
Analysis Of D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climatic Battle Of World War II By Stephen E. Ambrose

There are many events that can change history, whether it is minor or catastrophic. Change is inevitable, but it is the reason why the world is the way it is today. D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climatic Battle of World War II was written in 1944 by Stephen E. Ambrose and told the story of the most pivotal battle that changed the course of history. This day not only put an end to Hitler's rule in Europe, but also began the series of events that ended World War II. It is told from the viewpoint of American, British, Canadian, French, and German GIs and Tommies who fought during the battle. Ambrose uses about 14,000 interviews with veterans, sailors, infantrymen, and paratroopers in an attempt to tell the story from both sides of the Atlantic. D-Day is the story of the heroes who fought for America at the most demanding moment of their lives, portraying the many horrors and complexities that they went through. It describes their heroism and courage that led to the victory of the citizen soldiers.

Ambrose is known as one of the most acclaimed historical writers in the world, beginning his journey off as a pre-med student at the University of Wisconsin. He then joined the Navy and even went overseas, but when he came back to America he had full intentions of becoming a doctor like his father. After taking an American history class, his career path changed when he found inspiration in telling stories of the heroic soldiers who fought for this country. His true passion and calling in life was telling the stories of the courageous heroes who went unheard of. Ambrose believed that online research was not powerful or descriptive enough to show the experiences that these soldiers went through. That is why he preferred interviews and using firsthand experiences to tell their stories. Reading the book in a first-person point of view is life changing. It allows the readers to hear about some of the horrors these people went through that many of us don't know happened. Online articles and historical books tend to summarize the events, but when it comes from someone that actually experienced the war and had to strategize in order to survive, it is that more powerful.

The Germans and the Russians had continuously been at war, with the Russians losing immeasurably to the Germans. The Russians had been begging for the Allies to help them, and imploring for them to plant the seed to end the war. After planning the operation, the Allies finally realized that it would be nearly impossible to fight a battle on two fronts. With that new knowledge, they decided that they had to strike on the other side of the German army, since it would be far too difficult to assign the supplies for each front. This was what they needed to do in order to help the Russians and regroup after the fight with the Germans. In order for the Allies to achieve this, they needed to mislead the Germans into thinking that they could possibly

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attack at a set place. They chose Pas de Calais to deceive them, a beach in France where England and France are closest. In order to pull this off, they needed a secret double agent to act as a spy on the inside. This was the job of Juan Pujol Garcia, someone that Ambrose claimed never got credit for what he accomplished. Garcia was successful in gaining the trust of the German soldiers and reassuring them that the Allies would attack at Pas de Calais, as well as gaining the trust of Hitler. After completely fooling the Germans, the Allies were able to surprise them on the Normandy beaches. In order to keep this attack a secret, the Allies chose the word “overlord” as codename for the Battle of Normandy. Even with all the planning, the arrangement was not full-proof.

The attack was planned to be on June 4th, not June 6th of 1944. During the date of the original attack, the weather was not good and the soldiers could likely drown in the waves of the ocean while storming the beaches. However, the Germans had plans and they would be able to see that the Allies were planning on invading the beaches. President Eisenhower decided to move forward with the attack on June 6th, that way the German soldiers would not discover their plans and they could still attack them by surprise. Surprising the Germans was crucial in their success because if the Germans would have known when the attack was going to take place, they would have had time to prepare and the battle could have ended completely different. Successfully, the plan worked and the majority of the Nazi officers posted in France were caught off guard and the Allies gained an upper hand while landing on five different Normandy beaches in France. The five beaches were called Sword, Juno, Gold, Utah, and Omaha. The Allies planned specific goals for each beach and a set of troops to go to each destination. The Sword army needed to get to Caen, which was the main city that was planned to be stolen back. The Juno army was told to block the road to Caen so any German reinforcements that were sent to help would be blocked. The Gold army had to conquer Arromanches by getting past the German defenses. The Utah army had to take back Cherbourg. Lastly, the Omaha army had to conquer St. Laurent or Vierville, which were coastline cities in France.

Ambrose wrote this book to explain one of history’s most important days in the perspective of the many veterans that fought in it. His book was created with thousands of interviews to give the readers new insights on D-Day. Ambrose wanted to give readers a clear vision of what it would have been like if they were there during this battle.

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