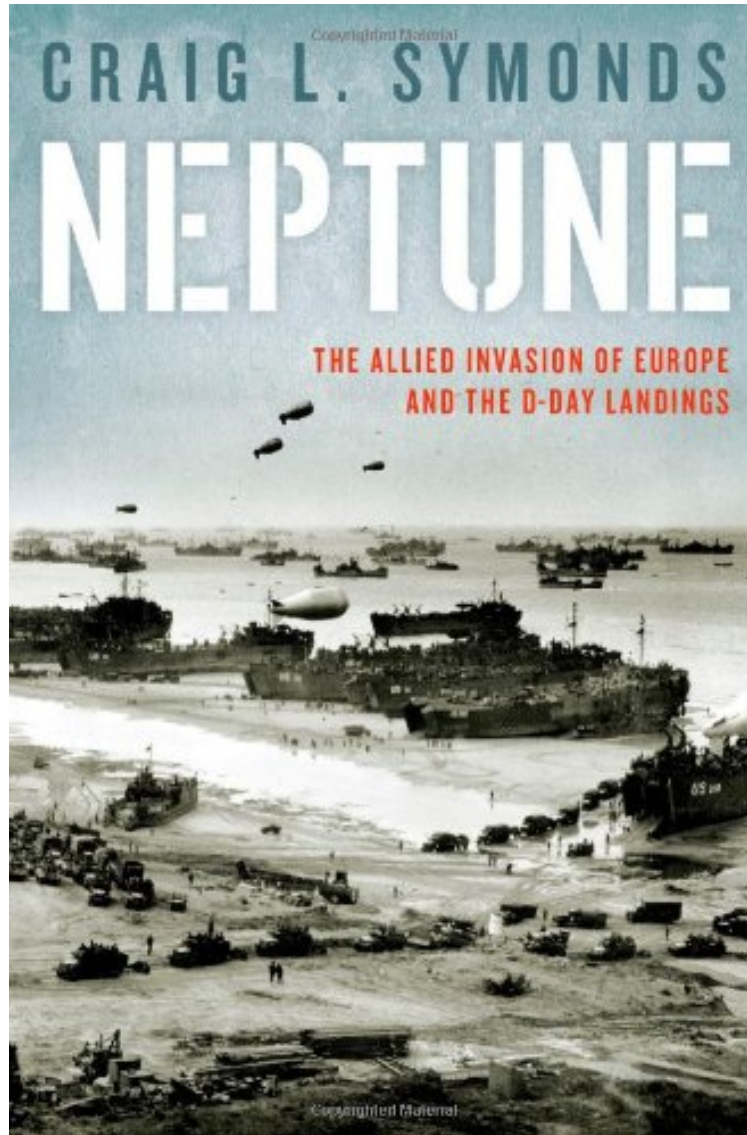


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Neptune: Allied Invasion of Europe and the The D-Day Landings

Craig L. Symonds

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Craig L. Symonds : Neptune: Allied Invasion of Europe and the The D-Day Landings before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Neptune: Allied Invasion of Europe and the The D-Day Landings:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book! The Navy's Story in Operation Overlord-NeptuneBy AndyGreat book! Many D-Day books concentrate on the role of the Army in the Normandy landings and afterwards. Prof. Emeritus Symonds of the US Naval Academy has written an informative and interesting book on the Navy's role

in Operation Overlord. The Navy's operational plan is called NEPTUNE which concerns the trans-Atlantic sea lift of men, material and vehicles and the cross-Channel movement of same to Normandy. Symonds tells a comprehensive story of the political and military build up through to the weeks just after the landing wherein he describes some of the initial Army activity at the same time emphasizing the Navy's role. I like the fact that Symonds used research sources such as oral histories, memoirs and letters as a part of his writing. I especially appreciated the material he gleaned from Navy "Action Reports" which are first-hand after-action reports of battles and conflicts. He researched these materials at the National Archives, the Naval Academy, National WWII Museum in New Orleans, U.S. Naval Institute's Oral History Program, Naval History and Heritage Command among others. The quotations and anecdotes make the book interesting and personal. I learned a lot about the state of pre-1941 U.S. Navy and its build up to the June 1944 invasion on Normandy.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A truly fine and thoughtful addition to the D-Day shelf. By James Connelly. Outstanding treatment of the naval and logistical planning in the context of often divergent wartime and political goals of the UK and the USA. Written with an uncommon combination of accessible prose (sometimes with the light touch of a revealing or humorous detail) and thorough, telling detail. The charts, maps, and photographs are intelligently devised and selected to illuminate the text -- they are not just the well-worn and conventional filler one sees in many D-Day books. Many books on D-Day and its planning are ponderously written; others are superficial remixes of previous works. Symonds' fine book is in a different class altogether. I had the good fortune to hear the author lecture on his book at the Boston Athenaeum: the book is infused with his enthusiastic and informed tone of voice. Highly recommended, even if, like me, you've read a number of studies of the lead-up to and execution of the Normandy invasion plan. The trade-offs between strategy and logistics, conflicting demands and goals for Europe and the Pacific campaigns, and the backgrounds that British and American commanders and planners brought to the war (often illustrated by private diary entries that contrast with the official lines then espoused) are themes that weave through Symonds' book and that he handles with clarity and style. A fine book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating tale of planning told in a well written book. MP3 CD is great. By Steve. Listening to all the details about the logistics surrounding the invasion of Normandy was one of the biggest audiobook pleasures I had the privilege of listening to in recent memory. I think that the planning side of the invasion is one of its most interesting aspects of it. It just seems like a logistical challenge that scales to near infinity. This book was incredibly fascinating and well written. It had a wealth of information. and I loved it. The MP3 CD is also great. It is the format I listened to the book in. It was very easy to rip the audio files and put them on my phone.

Seventy years ago, more than six thousand Allied ships carried more than a million soldiers across the English Channel to a fifty-mile-wide strip of the Normandy coast in German-occupied France. It was the greatest sea-borne assault in human history. The code names given to the beaches where the ships landed the soldiers have become immortal: Gold, Juno, Sword, Utah, and especially Omaha, the scene of almost unimaginable human tragedy. The sea of crosses in the cemetery sitting today atop a bluff overlooking the beaches recalls to us its cost. Most accounts of this epic story begin with the landings on the morning of June 6, 1944. In fact, however, D-Day was the culmination of months and years of planning and intense debate. In the dark days after the evacuation of Dunkirk in the summer of 1940, British officials and, soon enough, their American counterparts, began to consider how, and, where, and especially when, they could re-enter the European Continent in force. The Americans, led by U.S. Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, wanted to invade as soon as possible; the British, personified by their redoubtable prime minister, Winston Churchill, were convinced that a premature landing would be disastrous. The often-sharp negotiations between the English-speaking allies led them first to North Africa, then into Sicily, then Italy. Only in the spring of 1943, did the Combined Chiefs of Staff commit themselves to an invasion of northern France. The code name for this invasion was Overlord, but everything that came before, including the landings themselves and the supply system that made it possible for the invaders to stay there, was code-named Neptune. Craig L. Symonds now offers the complete story of this Olympian effort, involving transports, escorts, gunfire support ships, and landing craft of every possible size and function. The obstacles to success were many. In addition to divergent strategic views and cultural frictions, the Anglo-Americans had to overcome German U-boats, Russian impatience, fierce competition for insufficient shipping, training disasters, and a thousand other impediments, including logistical bottlenecks and disinformation schemes. Symonds includes vivid portraits of the key decision-makers, from Franklin Roosevelt and Churchill, to Marshall, Dwight Eisenhower, and Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, who commanded the naval element of the invasion. Indeed, the critical role of the naval forces--British and American, Coast Guard and Navy--is central throughout. In the end, as Symonds shows in this gripping account of D-Day, success depended mostly on the men themselves: the junior officers and enlisted men who drove the landing craft, cleared the mines, seized the beaches and assailed the bluffs behind them, securing the foothold for the eventual campaign to Berlin, and the end of the most terrible war in human history.

"[Symonds] has written a marvellous account of Operation Neptune. While emphasizing the American side of the equation, he is even-handed and covers the British side of events with sensitivity and generosity. He is a rare

American historian in his willingness to credit the contribution of the British and essentially accepts that it was a genuine partnership between, if not equals in the material sense, certainly so in the moral one...Symonds provides an excellent account of the strategic planning, discussions and compromises that led to the invasion of June 1944...This is a useful history of Operation Neptune. It tells a neglected story well and it is a story that deserves to be known much better. Symonds book is an excellent addition to the shelf of anyone interested in the Second World War and I recommend it accordingly."--The Northern Mariner"[A] fascinating, multi-layered story... Symonds has an excellent eye for telling details and arresting quotes from the ordinary participants." --Daily Beast"Neptune is a sweeping account . . . Symonds is lucid and incisive. His writing is as good as Rick Atkinson's . . . accessible, sharp and faithful to the human foibles of the protagonists whose plans and courage bore fruit on June 6, 1944." --ARMY "Excellent... Symonds has produced a terrific account of the heroic role the U.S. Navy played in making the D-Day landings a success." --Charleston Post and Courier"Symonds employs his extensive knowledge and skill at synthesis to turn an oft-told story into vibrant on-the-scene history... Symonds touches all the bases... The landing is especially well narrated. Solid writing has the reader feeling the suspense, where the outcome is already known." --Sea History"[A]n impressive account... Most accounts of the D-Day invasion start with landing craft opening their gates as courageous men rush out into German gun fire, Symond's brilliant narrative starts years earlier with American entry into WWII. The reader gains an incredible appreciation for the logistical masterpiece completed by Allied leaders and the careful, all-important buildup of the 'special relationship' between the United States and Great Britain... a must read for this year's important 70th Anniversary of D-Day." --Breitbart.com"Neptune is unquestionably a work that makes major contributions to the field... a finely written piece of history... It is very readable and hard to put down." --Proceedings"Neptune, prolific naval historian and longtime US Naval Academy professor (now emeritus) Craig Symonds describes in fascinating detail Allied planning and preparation for the defeat of Germany in 1944 . . . Neptune fills a lacuna in D-day literature by its unusually thorough treatment of the naval requirements for the successful invasion of northern Europe. And, too, his extensive use of archival materials and relevant personal papers and documents allows him to elucidate the naval planning, preparation, and organization for Operation Neptune in far greater detail than do previous works." --Michigan War Studies "In this well-written, engaging volume, Craig Symonds, Professor Emeritus at the U.S. Naval Academy, makes an original contribution to the historiography of the Normandy landings... Symonds masterfully mixes the big picture, operational descriptions with colorful, illuminating firsthand accounts from the sailors.... Symonds has an especially strong feel for naval command. His personal profiles and assessment of the key leaders such as Bertram Ramsay, Alan Kirk, Morton Deyo, Philip Vian, and Don Moon are arresting and unforgettable. One suspects that his analysis of these important personalities will substantially influence and inform subsequent generations of Neptune historians...Neptune is a truly original and important contribution, one that substantially rounds out our understanding of the Normandy invasion." --Robert C. McMannus, Journal of Military History"This superb volume is the first comprehensive account in a half century of the vital naval operations that lifted the liberating legions to France, landed them on D-Day, and supported them. Craig Symonds ranges with easy command from often fractious strategic planning sessions to the searing experiences of young sailors in the crucible of fire-drenched beaches. Neptune is at once an important scholarly contribution and a great read." --Richard B. Frank, author of Guadalcanal and Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire"Craig L. Symonds, one of America's greatest military historians, scores a triumph with Neptune. In this masterpiece of historical scholarship Symonds sheds new light on how FDR mobilized the U.S. Navy for the D-Day landings of June 6, 1944. His archival work is dazzling. Highly recommended!" --Douglas Brinkley, Professor of History at Rice University, CBS News Historian, and author of The Boys of Point du Hoc"Craig Symonds brings to vivid life the Allied assault from the sea on Normandy. He has written a clear, comprehensive, and often thrilling account of the massive and complex invasion--a tale of heroism and folly, genius and muddle. Neptune is an invaluable contribution to the history and literature of D-Day." --Evan Thomas, author of Sea of Thunder and Ike's Bluff"The prose is distinguished by the author's ability to simultaneously present an academic history supported by excellent research while captivating the reader with the individual narratives of soldiers and sailors who participated in the operation. Symonds has crafted an enjoyable and informative read for anyone interested in the history of WWII." --Publishers Weekly"Acclaimed naval historian Symonds has the teacher's patient touch and big-picture knowledge to accessibly present the truly incredible scope of this largely naval endeavor." --Kirkus sAbout the AuthorCraig L. Symonds is Professor of History Emeritus at the U.S. Naval Academy. He is the author of many books on American naval history, including The Battle of Midway and Lincoln and His Admirals, co-winner of the Lincoln Prize in 2009.