

David Ferrie

David William Ferrie was a man of exceptionally high moral aspirations and extremely low moral achievements. He was conflicted and self-contradictory. He was complex and brilliant, vulgar and depraved. He could be an invaluable and loyal ally, but he was a compulsive liar. He was fascinating, multi-talented, impulsive, unpredictable, charming, explosive, and weird. Later in his life, his appearance was bizarre. He was deeply religious, and incapable of self-control, especially around little boys. He had an enormous capacity to rationalize his bad behavior, and a frequent need to do so. He worked for the mafia and the CIA, flowing freely and easily between the two worlds. He was disgusting and likeable. He was an airline pilot, a mafia pilot, a hypnotist, an investigator, a lab technician. He struggled to become ordained in the Catholic Church, and he dabbled in the occult. He trained pilots (for the CIA) who were to play a part in the Bay of Pigs invasion, and he frequently flew missions over Cuba. His death was as strange as his life and his appearance.

He was born in Cleveland in 1918, raised in the Catholic faith by a father (James H Ferrie) who was a police captain in Cleveland, then later became an attorney. David studied three years at St Mary's Seminary in Cleveland, but before he could graduate and become ordained as a priest, he had a nervous breakdown. Later, he tried to pick up

where he left off, but St Mary's refused to take him back. So Ferrie decided to become a teacher, entering Baldwin-Wallace College in 1940, and student-teaching at a high school that year and the next. He seemed more interested in religion and boys than teaching, however, and the department chairman was neither impressed with his teaching skills nor assured of his moral character.

In August 1941, he made another attempt at becoming an ordained priest, this time at St Charles Seminary in Carthagen, Ohio. For the second time, he came up short after three years of study. Just before graduation, the faculty put a halt to his religious studies, explaining that there was surely an element of instability in his character somewhere. There was no single incident they could point to, but they noted that when Ferrie needed to be corrected about something, his attitude was that he didn't need to change; the rule needed to be changed.

In 1945, he began receiving psychiatric treatment, and the next three years were relatively stable. He taught English and aeronautics at a high school (while living at home), and began working at the Civil Air Patrol. In 1948, he encountered significant turbulence once again. He flew an airplane, which had been grounded by the US Air Force, from Columbus to Cleveland. At night, with no landing lights. While claiming to be a lieutenant in the Air Force. A funny thing happened on the way out the CAP door, though. The paperwork got lost. Then a couple of his cadets stated in writing that their instructor (Ferrie) had taken them to a whorehouse in a nearby

town. Somehow, Ferrie managed to talk his way into a transfer rather than dismissal, and he went to the Louisiana branch. That wasn't destined to last long, either, but when they requested his records from Cleveland, once again, the paperwork got lost.

In 1951, Ferrie took up residence on Bourbon Street in New Orleans' French Quarter, and the fifties were relatively stable for him. He got a good job with Eastern Airlines and became a Captain, flying big jets. The life of a pilot includes long layovers, which Captain Ferrie used productively. He studied biochemistry, psychology, and hypnotism. He started calling himself Dr Ferrie. Meanwhile he continued his work with the Civil Air Patrol, where he met cadet Lee Harvey Oswald. By the end of the decade, Ferrie had lost all the hair on his body. There is speculation that it resulted from his biochemical studies. He began wearing a homemade wig, held in place with glue, and he painted on his eyebrows, yielding an odd, frightening, clownish appearance.

What he lacked in hair, he made up for in hostility toward Communists and Communism. He wrote a letter to the US Defense Secretary, expressing a strong interest in blowing the hell out of every damn Russian, Communist, Red, or what have you. Apparently, that led to a relationship with the CIA. He began flying missions into Cuba, first to deliver weapons to Castro to use against Batista. Then, when Castro painted Cuba red, Ferrie flew weapons into Cuba to be used against Castro. Ferrie was intensely bitter over what he considered Castro's betrayal when the

Cuban dictator seized American assets and embraced Russia. He was passionate about working with anti-Castro exiles in Florida and Guatemala.

That hatred of Castro and Cuba placed Ferrie squarely in alignment with the CIA, and at odds with the White House. JFK had very different methods in mind for dealing with Castro and Russia's expanding influence in the Western Hemisphere. JFK could not control the CIA, because they had secret funds to finance secret operations that often directly contradicted JFK's orders. The CIA was in charge of US foreign policy as much as JFK was. Kennedy was also at odds with his top military leaders and advisors. American missiles armed with nuclear warheads were positioned in Turkey on Russia's southern border. If the nod came from Washington, all of Russia's major cities would become a nuclear inferno in 30 minutes. JFK understood that Russia's inevitable reaction would not be conducive to world peace, and he ordered the missiles removed. The Pentagon did not comply. Castro wanted Yankees off his island, and Russia wanted the US to know how it felt to have nuclear missiles staring them in the face. The result should not have surprised anyone in Washington.

When we Americans are told about the Cuban Missile Crisis, we are led to believe that the Russians were warmongering, blood-thirsty Communists poking a stick in the eye of Americans, who were just minding our own business. That's hardly an accurate portrayal of those events. The Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis are

proof of what happens when the CIA decides it knows how to conduct America's international affairs better than the President of the United States. We had two governments operating against each other in the early 1960s. One of them almost drew us into WWII. Perhaps we should be grateful that the damage they did was mostly limited to assassinating JFK. Perhaps we should be worried that the CIA is still not under the control of POTUS and Congress, and that our national spooks are right now doing things that we have no idea of, would not approve of, and POTUS has no control over. They are no less capable now than they were in the early 1960s. They can keep secrets from POTUS, Congress, and even the Director of the CIA. They are experts at staging their crimes to look like accidents. They know just how to shift blame to other individuals or groups. They can kill somebody and make it look like he died of natural causes (like heart attack or cancer). Taxpayers have no way of knowing what the CIA is up to, and that's just the way they are going to keep it. That should alarm every one of us.

But getting back to the 1960s, Ferrie was in that area between official federal policy and CIA policy. Between legal and illegal. Between right and wrong. Between patriotism and treason. He was strongly allied with the CIA, and deeply involved in covert operations, but how far was he willing to let himself be led toward treason? Far enough to devote himself to anti-Castro Cubans and their cause. Early in April, 1961, the CIA began hearing rumblings from anti-Castro guerillas in central Cuba, but

their radio signals weren't strong enough for the CIA to understand what the guerillas were trying to tell them. They needed to send in a team to collect radio signals from a mountain top in the Camaguey Mountains. Ferrie was chosen to lead the mission. He was summoned to Washington and instructed to fly from Florida's west coast to a jungle in central Cuba, where he and his copilot would be met by guerillas who would guide them to the location where the radio signals could be recorded. Ferrie couldn't have been happier, flying an important mission for the CIA! Ferrie was wounded, but the mission was successful. Unfortunately, it was overshadowed by the Bay of Pigs invasion the following morning (April 17, 1961).

The Bay of Pigs invasion, of course, was a disaster for the US and a huge embarrassment for the new POTUS. JFK determined to destroy the CIA, but that was not his top priority at that time. Meanwhile, he instructed his brother Bobby (Robert Kennedy, US Attorney General) to control the CIA by eliminating their secret funding capabilities. The CIA and the Kennedys would be at odds for the rest of JFK's time in office, and Ferrie would maintain his ties with the CIA. The invasion left JFK weakened and chagrined, and it left Russia strengthened and emboldened. That led to the Cuban Missile Crisis a year later. The radio signals Ferrie recorded were warnings that Russia was building missile sites in Cuba. The CIA was more determined than ever to crush Castro, control Cuba, destroy Communism, and to do whatever it took to prevent JFK from stopping them.

After all, they believed, the future of the US was at stake. The future of the world, in fact. That, they reasoned, gave them carte blanche authority to take whatever action necessary to achieve their goals.

In 1961, Ferrie was living in a tri-level house near the New Orleans Airport, where he worked for Eastern Airlines. He and his mother lived on the main floor, where he also hosted CAP meetings. In the basement, Ferrie had constructed a crude flight simulator, used for teaching flying. On the top floor, Ferrie had a library and a medical lab, including a microscope, mice, test tubes, diplomas, and a psychiatric couch. 1961 was probably the best year of Ferrie's life. But he just couldn't stay out of trouble for long.

One night Ferrie got drunk, took a boy and went on a joy ride in an airplane, terrorizing sleepy New Orleans residents at tree-top level, and probably having sex with the boy somewhere along the way. When he faced angry FAA officials back at the airport, he was facing loss of his commercial pilot's license and charges of indecency with a minor. He also faced a pink slip from CAP for violating its rules. Minor infractions (pun alert!), like sleeping in the same cabin with teenage cadets and throwing them a beer party on the beach. He just couldn't keep his hands off the boys. (Thank God for the seminaries that refused to allow that pervert from realizing his full potential as a pedophile priest.) So, he started a flying club called the Falcons, holding meetings in his home, which once again provided him access to teenage boys.

But that didn't mean he had given up on becoming a priest. This time it was through the Apostolic Orthodox Old Catholic Church, based in a house in Louisville, Kentucky. Ferrie went there, wearing a wig which was secured with Scotch tape, and once again went away empty-handed. The Archbishop who was supposed to perform the ceremony found out about Ferrie's parting of the ways with Eastern Airlines, and he refused to consecrate Ferrie. Instead, Ferrie got a scolding and a letter of excommunication. He continued to fight Eastern Airlines for years, finally resulting in yet another defeat and a downward spiral.

He moved out of his house by the airport and into an apartment in town. Then came his fourth and final attempt to become an ordained priest. He made arrangements, and he was scheduled to be ordained on July 19, 1963. This time Ferrie was betrayed by his friend Jack Martin, who told the ordaining priest about Ferrie's pending charges of homosexuality. That was the end of that, and that was the end of the friendship between David Ferrie and Jack Martin.

In New Orleans, Ferrie was working as a private investigator for Guy Banister, a right-wing extremist who was involved with anti-Communist covert actions in Latin America. Ferrie also worked as a private investigator and pilot for mafia boss Carlos Marcello. He was also training a dozen Cuban exiles at a camp outside New Orleans. They were planning to go after Castro, but the FBI raided the camp on July 31, 1963. Although Ferrie wasn't there during the raid, he is the one who had secured the

explosives and military hardware confiscated by the FBI. The 11 people arrested in the raid were quickly released and the record of their arrests was erased. It is no coincidence that Ferrie's boss, Guy Banister, had once been in charge of the FBI office in Chicago, and he was close to J Edgar Hoover.

In 1963, Ferrie saw a familiar face that he hadn't seen in years: Lee Harvey Oswald (LHO). Since they last saw each other at CAP, where LHO was a cadet and Ferrie was an instructor, Oswald had spent time in the Marine Corps, lived several years in the Soviet Union, got married, and was now working for Guy Banister. They would see each other many times that summer, sometimes at Banister's office. Lee was a guest at one of Ferrie's parties, where David got drunk and started talking about the death of JFK in the cross-fire of high-powered rifles.

Ferrie was spending a great deal of time helping his boss (one of them), Carlos Marcello, defend against racketeering charges. While JFK was being murdered in Dallas, Ferrie was in a New Orleans courtroom listening to the judge pronounce Marcello not guilty. Ferrie left the same afternoon for Texas. Jack Martin called the DA, Jim Garrison, and said he thought Ferrie may have been involved in the JFK murder.

Investigators searched Ferrie's apartment and found some of his medical equipment as well as maps of Cuba. He was arrested and questioned by Garrison's investigators when he got back to New Orleans, and they turned him over to the FBI, who quickly

released him with an apology. (Thanks to Guy Banister, no doubt.)

In 1966, Garrison reopened his investigation into the JFK murder, and he was convinced Ferrie was a key figure in the crime. In February, 1967, the investigation was made public, and Ferrie was made dead. The official cause of death was natural causes. Many think he killed himself, and many others think he was murdered. It's one of so many deaths during the 1960s and -70s that cannot be proven to be murder, but are just a little too convenient for those whose interests were greatly served when they no longer had to worry about what the individual might be willing to tell authorities about the JFK murder. The statistical odds of that many convenient natural deaths or suicides rules out coincidence. Especially when we factor in the CIA's talent in the art of making murder appear to be something else. Once we realize that the CIA (or certain key high-level CIA agents) was largely responsible for the JFK assassination, it is not difficult at all to see their fingerprints on the corpses of dozens of people who threatened to expose them.

David Ferrie did not help murder JFK, but he was associated with people who were involved in the murder conspiracy. Ferrie pretended to be part of the conspiracy in order to find out what was happening, but he was actually involved in a secret project to save the life of JFK by killing Fidel Castro. After JFK's death, people on both sides had plenty of reasons for wanting Ferrie dead. The JFK murder conspirators didn't want him to reveal what he knew about the

murder. People involved in trying to save JFK's life didn't want him to reveal anything about the secret project he had been involved in (along with LHO, Dr Mary Sherman, Judyth Vary Baker, Dr Alton Ochsner, Guy Banister, and Carlos Marcello).