba. The U.S. embargo makes it illegal for U.S. citizens to spend money in Cuba.

Haynie has consulted informally with Freeport-McMoran, which had a major presence in Cuba before the revolution and holds one of the largest claims against the Cuban government. The president of Louisiana Interstate Gas Co. traveled with Haynie on one of the trips to explore the infrastructure needs of Havana, whose natural gas supply is sporadic at best.

Haynie sees potential in Cuba for agriculture, infrastructure and tourism development initially. As a lobbyist for Philip Morris, he has eyed the tobacco industry. Cuba was the largest customer at the Port of New Orleans before the U.S. embargo, Haynie says.

He estimates Cuba could absorb 20 percent of Louisiana rice production immediately. The father of Haynie's friend and sometimes client Billy Trotter used to ship rice once a week from Crowley to Havana.

For Haynie, it's a chance to get away from Baton Rouge and explore the challenges of a new arena. It also has the potential to be extremely lucrative. "I'd love to connect some dots eventually, if it's legal to do so."

—DAVID KURTZ



The episode may have been a turning point in public sentiment toward Nunez's reign. The outcry, especially on editorial pages, was fierce. Haynie accepted full blame for the whole sordid incident. It wasn't illegal, but Haynie acknowledges it was unethical. There's no excuse for it. It was the biggest embarrassment of my life," he says.

A *Times-Picayune* review of campaign finance records showed Haynie & Associates gave nearly \$50,000 to legislators in 1993-94, before the Roussel controversy. That does not include money contributed to other state races or federal campaigns. By 1996, however, Haynie only contributed about \$10,000 to all state campaigns and another \$5,000 to federal campaigns, according to his records. But none of those figures include the tens of thousands of dollars contributed by Haynie's clients, money over which he presumably exerts some control. "I have a little influence," Haynie says coyly.

When the federal probe into video poker interests and the Legislature first became public in the summer of 1995, many people expected to see Haynie's name among those prominently mentioned in FBI affidavits from wiretaps. Some lobbyists, jealous of Haynie's success or suspicious of his tactics, even hoped he would be implicated. But Haynie came through virtually unscathed. He says he was never interviewed by the FBI or subpoenaed.

"If I'm in a fight with you, I'm going to use every rule to my advantage; and if there's gray area, I'm in there — because I'm going to win. But I don't do anything illegal."

**THEN - GOV - CLINTON
WITH THEN DEMOCRAT
BILLY TAUZIN AND
HAYNIE AT A 1992
FUND-RAISER AT
LONGVIEW**

Haynie's survival is all the more remarkable because the revelations in the affidavits led to the political downfall of many legislators whom he had come to depend on.

But even as he was losing Brinkhaus, Rayburn and Nunez in the 1995 election, he was gaining Mike Foster. And, in typical Haynie fashion, he added Nunez's rival, former Senate President Allen Bares, to his staff shortly after the election. Should he have any problems

personally reaching reform-minded legislators, Haynie now employs one.

Business Success

Sonny Mouton recalls a conversation with Haynie on the way to Cameron to speak to the Knights of Columbus during the 1979 campaign. "He was telling me he was going to be a millionaire by the time he was 29. I said, 'Have a nice trip,' And he may have gotten there, or gotten real close."

Being a top-flight lobbyist has its rewards. "Our firm may be the most expensive in Baton Rouge, but they get what they pay for," Haynie says.

While Haynie declines to discuss the specifics of his fee structure, one attorney told *The Times* that Haynie once quoted to him a \$50,000 fee to lobby the Legislature for one session on a single issue. When Harrah's declared bankruptcy, Haynie was listed as a creditor owed \$388,726 for a three-year contract that was scheduled to pay \$24,200 a month for 1996. But he says Philip Morris remains his biggest client.

His other business endeavors include an interest in Washington, D.C.-based *Campaigns and Elections*, "The Magazine for Political Professionals," published by former Louisiana state legislator Ron Faucheux.

Haynie started his own publishing company, Louisiana Governmental Studies Inc., in 1984 to give his staff something to do between sessions. The company published quadrennially the indispensable *Grass-roots Guide* to the Legislature and the more recent *Guide to the Louisiana Judiciary*, in addition to a legislative directory. (Full disclosure: I was paid to proofread the 1996 edition of the *Grass-roots Guide*, whose editorial team included then-*Times* editor Richard Baudouin.) The books have filled obvious voids in the information available to those in the Capitol — and enhanced Haynie's credibility as an honest broker.

He owns Environmental Protection Applications Inc., which burns oilfield board roads and construction debris. In addition to doing business with many of the same oilfield contractors Haynie lobbies for EPA has contracted with the U.S. Justice Department to destroy marijuana seized in drug busts. He has sold Louisiana Tool & Supply Co., but he still holds minority interests in four oilfield service companies in Lafayette.

There are a few conspicuous signs of Haynie's financial success. He built an expansive new house recently in Lafayette's exclusive Fernwood Subdivision. Haynie's valuable Louisiana currency collection contains 1,400 species, including 400 believed to be the only samples in existence. It includes the first currency issued in the state of Louisiana, an 1812 note from the Bank of Orleans. He also collects old maps, some dating to 1840.

The End, First

My interviews with Haynie often deteriorated into lengthy negotiating sessions about what he would and wouldn't discuss. One interview session lasted for seven hours, an hour of which he devoted to explaining why, if I wanted to print a photo of him with one governor, I had to print photos of him with all the governors with whom he had worked. "Let's get focused there," he would say, steering the interview yet again toward a point he felt hadn't hit home.

As the reporting on the story finally wound down, Haynie made a request. "Do me a favor. Answer this question at the end of the story: If you at some time in your life need a lobbyist, who would you hire? You don't have to answer that now. But I'm going to read the end of the story first, and I'll know."