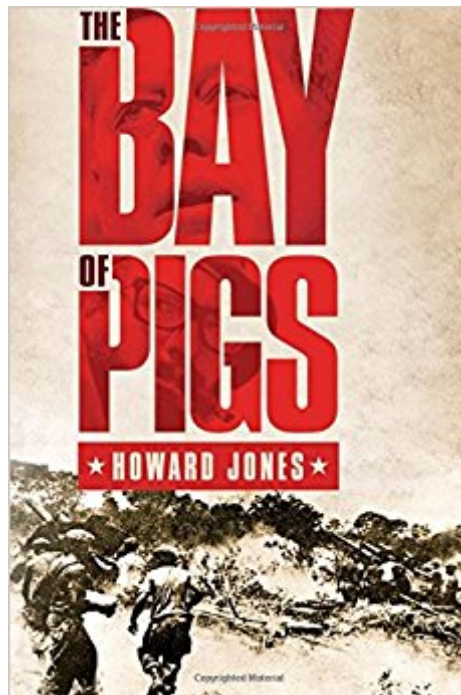




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# The Bay Of Pigs (Pivotal Moments In American History)



## Synopsis

In *The Bay of Pigs*, Howard Jones provides a concise, incisive, and dramatic account of the disastrous attempt to overthrow Castro in April 1961. Drawing on recently declassified CIA documents, Jones deftly examines the train of missteps and self-deceptions that led to the invasion of U.S.-trained exiles at the Bay of Pigs. Ignoring warnings from the ambassador to Cuba, the Eisenhower administration put in motion an operation that proved nearly unstoppable even after the inauguration of John F. Kennedy. The CIA and Pentagon, meanwhile, both voiced confidence in the outcome of the invasion, especially after coordinating previous successful coups in Guatemala and Iran. And so the Kennedy administration launched the exile force toward its doom in Cochin Bay on April 17, 1961. Jones gives a riveting account of the battle--and the confusion in the White House--before moving on to explore its implications. *The Bay of Pigs*, he writes, set the course of Kennedy's foreign policy. It was a humiliation for the administration that fueled fears of Communist domination and pushed Kennedy toward a hardline "cold warrior" stance. But at the same time, the failed attack left him deeply skeptical of CIA and military advisers and influenced his later actions during the Cuban missile crisis.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this brief, standard survey, University of Alabama historian Jones (*Mutiny on the Amistad*) concludes that the 1961 CIA-engineered Bay of Pigs invasion marked a new direction in [U.S.] foreign policy by combining military force and assassination. When Castro's seizure of power in

1959 led to mass executions and bellicose anti-American rhetoric, President Eisenhower authorized the CIA to draft a plan for Castro's overthrow. The plan included Castro's assassination and landing a brigade of Cuban exiles at the Bay of Pigs. Pressed by building Cold War anxiety in his ranks, President Kennedy approved the plan after taking office in 1961, but reduced air cover in order to conceal U.S. involvement, and an invasion built on questionable premises and dubious assumptions quickly foundered. While the abortive invasion solidified Castro's rule, the author says, failure didn't deter Kennedy, whose administration made the overthrow of Castro its central focus. Extensively researched and cogently reasoned, Jones's update of this Cold War turning point for the Pivotal Moments in American History series is a cautionary account of a disastrous foray into regime change. 30 b&w illus; maps. (Aug.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A readable and concise study of the events leading to the military and political disaster in April 1961...This book should be must reading for our two presidential candidates and their staffs."--St. Petersburg Times"Jones has crafted an exceedingly impressive history of this tragic event that should stand as the definitive treatment for years to come. Essential for all history collections."--Library Journal (starred review)"Jones, University Research Professor of History at UA and the author of *Mutiny on the Amistad*, tells this story not in a single page but in nearly hypnotic detail. He has researched the events with great care and thoroughness, using now-declassified records from the CIA, Senate committee hearings, and a host of other sources."--Tuscaloosa News"A taut account of a dismal passage of the Cold War... With remarkable efficiency, Jones... examines all aspects of the debacle... May become the preferred single-source reference to an episode whose foreign policy and military implications continue to reverberate."--Kirkus Reviews"Howard Jones's *The Bay of Pigs* broke new ground both with documentation and interpretation. In doing so, he also painted a broader Cold War brush in showed the foreign relations legacy of both the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis."--Cold War Times Magazine"A concise and highly informative account of the planning and execution of this foreign policy debacle...An excellent revisiting of a tragic episode of the cold war."---Booklist"Extensively researched and cogently reasoned, Jones's update of this Cold War turning point for the Pivotal Moments in American History series is a cautionary account of a disastrous foray into regime change."--Publishers Weekly"The Bay of Pigs, based on deep research, is a hard-hitting history of the Cold War mentality that led American leaders not only to back a badly flawed invasion but also to plot all manner of attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro and others in his circle."--James T. Patterson, author of *Restless Giant: The United States from*

Watergate to Bush v. Gore"An unsparing portrait of an epic disaster, a tale of overreach, incompetence, hubris and self-delusion, of every level of American government at its worst. The Bay of Pigs had far-reaching consequences, and from Howard Jones' account it becomes clear why."--James Galbraith, The University of Texas at Austin"This is the definitive history of John F. Kennedy's greatest policy calamity. More thoroughly researched than any previous work on the subject, it is also succinct, nuanced, and exquisitely balanced in its treatment of the president and the CIA."--Brian Latell, author of *After Fidel: Raul Castro and the Future of Cuba's Revolution*, and Senior Research Associate, Cuba Studies, University of Miami"Howard Jones has written a page-turner, beginning the moment he describes Fidel Castro's planes roaring out of Havana and heading toward the helpless Cuban exile brigade on Red Beach. He also shows conclusively how the invasion-poorly planned, driven by self-deception and inertia-solidified Castro's rule, destroyed U.S.-Cuban relations, and reinforced the American government's paranoia that any criticism of its foreign policy constituted a threat to nation security."--Stephen Schwab, retired CIA official currently teaching at the University of Alabama"A taut account of a dismal passage of the Cold War... With remarkable efficiency, Jones... examines all aspects of the debacle... May become the preferred single-source reference to an episode whose foreign policy and military implications continue to reverberate."--Kirkus Reviews"Extensively researched and cogently reasoned, Jones's update of this Cold War turning point for the Pivotal Moments in American History series is a cautionary account of a disastrous foray into regime change."--Publishers Weekly"The Bay of Pigs, based on deep research, is a hard-hitting history of the Cold War mentality that led American leaders not only to back a badly flawed invasion but also to plot all manner of attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro and others in his circle."--James T. Patterson, author of *Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush v. Gore*"An unsparing portrait of an epic disaster, a tale of overreach, incompetence, hubris and self-delusion, of every level of American government at its worst. The Bay of Pigs had far-reaching consequences, and from Howard Jones' account it becomes clear why."--James Galbraith, The University of Texas at Austin"This is the definitive history of John F. Kennedy's greatest policy calamity. More thoroughly researched than any previous work on the subject, it is also succinct, nuanced, and exquisitely balanced in its treatment of the president and the CIA."--Brian Latell, author of *After Fidel: Raul Castro and the Future of Cuba's Revolution*, and Senior Research Associate, Cuba Studies, University of Miami"Howard Jones has written a page-turner, beginning the moment he describes Fidel Castro's planes roaring out of Havana and heading toward the helpless Cuban exile brigade on Red Beach. He also shows conclusively how the invasion-poorly planned, driven by self-deception and inertia-solidified Castro's rule, destroyed

U.S.-Cuban relations, and reinforced the American government's paranoia that any criticism of its foreign policy constituted a threat to nation security."--Stephen Schwab, retired CIA official currently teaching at the University of Alabama

Great book trouble time in Cuba my home. My father was at the Bay of Pigs his was one of the Cubans that were taken prisoner by Fidel Castro soldiers, after he was release from prison he was brought back to this amazing nation the USA. My mother, brothers, my sister and my self were traded for medicine so we were able to come to the USA 1963. So this book was a reminder how we all got out of Cuba and left Fidel Castro regime.I already loan this book to a friend, it gave me pleasure and sadness to read it in details everything that happen in Cuban at the time of the Bay of Pigs.

University of Alabama historian Dr. Howard Jones has written an excellent one volume history of the U.S. government's attempts to eliminate Cuban leader Fidel Castro in the 1960s. The book is titled The Bay of Pigs and Jones does a great job of writing a compelling and accurate portrayal of the disaster that was the Bay of Pigs operation but this book is so much more than that. Jones places the Bay of Pigs in the context of the Eisenhower and then Kennedy administration's overall anti-Castro policies. He discusses at length the various options debated by American policymakers in the White House. The details of what happened at the Bay of Pigs are well known and have been told elsewhere but Jones makes great use of the CIA's release of documents collectively known as the "family jewels" to revise the picture on the depth of CIA involvement in what culminated at the Bay of Pigs. Another thing that I found particularly helpful is that Jones doesn't stop the story after the defeat of the Cuban exiles. In discussing the subsequent policies advocated by both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations until 1965 Jones makes it quite clear that hardly anybody in the White House seemed to learn the proper lessons of the disaster at the Bay of Pigs. Jones, I think makes it clear that absent the escalating war in Vietnam and problems elsewhere on the globe the United States may have blundered in to a second Bay of Pigs, except this one would have been backed up by the U.S. military. Jones gets a little conspiratorial when he discusses the potential connection between the Kennedy administration's Cuba policy and the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963. Although even there he makes use of new evidence released by the CIA in the 1990s. It's just a shame that many of the documents were still at least partially classified. Until the release of those documents without redacted sections and the availability of documents in Cuba, Jones work stands as the best one volume history available. Lastly, the page for the Kindle edition of

this book states it has real page numbers. I purchased my copy in June 2012 and my copy includes location numbers, not page numbers. Ordinarily sends purchasers an email when a book is updated so I don't think it's been updated since my purchase, this appears to be an error on the web page for this book. The lack of page numbers in my copy is outshone by the inclusion of marks at the bottom of the Kindle screen that lets the reader know in a very rough way the length of the chapter. I really appreciate that because it enables me to at least make a guess as to whether or not I'll be able to finish a chapter before bed.

John F. Kennedy inherited the Bay of Pigs plan from Dwight Eisenhower, who, in one of his last official acts, had ordered the CIA to rub out the Cuban revolution. Tiny Cuba was no threat to the U.S., but Castro had nationalized American property and Washington feared that Castro-ism could spread to other parts of Latin America. The CIA's plan involved landing a brigade of 1,500 anti-communist Cubans on a beach in Cuba and then waiting for the population to rise up against Castro. The plan looked straightforward on paper. In reality, the CIA had bad intelligence on Cuba and no experience with amphibious invasions. Within days, the invaders were overwhelmed by Castro's vastly superior forces. The fiasco exposed an amazing level of dysfunction in the U.S. government. Incredibly, Kennedy was adamant that U.S. fingerprints be kept off the operation, yet he didn't ask hard questions of the CIA and he went along with the plan because the "experts" told him it would succeed. Grown ups in the State Department and the military who should have been deeply involved were instead marginalized by the CIA on spurious security grounds. It is likely the CIA itself suspected that the plan was unworkable but went ahead anyway in the expectation that Kennedy would send in the Marines rather than accept a humiliating defeat. Few officials cared about international law or gave a hoot about lying to the American public. Duplicity, scheming, and miscommunication are rife in DC. Ordinarily they are a source of low comedy, but not when they are part of aggression against a small country. The U.S. defeat at the Bay of Pigs solidified Castro's hold on power. The U.S. got what it deserved. Howard Jones' "The Bay of Pigs" is sensible, workmanlike history, based on declassified archives. It is clear-eyed about the moral and intellectual limitations of the U.S. national security bureaucracy. I took off one star only because the book neglects the Cuban side of the story. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Cubans died defending their revolution against the onslaught of the CIA. They deserved to have their story told.

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identified contributing factors to failure where it belonged across myriad of people and organizations. quality consistent with other books in this series. quick moving and informative

This books shows the links between Kennedy and Richard Bissell and Alan Dulles. Both got medals.. Photos are good and show both sides

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