

Spaak's Statue

The Woman Who Risked her Life to Save Jewish Families, and Why we Need a Statue of Her.

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Statues of historical figures are important because they show public recognition of people's actions from the past. They show what society at the time of the statue's making thought was significant. For example, people calling for statues of slave owners to be taken down are protesting against crimes from the past. This shows how statues echo people's feelings and views. So statues are symbols showing us what we think of the past and what we carry into the present. There are many statues of famous people from the past, and not all of them are specifically 'heros'. Statues of influencers, authors and industrialists decorate our streets and cites. You might not pay them much attention, but statues and monuments really do hold significance in society today. They commemorate, idolise and remember people who made a difference to the world. Many statues are starting to spark debates at the moment. What was acceptable in the past, clearly isn't today. On the other hand, there are some people who deserve more recognition. People who did wonderful things, even when the odds were against them.

I think that Suzanne Spaak should have a statue erected in Paris, where she was an active resistor in the Second World War. She saved lives, helped innocent people, and stood up for what she thought was right. She put herself in great danger, acknowledging the risks but her fight for justice carried on.

Spaak was an aristocratic married mother-of-two who decided to help poor Jewish families in France to hide their children from German and French police who wanted to deport them. She worked with an underground network linked to Polish Communists and succeeded in helping many Jewish children. She was captured in 1943 by the Gestapo and taken to prison and tortured. But she did not confess the names or the addresses of her fellow resistors. She died in August 1944, murdered by a prison guard in Paris, just one week before the liberation of Paris. Her amazing devotion to saving Jewish lives, (she was not Jewish herself) meant that in 1985 she was recognised by the Israeli State as: "Righteous Amongst the Nations." which is a special honour for non Jews who helped Jewish people throughout the Holocaust.

We should have a statue of Suzanne Spaak because she was selfless and sacrificed herself for others. She was independent in her thinking and her morality since European countries were

being indoctrinated into becoming anti-semitic. She fought for what she believed was right despite her country being against it and she was willing to help people she had never even met. Being able to think for yourself, even when you were told that you were wrong, even when knowing the immense risk that comes with being a resistor, is a brave thing to do. She has inspired many people and will continue to do so for generations. However, that being said, I don't believe there is enough recognition of her actions. She deserves to be honoured, and have the general public know her name.

I think the statue should be placed outside the Prison of Fresnes in Paris where she was murdered to show justice and respect. As well as an image of her alone, I think that there should be children surrounding her, as a symbol of all the young lives she committed to and saved. Even when facing torture and hatred, she kept trying and kept fighting for what was right. That is a very courageous thing to do.