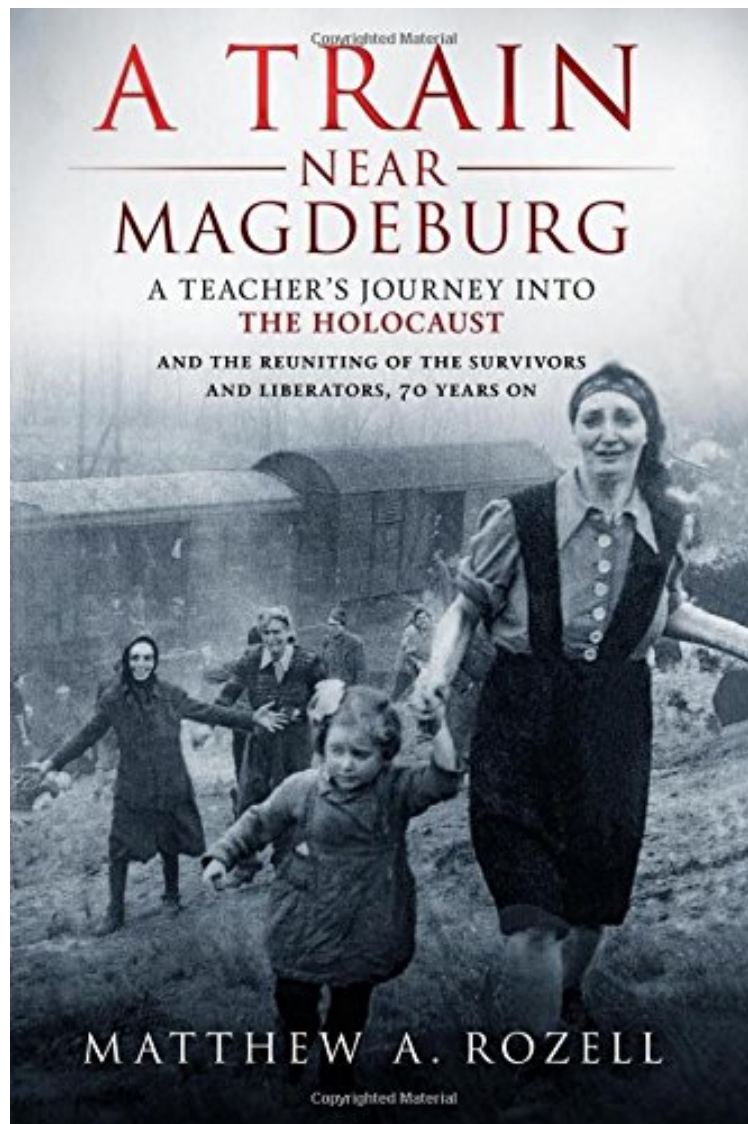


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## **A Train Near Magdeburg: A Teacher's Journey into the Holocaust, and the reuniting of the survivors and liberators, 70 years on**

*Matthew A. Rozell*

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**Matthew A. Rozell : A Train Near Magdeburg: A Teacher's Journey into the Holocaust, and the reuniting of the survivors and liberators, 70 years on** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Train Near Magdeburg: A Teacher's Journey into the Holocaust, and the reuniting of the survivors and liberators, 70 years on:

60 of 60 people found the following review helpful. Books like this one by Matthew Rozell are very important to ...By FromOhioAs a daughter and daughter-in-law of US WWII infantrymen, I was very interested in this book. It was a very thought-provoking and troubling read. I fear that much of what happened during WWII is fading from our national memory. Books like this one by Matthew Rozell are very important to help preserve and remind all of humanity what we, as humans, can be capable of doing. Throughout history, genocide of one type or another has happened and still happens today; think ISIS, Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge, Rwanda, and the list continues. When we don't learn about what really happened and hear people like the Holocaust deniers gaining national voices in the news, we are doomed to allow this to happen again. Another note that strikes me here; my father was a POW, courtesy of the Nazi's. He spent the winter of 1944-45 starving to death and freezing in a German prison camp. He was liberated on April 14, 1945, one day after the Jews on the train near Magdeburg were also liberated. He too faced an uncertain recovery post starvation. Food caused him to vomit and he had to be hospitalized and fed very gradually to keep him alive. He had endured this severe winter without adequate clothing and many in his camp died of hypothermia and/or suffered frostbite and loss of toes and fingers. I shuddered to read of the 150 American POW's who were massacred by the SS rather than transported to a POW camp in Mr. Rozell's book. He could have suffered this fate, as many of the ill-fated Jews also suffered. We need to demand this subject be taught in our schools and make sure our children are aware of what can happen via propaganda and people not being willing to step up and speak up. As of now, I have encountered American college students, in the community college where I teach nursing, who could not tell me what decade the second world war occurred or what nations were involved. Sad, to be sure. Wake up America and the rest of the world as well. Please make sure we don't repeat this history again. Thank you!

45 of 46 people found the following review helpful. A personal account of a microscopic event in the Holocaust - as seen from the survivors and their liberatorsBy BouTell him about the train ...In July 2001, history teacher Matt Rozel initiated a project to create testimonies of World War II veterans, as part of an course to teach history to his students. When interviewing Carol Walsh, he learned of the story about how they came to a place where there was a long train of boxcars. As it turned out, it was full of concentration camp victims, transported from Bergen-Belsen to an unknown location. Unbeknownst to them, they were scheduled to be blown up on a bridge spanning the Elbe. But the Americans intervened, and the German SS guards had left the night before. They were free. This is how it all started. Matthew Rozell put this story on his website and thought nothing of it. However, he was suddenly contacted by a 'child survivor', who found his website and decided to contact him. This set things in motion: Matthew Rozell was contacted by more and more survivors and decided to set up a reunion, to get the liberators and the people they liberated in contact. This book describes the experience of not only Matthew Rozell, but the survivors and their liberators. Matthew wanted to do justice of the narrative by the Holocaust, as evidenced by this microcosmic event of the liberation of the train in the backdrop of the vastness of the macrocosm of the Holocaust. He utilizes the voices of those who were there, both of the survivors and their liberators. This book gives a dramatic and emotional account of how the lives of people - both survivors and liberators - were impacted by the events. It gives a good overview of the impact of the Holocaust in the eyes of simple people who just happened to be Jewish, but were people all the way. The book is roughly divided in three parts, glued together into the narrative of the author. The first part deals with the Holocaust, the experiences for the people involved. The second part deals with their Liberators, how they experienced the discovery of the train. And the third part deals with the effort from Matthew Rozell, who set up the first reunion and the many more that were to follow, giving the survivors the chance to thank their liberators. One might think why this book should be read: there are so many books about the Holocaust and yes, we know it happened. But in no book that I have read up to this day, the story comes to live in such a personal way. How the lives of innocent people were impacted, what they went through and how they were formed by their experience. By zooming in on this particular event, you get to know what it was like - not only for the victims, but also for their liberators. Or, as quoted in the book: It is important to have the past in front of you - not in the rearview as one moves forward.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Amazing and Heartwarming Tale of Lifelong Friendships Between Holocaust Survivors and Their LiberatorsBy CustomerEveryone should read this book, detailing the amazing bond that formed between Holocaust survivors likely on their way to death in one last concentration camp as WWII was about to end and a small number of American soldiers that happened upon the stopped train and liberated the victims. The lifelong friendships that resulted between the survivors and their liberators is a testament to compassion and goodness. It is amazing that the author is not Jewish but a "reluctant" history teacher who ultimately becomes a Holocaust scholar. This is a great book.

What do you do if you are a reluctant soldier, having been shot at, seen your friends killed, and can no longer even remember what your own mother looks like? As a combat soldier fighting your way across Europe, what is the plan when you come across a Holocaust train full of suffering humanity that shocks you to your core, even after you think you have seen it all? And what happens when you get to meet the survivors face to face, two generations later?~ 'After I got home I cried a lot. My parents couldn't understand why I couldn't sleep at times.'-Walter 'Babe' Gantz, US Army

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