

**JOHN MAGINNIS PAPERS**

Mss. 5185

Inventory

Compiled by  
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Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections  
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library  
Louisiana State University Libraries  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

2015

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**SUMMARY**

<b>Size.</b>	4.5 linear ft.
<b>Geographic locations.</b>	Louisiana
<b>Inclusive dates.</b>	1965-2014
<b>Bulk dates.</b>	1984-2014
<b>Language.</b>	English
<b>Summary.</b>	John Maginnis was a Louisiana journalist, publisher, and political commentator. Papers include research files, news clippings, newsletters, columns, correspondence, and photographs from throughout his career.
<b>Restrictions on access.</b>	Access to original letters by Edwin Edwards (September 29, 2006 and August 2008) is restricted. Use photocopies.
<b>Related collections.</b>	None.
<b>Copyright.</b>	For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
<b>Citation.</b>	John Maginnis Papers, Mss. 5185, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
<b>Stack locations.</b>	Y:132-136; Vault:1; OS:M

**BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

John James Maginnis was born March 17, 1948 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the youngest child of Inez Blancq and Edward Joseph Maginnis. He attended Catholic High School, where he served as editor of *Bear Facts*, a student newsletter, and also worked for the *Catholic Commentator*. As a pre-law student at Louisiana State University, Maginnis became editor of the *Daily Reveille* in 1969, while also writing a popular satirical column. This column later transitioned into an alternative paper called *Kiwi*. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1970, he served in the U.S. Navy and spent a semester at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, before returning to Baton Rouge and beginning a career as an independent journalist and political commentator.

Maginnis worked as a publisher and editor for a variety of publications, including *Gris Gris*, an alternative paper covering politics and local culture; the *Baton Rouge Enterprise*, which later became the *Business Report*; and a bimonthly magazine, the *Louisiana Political Review*. In 1993, he started the *Louisiana Political Fax Weekly*, a newsletter that was originally sent to subscribers via fax. This title changed to *LaPolitics Weekly* in 2008, later developing an online counterpart, LaPolitics.com. In addition to this work, Maginnis published three books: *The Last Hayride* (1984), covering the 1983 gubernatorial campaign between Edwin Edwards and David Treen; *Cross to Bear* (1992), which followed Edwards' 1991 campaign against David Duke; and *The Politics of Reform* (2000).

Maginnis married Jacqueline Drinkwater in 2008. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame at the LSU Manship School of Mass Communications in 2000 and, following his death on May 25, 2014, was posthumously inducted into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The John Maginnis Papers consist of research files, news clippings, newsletters, columns, correspondence, and photographs. The bulk of material is made up of Maginnis' newspaper columns and the *Louisiana Political Fax Weekly* newsletter, from 1984-2014. Research files include news clippings, public surveys and opinion polls, legislative voting records, histories of early Louisiana governors, court documents pertaining to Edwin Edwards' indictments, and reviews of Maginnis' books. There are also two letters exchanged by Maginnis and Edwards while the latter was serving time in prison.

Writings comprise all of Maginnis' newspaper columns from 1984-2014, some of which have been grouped into subject files by Maginnis himself. Printed material consists of a full set of the *Louisiana Political Fax Weekly*, later *LaPolitics Weekly*, running from 1993-2014, as well as 30 issues of the Catholic High School newsletter, *Bear Facts*, of which Maginnis was editor. Also in this series are a satirical issue of the *Daily Reveille* from 1969, a *Reveille* story about Maginnis taking over as editor, and two letters pertaining to his work with *Bear Facts* and the *Reveille*. Photographs include those used in the books *The Last Hayride* (1984) and *Cross to Bear* (1992), and other publications.

**LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES**

**Series I. Research Files, 1985-2010, undated**

**Series II. Writings, 1984-2014**

**Series III. Printed Material, 1965-2014**

**Series IV. Photographs, 1985-1992, undated**

## **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Series I. Research Files, 1985-2010, undated**

Research files consist primarily of newspaper clippings relating to Louisiana politics during the 1990s and 2000s, particularly the gubernatorial races and Edwin Edwards' trials and investigations. Also included are public surveys and opinion polls, legislative voting records, campaign fliers, histories of early Louisiana governors, court documents pertaining to Edwards' indictments, and reviews of Maginnis' books. Specific individuals represented include Governors Mike Foster and Edwin Edwards, and Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne. There are two letters written by Maginnis to Edwards in 2006 and 2008, while Edwards was serving time in prison. Edwards' typed responses are included on the same sheets of paper. These files were created by John Maginnis and the original order has been retained.

### **Series II. Writings, 1984-2014**

This series contains copies of newspaper columns written by John Maginnis between 1984 and 2014. His syndicated column eventually appeared in 21 newspapers around the state. Columns are divided into three groups. The first group (Box 1, Folders 46-61) is made up of columns organized by topic by Maginnis. The second group (Box 1, Folder 62-81 and Box 2, Folder 1-4) contains columns in chronological order from 1984-2009, with colored tabs placed by Maginnis to label topics. The third group (Box 2, Folder 5-31) includes all of Maginnis' columns from 1988-2014, in chronological order. There is some overlap and duplication between the three groups, and there are also a small number of columns marked for editing.

### **Series III. Printed Material and Related Correspondence, 1965-2014**

The bulk of this series consists of the *Louisiana Political Fax Weekly*, founded by Maginnis in 1993 as a bi-monthly newsletter featuring news and analysis of Louisiana politics. In May 2008 the title was changed to *LaPolitics Weekly*, reflecting the more updated digital nature of the publication. In 2011, Jeremy Alford joined LaPolitics as a partner, and continued as publisher and editor after Maginnis' death. Included issues of the newsletter run from 1993-2014.

Other printed items reflect earlier parts of Maginnis' journalism career. There are 30 issues of *Bear Facts*, a Catholic High School newsletter, from the 1965-1966 school year when Maginnis served as editor. There is also a March 2000 issue, in which Maginnis was featured for receiving a journalism award. In addition, there is an April 1, 1969 satirical issue of the *Daily Reveille*, and an article from the December 19, 1968 issue of the *Reveille* announcing Maginnis' selection as editor.

Two letters relating directly to this early portion of Maginnis' career are also a part of the series. One is a January 27, 1966 letter from Brother Donnan Berry of Catholic High School, praising his work on *Bear Facts*. The other is from James T. Nardin, Chairman of the Committee on Student Publications at Louisiana State University, on May 7, 1969, expressing appreciation for Maginnis' work as editor of the *Daily Reveille*.

**Series IV. Photographs, 1985-1992, undated**

Most of the photographs in this series were either used, or considered for use, in Maginnis' books. Although primarily reproduced just prior to the publication of *The Last Hayride* and *Cross to Bear*, many of the photographs were taken at an earlier date. Almost all images are undated, and have been left in their original organization scheme. One section is grouped alphabetically by the name of the individual in the photograph, while others are sorted relative to their inclusion in either *The Last Hayride* or *Cross to Bear*. Most photographs depict Louisiana politicians at various campaign events and public appearances.



**INDEX TERMS**

Baton Rouge (La.)--History--20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Catholic High School (Baton Rouge, La.)  
Edwards, Edwin W.  
Governors--Louisiana.  
Journalism--Louisiana.  
Louisiana--Politics and government--20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Maginnis, John, 1948-  
Newspaper editors--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.  
Political campaigns--Louisiana.  
Political corruption--Louisiana.  
Politics and culture--Louisiana.  
Press and politics--Louisiana.  
Reveille.  
Student newspaper and periodical editors--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents with dates</u>
<b>Y:132</b>	1	1-45	<b>Series I. Research Files, 1985-2010</b>
<b>Vault:1</b>	H-M		Original Edwin Edwards letters (September 29, 2006 and August 2008) are restricted. Use photocopies (Box 1, Folder 20).
<b>Series II. Writings, 1984-2014</b>			
<b>Y:132</b>	1	46	Newspaper columns – Black Politics
		47	Newspaper columns – Blanco
		48	Newspaper columns – Economic development
		49	Newspaper columns – Environment
		50	Newspaper columns – Ethics
		51	Newspaper columns – Fiscal reform
		52	Newspaper columns – Gambling
		53	Newspaper columns – Higher Ed
		54	Newspaper columns – Governor’s power/budget
		55	Newspaper columns – Foster
		56	Newspaper columns – Jindal
		57	Newspaper columns – Legislative relations
		58	Newspaper columns – Oil/gas/business
		59	Newspaper columns – Roemer
		60	Newspaper columns – Best/worst/quotes
		61	Newspaper columns – National press
		62-81	Newspaper columns – Various topics, 1984-2005
<b>Y:133</b>	2	1-4	Newspaper columns – Various topics, 2006-2009
		5-31	Newspaper columns – All, 1988-2014
<b>Y:134</b>	3	1	Newspaper columns – Problems: Add or Extend, undated
		2	Newspaper columns – AM Varsity, undated
		3-4	Newspaper columns – Typefaces, undated
		5	Newspaper column distribution lists

**Series III. Printed Material and Related Correspondence, 1965-2014**

<b>Y:135</b>	4	6-26	<i>Louisiana Political Fax Weekly</i> , 1993-2003
		1-9	<i>Louisiana Political Fax Weekly</i> , 2004-2008
		10-21	<i>LaPolitics Weekly</i> , 2008-2014
		22	Catholic High School <i>Bear Facts</i> newsletter, 1965-1966
		23	<i>Daily Reveille</i> article, December 19, 1968

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents with dates</u>
OS:M	--	1	<i>Daily Reveille</i> , April 1, 1969 (April Fool's edition) <i>Gris Gris</i> (September 18, 1985; November 1987; March 1988; mid-December 1989; February 1990)
Y:135	4	24	Letters from Father Donnan Berry (Catholic High School) and James T. Nardin (LSU)

**Series IV. Photographs**

Y:136	5	25-28	Photographs for <i>The Last Hayride</i> (1984)
		1	Photographs for <i>The Last Hayride</i> (1984)
Y:136	6	2-4	Photographs for <i>Cross to Bear</i> (1992)
		1-22	Photographs for assorted publications (arranged alphabetically)