are told of a hundred people packed into a rail car, but not what that feels or smells like. Another time Matas lapses into callous banality, writing of concentration camp victims "going up in flames."

Too often details are ignored when they get in the way. Daniel's love for photography is a central plot device, enabling him to somehow keep a full complement of developing and printing supplies even after virtually all personal possessions are confiscated. Erika suddenly changes from a shy little girl to a compelling figure who leads a work camp revolt, with no hint as to what caused her transformation.

It is difficult to know to what extent Matas might have explored the Nazis' justifications of the Holocaust. Of course the events of the book were without reason of any kind, but would it not be better to expose such evil thinking, rather than let it lurk in the shadows? There are scattered references to the Nazis seeing Jews as less than human, but never is the subject directly engaged and, as it always will be, destroyed by its own repulsive inhumanity.

To her credit, Matas doesn't leave virulent anti-Semitism in the camps, but shows how deeply it runs in society at large. When Daniel finally returns to Lodz, he and a friend are beaten by boys who jeer that the two should never have escaped the gas. Matas does use some devices that will touch a chord with many modern young readers. For instance, children of divorce may relate to Daniel's veneration of photographs of happier times. There are also useful maps, a glossary of unfamiliar terms, and a chronology of European Jewry's destruction.

The book ends with much-needed relief from the litany of horror, and some guarded hope for the future, as Daniel and his girlfriend Rosa plan for a life in Palestine. *Daniel's Story* is a book that illustrates the terror of the Holocaust, and, on those terms, would be a useful addition to a school library. But a parent or reader in search of a well-written, powerful literary work should look elsewhere.

Nancy Payne is a producer with CBC Radio in Ottawa, and has a special interest in children's literature.

A Partisan's Memoir

A Partisan's Memoir: Woman of the Holocaust. Faye Schulman (with the assistance of Sarah Silberstein Swartz). Ed. Rhea Tregebov. Second Story, 1995. 224 pp. $18.95 paper. ISBN 0-929005-76-7.

We all have images of Jews during the Holocaust with stars on their breasts or tattoos on their arms. But carrying guns? Probably not.

In her autobiography, *A Partisan's Memoir: Woman of the Holocaust*, Faye Schulman challenges this "myth of passivity" (10). Along with up to 25,000 other Jews, Schulman fought with the Soviet partisans. Jews, including Schulman's future husband Morris, led approximately 200 bands of Soviet partisans. Schulman says, "Young Jewish partisans were known as the most daring of all" (100). She succeeds in bringing to life this historical fact, which should be common knowledge.

Schulman was born in Lenin, a shtetl in Eastern Poland near the Soviet border. When she was a child, it was home to 12,000 people, half of them Jews. Schulman describes her family, and how her community was humiliated, placed in a ghetto, and then liquidated. Schulman escaped death because the Nazis valued her skills as a photographer. (They made her document their crimes.) She ran away to join the partisans in the forest and, without any prior training, became a nurse and soldier. Often the only woman in her group, she participated in all partisan missions. She was just nineteen years old.

This memoir successfully marries personal and political histories. Schulman gives her readers a thorough historical grounding, including photographs, a chronology of events and maps. She tells her story in an exceptionally plain style, with hardly any literary devices. The starkness of her style suits the material, however; the facts do not need embellishment. Her details and anecdotes are well-chosen: for instance, she used salt as a disinfectant and vodka as an anaesthetic. She describes Nazi atrocities, as well as the mental alertness of the survivor, with painful clarity.

Physical hardships of the war were more than matched by emotional ones, and Schulman communicates this without sentimentality. The simplicity of her style gives her words power. Under the partisans, tears were not allowed. Women were expected to be just as tough as the men. Furthermore, Jews were under "constant scrutiny" (105) from their fellow partisans, many of whom were anti-Semitic. Schulman suffered the additional trauma of grief: she would often see the faces of family members instead of those of the soldiers on whom she was operating. The end of the war brought two of her brothers back to her, but the pain remained.

A Partisan's Memoir is primarily an historical rather than a literary text, and would interest a broad audience. It would also be an excellent supplement to social studies courses for high school students. I would not, however, recommend it for younger children.

Elaine Ostry *is a doctoral candidate in English at the University of Toronto.*