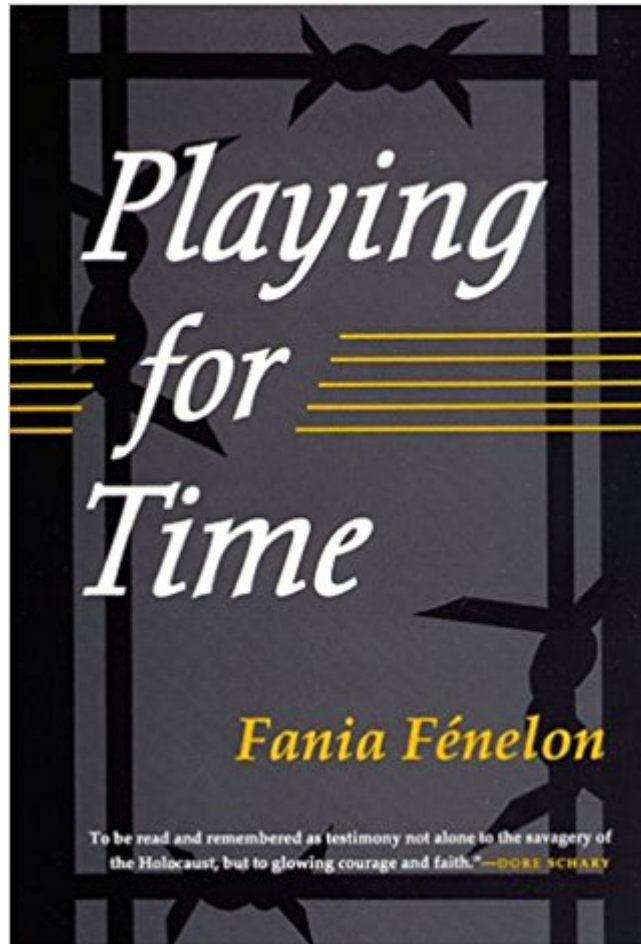




The book was found

Playing For Time



Synopsis

In 1943, Fania Fenelon was a Paris cabaret singer, a secret member of the Resistance, and a Jew. Captured by the Nazis, she was sent to Auschwitz where she became one of the legendary orchestra girls who used music to survive the Holocaust. This is her personal account of the experience.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: French

In 1943, Fania Fenelon was a Paris cabaret singer, a secret member of the Resistance, and a Jew. Captured by the Nazis, she was sent to Auschwitz, and later, Bergen-Belsen. With unnerving clarity and an astonishing ability to find humor where only despair should prevail, the author charts her eleven months as one of "the orchestra girls"; writes of the loves, the laughter, hatreds, jealousies, and tensions that racked this privileged group whose only hope of survival was to make music.

I bought this book years ago, but since no one has ever reviewed it, I figured I would give it a go. My first exposure to the Holocaust was watching the made for TV film PLAYING FOR TIME at the age of nine years old when it aired on HBO. The movie was so haunting that it has stayed with me for thirty years and led to me trying to get my hands on the copy of the DVD for years. When I found it available I bought the book as well. The book isn't necessarily well written, but because it's real and from the heart it kind of places you in the moment as though you were truly there. She tells the story

from her point of view entirely and you also have to realize that it is biased. Her personality does come shining through in the story and although she does have a good heart she is a bit self centered and tends to glorify herself a bit. A lot of the survivors have disputed her account, and that's very realistic as well, because if you told a story about your workplace including all the good and bad that you saw in others from your perspective, they wouldn't agree with it. And they'd probably have a different, less flattering perspective about you, too. I've done a lot of writing without saying what the story is about...basically, Fania Fenelon is living in Paris as somewhat of a B celebrity as a popular singer in nightclubs. Although she is half Jewish, she is non practicing and has never identified herself as Jewish until she is caught working with the French Underground. Suddenly nothing but her ethnicity matters and she's shipped to Auschwitz where she meets another woman, Clara, who has found herself in similar circumstances. When Fania is recognized by members of the Auschwitz women's orchestra, she is plucked from the barracks and brings Clara with her which basically is a twist of fate that saves both their lives. How their dire circumstances change them as people is one of the main focuses of the book. As I said before, apparently Fania had a very rosy view of herself and a very critical view of others, which is a complaint many of her fellow survivors had made about this memoir. That sort of does come through...you can tell that she's not as perfect as she portrays herself as, but it's a very absorbing read nonetheless.

This was as deep or more than the movie that I loved. Very emotional and moving. Try to find the film to complete the experience of this great book.

This is a challenging book to read; trying to remember who is who, and the inclusion of French and German words make it a bit more complicated read.

Everyone should read this book. I also saw the movie with Vanessa Redgrave and other GREAT cast! Spenidid acting in a very well done film!

i saw the movie but loved the book even more so. this item shipped so fast!!!!

Very good. Very thought-provoking.

Sad but informative as to how people were treated during the Holocaust

Interesting story very sad to learn details of a horrific time in our history.

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