



Kingfish U

Huey Long and LSU

ROBERT MANN

PRAISE FOR *KINGFISH U*

“The impact of Huey Long on LSU was enormous and more complicated than most folks realize. *Kingfish U* is both thoroughly researched and great fun to read. Robert Mann masterfully weaves the controversies, visions, and key characters into a compelling narrative.”

—Wayne Parent, author of *Inside the Carnival: Unmasking Louisiana Politics*

“Robert Mann has captured how Huey Long used his power and influence to build and promote Louisiana State University through its Fighting Tigers football team. *Kingfish U* is a must-read for political types, academics, football fans, and lovers of history and great writing.”

—Dan Borné, voice of LSU’s Tiger Stadium and former aide to U.S. senator Russell Long

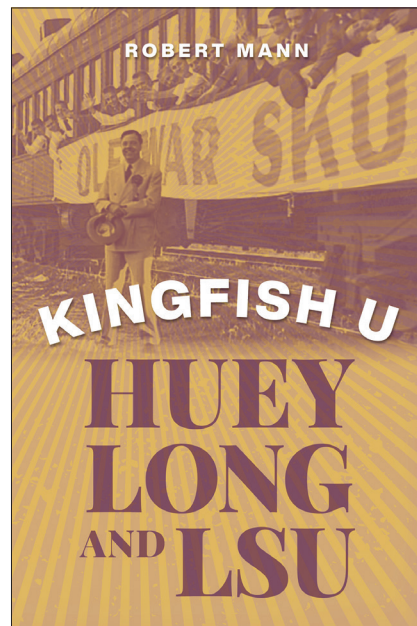
No political leader is more closely identified with Louisiana State University than the flamboyant governor and U.S. senator Huey P. Long, who devoted his last years to turning a small, undistinguished state school into an academic and football powerhouse. From 1931, when Long declared himself the “official thief” for LSU, to his death in 1935, the school’s budget mushroomed, its physical plant burgeoned, its faculty flourished, and its enrollment tripled.

Along with improving LSU’s academic reputation, Long believed the school’s football program and band were crucial to its success. Taking an intense interest in the team, Long delivered pregame and halftime pep talks, devised plays, stalked the sidelines during games, and fired two coaches. He poured money into a larger, flashier band, supervised the hiring of two directors, and, with the second one, wrote a new fight song, “Touchdown for LSU.”

While he rarely meddled in academic affairs, Long insisted that no faculty member criticize him publicly. When students or faculty from “his school” opposed him, retribution was swift. Long’s support for LSU did not come without consequences. His unrelenting involvement almost cost the university its accreditation. And after his death, several of his allies—including his handpicked university president—went to prison in a scandal that almost destroyed LSU.

Rollicking and revealing, Robert Mann’s *Kingfish U* is the definitive story of Long’s embrace of LSU.

ROBERT MANN is the author of numerous books, most recently *Becoming Ronald Reagan: The Rise of a Conservative Icon* and *Backrooms and Bayous: My Life in Louisiana Politics*. He holds the Manship Chair in Journalism at the Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University.



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