

PROJECT TITLE: Why Did the Germans Lose at D-Day? Evaluating Operation Overlord and the Axis Response	
AUTHOR: Melisa C. Larson	GRADE LEVEL & SUBJECT: US History, World History II High School

SCHOLARSHIP & RESEARCH

1. PRIMARY INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION

Why did the Germans lose at D-Day?

2. CONTEXTUAL ESSAY

Separate document

3. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOURCES CONSULTED

BOOKS

Ambrose, Stephen E. *D-Day: The Climactic Battle of WWII*

Despite Ambrose's fall from academic grace for inventing primary sources and lack of proper citation, his influence on the historiography of D-Day is still unparalleled. His writing style appeals to popular culture because he really emphasizes the human story, especially the stories of soldiers. This book is an interesting and engaging account of the battle built from the narratives of individuals. Just be sure to take it with a grain of salt.

Barbier, Mary Kathryn. *D-Day Deception: Operation Fortitude and the Normandy Invasion*

Provides a thorough examination of Operation Fortitude but often assumes that the reader has a background in military terminology and history. The writing is very technical, but readers with a deep interest in military operations will appreciate the extensive details. End-notes and glossary of abbreviations are helpful to general readers.

Hesketh, Roger. (2000). *Fortitude: The D-Day Deception Campaign*. Woodstock, New York: The Overlook Press.

Hesketh, one of the lead government agents in developing and overseeing the plan to deceive the German military about the D-Day invasion, wrote this official history of Operation Fortitude immediately after the end of WWII in 1945. The document remained classified until the 1970s and was only recently released in its entirety. The narrative is comprehensive and clearly written for an audience with military expertise.

Keegan, John. (1982). *Six Armies in Normandy*. London: Jonathan Cape, Ltd.

Very personal and captivating narrative written from the perspective of an author who lived through the war as a young man. This book is part historic analysis with extensive statistics, and part coming of age autobiography. The author vividly describes his own journey from a young man who believed in the ultimate certainty that Britain would win the war to an academic historian who now comprehends the thin margin of victory for the Allies.

Kershaw, Robert J. (1994). *D-Day: Piercing the Atlantic Wall*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press.

Examines the D-Day invasion from the perspectives of both Allied and Axis soldiers through personal accounts. Written primarily for an audience with an interest in military history, the book contains extensive photographs and quotes that will engage all readers.

Saunders, Anthony. (2001). *Hitler's Atlantic Wall*. Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton Publishing Limited.

Directed at history buffs more so than historians, this book is primarily a tour of the Atlantic Wall fortifications both past and present in Normandy, France. It contains numerous photographs from German, British and Canadian archives along with more recent amateur images of the sites. The images capture the extent, strength, and formidability of the German defensive line.

Weinberg, Gerhard. *A World At Arms: A Global History of World War II*

One of the first comprehensive studies of WWII from a global perspective. Weinberg examines the events of the war simultaneously in order to provide a context for the decision-making of both Allied and Axis Powers. The book is based extensively on primary source research at British, American, and German archives and contains over 200 pages of bibliographic notes.

ARTICLES

Ambrose, Stephen E. (1981, Summer). Eisenhower, the Intelligence Community, and the D-Day Invasion. *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 64(4), 261-277.

Explores the role that intelligence played in the success of the D-Day invasion but, as to be expected from this author, ultimately argues that it was the soldiers who won the day through their bravery and tenacity. Article includes primary sources: images, confidential documents, and extensive quotes from the *Eisenhower Papers* collection.

Anonymous. (2007, December 01). IKE AT D-DAY. *Smithsonian*, 48-58.

Easily accessible and engaging article for diverse student learners. Provides a brief overview of the planning and decision making in the days just prior to the D-Day invasion through the lens of Eisenhower. The article is an excerpt from the book *Ike: An American Hero* by Michael Korda.

Berman, Mildred. (1994, October). D-Day and Geography. *Geographical Review*, 84(4), 469-475.

Brief but informative look at the D-Day invasion from the lens of geography. This article explores the role that both the physical geography of Normandy and the unique weather conditions in June 1944 played in the invasion planning. Of particular interest is the development of the artificial harbors known as “mulberries” and their corresponding protective breakwaters called “gooseberries.”

Grigg, John. (1984). D-DAY. *History Today*, 34(6), 6-9.

Fascinating article that explores the question of whether or not the D-Day invasion could have been even more successful if it had happened in 1943. While the author tantalizes the reader by suggesting possible outcomes if the invasion had been earlier, he does not provide adequate evidence that the option was militarily possible.