



0. UTAH BEACH - Story Preface

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15. STUNNING D-DAY FACTS

American soldiers make their way to Utah Beach on D-Day morning, 6 June 1944. On the beach itself are wrecked vehicles. Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives. Click on the image for a better view.

At 0630, on the morning of June 6, Americans landed on two of five Normandy beaches earmarked for the invasion: Utah and Omaha. Thanks to National Archives and official military records, we can view pictures of that memorable day.

- An aerial view of Utah Beach on D-Day morning.
- USS Bayfield (APA-33) was the U.S. flagship for the Utah Beach landings.
- During the early phase of the landings, German shells were fired at an LST making its way to Utah Beach.
- Barrage balloons, attached to landing crafts and ships making their way to Utah Beach, were intended to protect men and vessels from low-flying German war planes.
- Troops about to go ashore were still smiling. Many would never smile again.
- With its .50 caliber machine gun pointed skyward, for anti-aircraft defense, an Army weapons carrier makes its way to Utah Beach.
- Sunken ships at Utah Beach formed a kind of breakwater.
- Having made it safely to a seawall, soldiers await orders to move inland.
- American soldiers under artillery fire, including African-Americans, do their jobs on Utah Beach.

- VII Corps' D-Day operations at the Utah Beachhead.
- German prisoners of war, captured on June 6th, were temporarily kept in a Utah Beach barbed-wire enclosure.
- Utah Beach headquarters, during the landing build-up, was not a safe place that day.

Omaha Beach, the other American D-Day landing point, had its own series of problems.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/UTAH-BEACH-Normandy-Invasion>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/UTAH-BEACH-Normandy-Invasion>

## Questions 2 Ponder

### Why Do People Smile Even When Facing Imminent Danger?

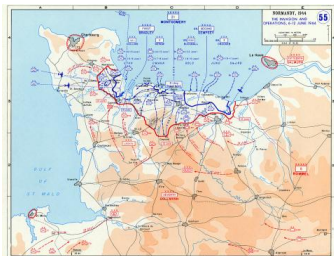
As Americans reach the shore of Utah Beach, on D-Day, photos show some of the men are still smiling. Not long after, many of those soldiers will never smile again.

What causes people to smile, even when facing imminent danger?

Does smiling somehow make us feel better? Why, or why not?

Is there such a thing as a “nervous smile?” Explain your answer.

## Media Stream



### Normandy: The Invasion and Operations - June 6-12, 1944

Map image online, courtesy U.S. Military Academy.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Normandy-The-Invasion-and-Operations-June-6-12-1944>



### Utah Beach - Aerial View

Image described above from the United States Army in World War II Series, European Theater of Operations, U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Online, courtesy HyperWar Foundation and iBiblio - The Public's Library and Digital Archive at University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill).

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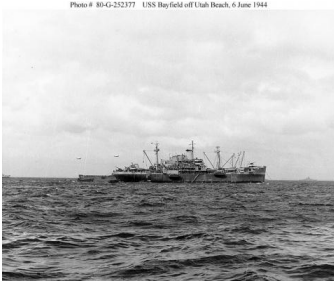


### USS Bayfield - Normandy Invasion

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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### USS Bayfield Off Utah Beach

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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### German Shell Explodes Next to an LST

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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### Barrage Balloons - Screen Against German Attack Planes

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Barrage-Balloons-Screen-Against-German-Attack-Planes>



### Troops Arriving at Utah Beach

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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### Weapons Carrier Goes Ashore at Utah Beach

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Weapons-Carrier-Goes-Ashore-at-Utah-Beach>



### Sunken Ships - Utah Beach Breakwater

Image described above from the United States Army in World War II Series, European Theater of Operations, U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Online, courtesy HyperWar Foundation and iBiblio - The Public's Library and Digital Archive at University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Sunken-Ships-Utah-Beach-Breakwater>

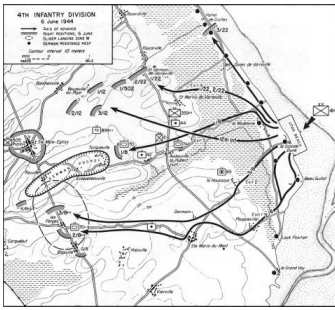


### Troops at the Utah Beach Seawall

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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### 4th Infantry Division - Utah Beach

Map, described above, from the United States Army in World War II Series, European Theater of Operations, U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Online, courtesy HyperWar Foundation and iBiblio - The Public's Library and Digital Archive at University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill).

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/4th-Infantry-Division-Utah-Beach>

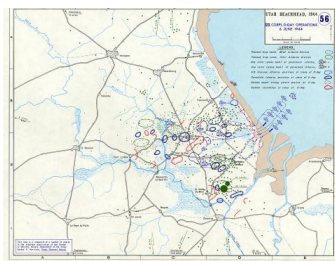


### Utah Beach - Artillery Fire

Map, described above, from the United States Army in World War II Series, European Theater of Operations, U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Online, courtesy HyperWar Foundation and iBiblio - The Public's Library and Digital Archive at University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill).

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Utah-Beach-Artillery-Fire>



### VII Corps D-Day Operations - Utah Beach

Map online, courtesy U.S. Military Academy Map Atlas Collection.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/VII-Corps-D-Day-Operations-Utah-Beach>



### German Prisoners of War - Captured at Utah Beach

U.S. Military Photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archives.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/German-Prisoners-of-War-Captured-at-Utah-Beach>

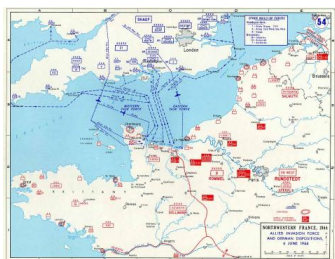


### Utah Beach - Headquarters

Image described above from the United States Army in World War II Series, European Theater of Operations, U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Online, courtesy HyperWar Foundation and iBiblio - The Public's Library and Digital Archive at University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill).

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### Allied Invasion Force and German Dispositions - Map

Map online, courtesy U.S. Military Academy.

PD

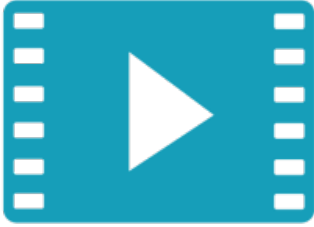
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### UTAH BEACH

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[A Distant Shore: African Americans of D-day](#)

Clip from *A Distant Shore: African Americans of D-day*. Online, courtesy the History Channel.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/A-Distant-Shore-African-Americans-of-D-day>