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James Douglas O'Dell, **The Water is Never Cold: The Origins of the U.S. Navy's Combat Demolition Units, UDTs and SEALs**, Brassey's, Inc. Dulles VA, 2000. 290 pp. appendices, notes, index.

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The contribution of the Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams to the many successful amphibious operations in World War II have not often been written about, it is almost as if the Navy's silent service were the frogmen rather than the submariners. O'Dell, who for a time was the editor of the UDT-SEAL Museum Association, came across the field through casual conversation with the local gas station owner who was a UDT veteran of Iwo Jima.

O'Dell traces the history of the UDT from their genesis in late 1942 and early 1943 as a response to the possibility of the Germans, Italians, and Japanese fortifying beaches with obstacles, to the end of the Second World War. Along the way he examines their recruitment and training as well as their employment. O'Dell wisely does not try to catalog all operations of the UDT teams, covering instead only a few. He does discuss the differences in employment between the European Theater; where the UDTs themselves were employed at Normandy but had learned lessons from previous landings in North Africa, Sicily and Italy; and the Pacific Theater where their manner of employment led to the creation of an advanced training base on Maui where the UDTs really polished their swimming and underwater skills.

O'Dell's work is an interesting glimpse into the shadowy world of the World War II UDT.



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