

## **Isabelle Choko, Testimony and Student Reflections<sup>1</sup>**

The students are in their first year at the Notre-Dame des Missions High School (Charenton-le-Pont)<sup>2</sup>

Passing on their testimony to the younger generation, preserving the voices of the deported, and ensuring that such a crime would never again take place; that is the mission that Isabelle and her fellow deportees have undertaken...

## **Meeting at the Shoah Memorial with Isabelle Choko**

### **The Testimony of Isabelle Choko**

On November 20th, 2017, during our visit to the Shoah Memorial, we had the chance to meet a survivor of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. For two hours, Mrs. Choko told us the story of her life: her childhood and its destruction with the start of the war, her life in the Lodz ghetto, her deportation to Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, her liberation, and the reconstruction of her life after the camps. Her testimony was filled with emotion, and though her voice trembled at certain moments, the power of her spirit and her tremendous courage commanded great respect.

### **Introduction:**

Isabelle Choko, née Stztrauch, was born on September 18th, 1928, in the city of Lodz, Poland.<sup>3</sup> Isabelle describes the city of her childhood as a center for textiles and fabrics, similar to the city of Lyon in France. Before tragedy struck, Isabelle had a privileged childhood: she was an only child, pampered and spoiled by her parents, who owned their own pharmacy. They would ski or

visit the seaside during school vacations, and they brought a seamstress to their house to ensure that Isabelle was always dressed in the latest fashions. Her parents were not fervently religious, and they decided to send her to the only mixed, secular school in the city, "Notre Ecole." This private, avant-garde school taught her the humanist principles: she learned about religion through history, and she had lessons in civic education and sexuality. Her mother envisioned a beautiful future for her and wanted her to go to France to finish her studies. Isabelle dreamed of becoming an accomplished chemist. She developed a passion for reading, dancing, and playing the piano. Following her mother's wishes, she also swam and took lessons in French: her mother thought that there existed no language more beautiful than that of "the country of the Rights of Man."

### **The Declaration of War:**

In September of 1939, when Isabelle was only 11 years old, war broke out in Poland: the invasion of Poland by German troops marked the end of her childhood. One night, the city loudspeakers broadcasted the following message: "the Germans are arriving; they will send all able-bodied men to perform forced labor in Germany." Entire families hastened to flee the city as quickly as possible, taking back roads to reach the border. It was, in fact, a Machiavellian strategy for the Germans: they bombed the roads while clearing out the big cities. Isabelle and her family survived because her father was unwell, and her mother decided that they should stay where they were.

Immediately after this attack, the Germans invaded Lodz, and antisemitic measures were put into place. There was no need for the Germans to locate or register the Jewish population: in Poland, all Jews already had "Jewish" stamped on their identification papers. Quickly, it became

mandatory to wear the yellow star: one on the back as well as one on the chest. Jews no longer had the right to use the main road in the city, which prevented them from traveling freely. Like those of the rest of the Jewish population in the city, the assets of Isabelle's family were confiscated. Soon afterwards, two German soldiers came to requisition the pharmacy that was so dear to Isabelle's parents.

### **Imprisoned in the Ghetto:**

In September of 1939, just before Isabelle's birthday, all the Jews in the city were ordered to leave their homes and move into the ghetto. The Lodz ghetto was located in the most dilapidated and unsanitary part of the city, the Baluty neighborhood.<sup>4</sup> Thus began five years of hardship: Isabelle remained confined to the ghetto from the age of 11 to the age of 16. Each person was entitled to 50 square feet of housing. Isabelle's mother was able to use her connections: she found a house at 22 Zawisza Street, in which the whole family and a few friends could stay. There was even a small garden next to the house.

The Jews in the ghetto were sealed off from the outside world, surrounded by barbed wire and constantly surveilled by German soldiers. A few young people succeeded in making a clandestine radio, with which they would learn about the 1943 insurrection at the Warsaw ghetto.<sup>5</sup> From the age of 12 onward, Isabelle endured hunger (imposed by the meager number of ration tickets distributed), cold, physical attacks from the soldiers, sickness, deprivation, and forced labor: that was the everyday reality for the Jews confined to the ghetto. People tried to create a semblance of life in the neighborhood, and Chaïm Rumkowski, the "Jewish elder", constructed a small school.<sup>6</sup> A library and a small concert hall were built in the same clandestine

fashion. In this way, Isabelle was able to continue her studies, which were so important in the eyes of her parents, and she learned German, which would greatly help her once she was deported. Unfortunately, one year later, the Nazis running the ghetto discovered the school and had it closed as part of the process of removing all intellectual life from the neighborhood. The Nazis began to organize regular roundups to eliminate anyone who was unable to work. Thousands of children, the sick, and the elderly were taken. All forms of opposition were immediately suppressed.

Isabelle's mother worked in a grocery store. Isabelle's family was able to eat a little better than most of the people in the ghetto because her mother could eat at work and was sometimes able to bring back a pot of jam, some flour, or a few potatoes... Isabelle, as she told us, worked in a factory making hats. Her job was to weave the straw and she was paid by the yard. Very quickly, she started to return home from work with her hands cut up and covered in blood. She couldn't hide it from her mother for very long. Her mother then took it upon herself to find her a different job. Isabelle weaved ribbons, then shaped hats, and eventually she was put in charge of distributing materials for a factory supply store.

Illnesses circulated throughout the ghetto and most Jews suffered from typhus. Isabelle contracted diphtheria and jaundice, but her mother helped her to recover quickly. Her father, worn out from deprivation and exhaustion, died in February of 1942.

### **Liquidation of the Ghetto:**

In the month of August 1944, the Lodz ghetto was closed and liquidated. The population of the ghetto was ordered to go to the train station. Isabelle and her mother attempted to hide. At first, they hid in a small cellar: it was too cold and humid, so they decided to move. Next, they hid under piles of charcoal which were close to their old house. Their last hiding place was under the floorboards of the house of one of their neighbors. Unfortunately, the Germans had learned to recognize the hollow sound of hiding places and quickly found them. They were sent to the station, along with the rest of the people who lived in the ghetto. The Jews were ruthlessly crammed into cattle cars destined for Auschwitz-Birkenau. Their car was filled with around 60 people, and miraculously no one was sick. The deported established a rotating system: they would take turns standing to breathe a bit of fresh air through a small opening used as a window. It goes without saying that the cattle cars had no form of bathroom facilities and that the deported were given no food or water during their voyage of two days and two nights.

### **Auschwitz-Birkenau and Other Camps:**

The image of the immense crowd gathered on the platform upon Isabelle's arrival would remain the most frightening sight of her entire life. None of the faces were familiar. The deported arrived *en masse* and were confronted by screams, insults from the soldiers, and vicious dogs...

The rhythm of the march was very slow, and no one was permitted to speak under threat of assault. Other deported people, clothed in striped dresses, watched them pass. Someone whispered to Isabelle that they were mentally ill. By some incredible combination of circumstances, a prisoner, surely a worker from the Canada bloc<sup>7</sup>, whispered to her to go to the left. He told her this: "At the end of the platform, to the left is life and to the right is death."

Isabelle started to panic: how could she warn everyone? She took her mother by the hand and

began to quicken her stride, whispering with her head lowered, "to the left, go to the left!" The women were separated from the men, and Isabelle was able to lead her mother to the left. As soon as they entered the camp, the guards shaved their entire bodies, forcibly disinfected them, and distributed a few pieces of clothing: striped dresses and canvas shoes. Isabelle and her mother were not tattooed that day: she doesn't know for certain, but she thinks that it might have been due to an overflow of people. At Auschwitz, the conditions were even worse than they were in the Lodz ghetto. They spent their first night outside and were forced to squeeze together to keep warm. The women were dispersed into the barracks on the next day. Isabelle and her mother spent one week in Auschwitz-Birkenau. They were then transferred to a work camp in Celle, close to Hanover.<sup>8</sup> Their new barrack was located in the middle of a clearing and was bare and desolate: they slept on wooden beds, and their bedding consisted only of straw. The only source of heat for the barrack was one small, wood-burning stove. They were allotted a small amount of brown water in the morning, two bowls of soup per day, and on some days were given a potato. They were quickly assigned to a work *kommando*.<sup>9</sup> They worked for Hochtief, a public works organization.<sup>10</sup> They were ordered to build a shelter, for which they had to dig a very deep hole. One day, Isabelle, exhausted, stopped digging for a few minutes. The SS, furious, forced her to come forward, by threatening collective punishment. Isabelle was flogged.

Later, Isabelle would be made to carry railroad tracks. Thanks to the solidarity between the prisoners, they fell into a rhythm and transported them quickly. This solidarity helped in bearing the harsh winter of 1944-1945. Luckily, Isabelle was never separated from her mother, who remained her greatest source of emotional support. In February of 1945, Isabelle, her mother, and the rest of their *kommando* were transferred to Bergen-Belsen. At Bergen-Belsen, there was a

shortage of food and water as well as a typhus epidemic. The camp was also infested with lice. Isabelle worked in the infirmary, and through washing the sheets of the sick she also came down with typhus. Her mother stayed by her side throughout her illness. She had a fever of 104°F, or 40°C, and began to hallucinate. In the rare instances when she had a clear mind, she would see her mother's face leaning over her. One day, she saw that her mother's face and body were horribly swollen. Isabelle recovered from typhus, but unfortunately her mother succumbed to it soon after, in March of 1945. Isabelle couldn't bear it: she gave up on life and let herself waste away. One day, her friends said to her: "You have to get up. You have to find us something to eat. Save us!" Isabelle then got up and stumbled outside. As if in a dream, she found a woman giving out soup. She immediately drank one portion and took the rest to her friends.

### **Liberation:**

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945, she heard the loudspeakers cry, "You are liberated, we are the British army, you are free." These were the British troops who invaded Bergen-Belsen, the "camp of the dying." The soldiers broke down in tears when they discovered the barracks. Isabelle weighed less than 50 pounds. A doctor operated on her without anesthetic: her body, broken by exhaustion, couldn't use its nervous system anymore. She didn't feel anything. She was cared for by Sister Suzanne Spender.

Isabelle slowly pieced herself back together in Sweden. She stayed there for 9 months. In February of 1946, she left Sweden to live with her uncle in Paris. She learned that he and her cousin were the only surviving members of her family.

## **Student Impressions**

### **What I Felt and Learned from this Testimony:**

Isabelle Choko shared her testimony with high school students at the Shoah Memorial on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

#### **Margot M.**

It took me some time to completely understand my feelings after hearing Isabelle Choko's testimony on Tuesday, November 20th. I think that even today I am not entirely able to put my finger on all that I felt during her testimony. I obviously felt an enormous amount of compassion and pain when faced with the account of the great lady that is Isabelle Choko. I remained shocked and perplexed by certain degrading treatment that she had to endure. I felt both anger and incomprehension when she told us about the suffering that her family, along with millions of other Jews, had to bear. I admired the force and determination that she still had, after being forced to follow a path so riddled with tragedy. Mrs. Choko remained humble and honorable, with values that deeply moved me. Her life advice in particular spoke to me, because I totally agreed with it, and I try to follow it every day. My mother and I had the opportunity to exchange a few words with her after she gave her testimony: I was shaken to see her misty-eyed when my mother thanked her for her testimony. This is only a small detail, but the fact that Mrs. Choko used such precise words and conveyed a message so full of authenticity to us, in a language different from her native tongue, inspired even more respect. Also, the fact that she took the time to educate us about the past made me want to do everything within my power to better convey the gravity of her story. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to meet her.



## **Augustin**

Isabelle Choko is impressive. She lived through terrible things, but she still came here to speak about her experience. Her testimony showed us that our life is very comfortable and easy and that the little problems that we have are really nothing compared to what she has lived through. She taught us that we should never be discouraged and that we should always remain hopeful. She speaks to remind people of what happened and to demonstrate the atrocity of the Shoah. She also tells her story so that such a catastrophe never happens again. Her hope for us was that we would always do what we want to in life and that we would give ourselves the means to succeed. Isabelle Choko also told us that she does not feel any hatred towards the Germans living today because they are not responsible for the actions of their grandparents. I found this testimony very interesting because we became aware of what actually happened. I was quite moved at the end of the testimony.

## **Clémence**

I was very moved by this testimony which really enlightened me about the questions that I had about the deportation. She wished for us to make the most of our lives: to study, work, love, and to spread peace and love all around us. I was particularly touched by one phrase: "in life, there are two options: live or die." I understood that we have to live every day of our existence to the fullest, out of respect for and in tribute to the great struggle that she lived through.

## **Côme G.**

Isabelle Choko is a woman with an incredible history; she demonstrated her willpower and her strength to us. She also demonstrated how difficult life can be and the luck that we have to live in

a Europe that is at peace. She testifies so that such atrocities will never again be committed and to make us aware of the dangers of racism. I felt a profound admiration for her and an immense sadness to know how much of her childhood and adolescence was stolen. Isabelle Choko did not harbor any resentment towards the Germans and showed us the importance of not blaming the Germans today because they are not responsible for the crimes that the Nazis committed. She wished for us to have a career that makes us happy, and more broadly to be happy in our lives today and tomorrow.

### **Margot V.**

I found the testimony of Isabelle Choko to be very interesting. The testimony of a person who survived the camps will always have more weight than any documentary. The fact that she was in front of me made me feel more emotional than listening to a recorded testimony. She really impressed me with her courage and her tenacity in wanting to make it out at any cost. That taught me that nothing is impossible. Despite all of the horror that she lived through, she chose to live. Her sincerity deeply moved me.

### **Côme M.**

I could never have imagined that one day I would have the great privilege of meeting such a noble and touching person. We should be infinitely grateful for her testimony, which has allowed us to enrich ourselves and have a concrete example of the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazi regime in the concentration and extermination camps. Being face to face with someone who has had such a deeply upsetting personal history as that of Isabelle Choko really stunned me. It was truly hard for me to comprehend. It was unbelievable that I was listening to someone who was so

psychologically strong, and it was incredibly meaningful. During her testimony, I felt many emotions simultaneously: I became very tense when she told us about her life, especially in the concentration camps when she almost died at the hands of the camp supervisor, a Nazi officer. I was very moved when she spoke to us about her "new life" and how she reinvented herself after the war. That allowed me to understand that it is always possible to make it through, no matter what happens, if you fight hard enough. She gave us a message of hope. Every day she fought, resisted and remained hopeful, at the risk of her life. I think that this tenacity, alongside the love and protection of her parents, is in part what allowed her to be here with us today. After her testimony, we were able to ask her questions. Having the chance to meet such a strong person, to hear her testimony, and to ask her questions is an incredible opportunity.

### **Marine V.**

Isabelle Choko decided to give her testimony because of her grandchildren. She never really spoke about it to her children, for fear that it would make them suffer or that she, herself, would suffer. Her grandchildren, however, pushed her to give her testimony as well as to write. Isabelle Choko also realized the importance of the duty of remembrance. The values that she conveyed to us over the course of her testimony are very strong. Her testimony was first and foremost about love: the love that her mother had for her and the love that she had for her mother saved them both more than once. There was also a primordial solidarity. Without it, life in the camp would have been much harder. The testimony also demonstrated to us the point at which racism can create catastrophes. This obligates us to fight racism actively, so that things like this never happen again. Isabelle Choko wishes for us to live a happy life, to do the work that we choose for ourselves, and to spread love all around us. Her story made me feel a lot of emotions. When

Isabelle recounted her experiences to us, I felt horrified when I realized what the Nazis subjected the Jews to. I was equally overwhelmed when I saw how much the deportees helped one another. Even when the conditions of life were very hard, they were always ready to support each other, to share their bread in order to help a fellow survivor. I found that very admirable. I finally felt more at peace when Isabelle told us about the liberation of the camp and how she rebuilt her life.

### **Marie**

The story of Isabelle Choko provoked numerous emotions. I felt a lot of empathy for her. In fact, she was a teenager when she lived through the deportation, and I asked myself how I would have been able to survive if I had lived through that, if I had been separated from my family. What she told us was so horrible that it was sometimes difficult to believe that the person in front of us had lived through it, even more so because she was smiling. The fact that she recounts her life again and again shows a lot of courage, because, had I been her, I would have wanted to forget. I felt both sadness and anger because in our "civilized" world, in the twenty-first century, it is difficult to imagine that human beings could inflict things like that on other human beings. There were so many deaths and atrocities for nothing. Her testimony invited us to make the most of life and encouraged us not to fixate on the past but rather to learn from it.

### **Noémie F.**

If Isabelle gives her testimony today, it is to denounce the denialist claims that perpetually resurface. She also wishes to show the horrors that were suffered in the name of monstrous and unacceptable ideologies, ideologies of suspicion and hatred of the other. It is also a duty of remembrance for all of those who disappeared under barbaric conditions. Recounting these acts

serves to prevent them from being repeated. Despite my knowledge of how Jews were treated at the time, from books and films, meeting someone who actually lived through these horrors makes these facts more real. This testimony truly made a mark on me because Isabelle was my age during the war. Her life was completely torn apart, and she had to fight to survive at an age where she should have been youthful and carefree. Isabelle wished to rapidly move on from her experience as a deportee, and her ability to rebuild her life and move forward impressed me. I was shocked by the violence to which Isabelle was subjected, and touched by the sadness of her story, with so many misfortunes and deaths of those around her.

### **Titouan**

Isabelle taught me a lot of things, especially the value of family and solidarity (in the Lodz ghetto and then at Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen). It must be very difficult to tell your story after having lived through that, so I feel a great deal of respect for her. Personally, I am not sure that I would have known how to live a normal life and how to tell my story after having survived that genocide. I felt a lot of emotions, but the two that dominated were sorrow for her and for the other people who were deported, and anger towards the perpetrators of these crimes.

### **Martial**

In my opinion, Isabelle Choko is a strong and courageous person. The fact that she continues to give her testimony in order to spread peace in the world makes her an exemplary figure. I wonder, after all these years, how she still manages to find the strength to speak about such a painful history. When she wishes us love, freedom, and compassion, I can only admire the way that she sees the world.

## **Ilan**

This testimony provoked a lot of emotions for me. As the story went on, I visualized every unexpected misfortune and every disappointment, although I think that I am far from imagining the actual horrors that Isabelle lived through. I was submerged in sorrow, from the ghetto, the camps, the deaths of her parents... in fear as well. But I was also impressed, impressed by this woman who has been able to rebuild, to pull herself up and start a second life with renewed strength. We can ask ourselves why it is so important to speak about the Shoah. I think that the Shoah did not "vaccinate" the world against these events and that the deported must pass on their memories so that no one ever forgets the horrors that were committed during the war. In Isabelle Choko's case, it was with her grandchildren that she felt free to talk about it and started to share her story.

In her testimony, this admirable woman taught us the importance of courage and determination, which allowed her to survive, the importance of the mutual aid and solidarity which saved her during the harsh winter of 1944-45, but above all the importance of pulling yourself back up. Furthermore, she told us that she does not blame the Germans, because they are not responsible for the crimes of their fathers. She emphasized the importance of remembering, but also of moving forward. Finally, Isabelle wished us happiness, fulfillment, and freedom and cited Confucius: "Choose a career that you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life."

## **Ilona**

Throughout her poignant testimony, Isabelle Choko recounted the horrors of the ghettos and the concentration camps. From a warm and peaceful childhood, her life turned into the unimaginable. For years she has strived to honor the memories of the millions of men, women, and children whose suffering has marked history. But above all her story proves that a second life is possible through support and love. Like Simone Veil, Marceline Loridan Ivens, and many others, Isabelle Choko succeeded in turning her past into a force that helped her to rebuild.<sup>11</sup> I will remember her courage, her perseverance, and her ability to forgive which profoundly moved me. She succeeded where many would have failed. For me, her testimonies are important messages that should be shared with the whole world so that they will never be forgotten. Isabelle wished for us to have fulfilling work, love, and freedom, which inspired deep respect.

### **Gabriel**

Isabelle Choko testified so as to share the horrors that she lived through with us, even though she could not convey more than a miniscule part of the suffering that she actually endured. We must, as much possible, raise awareness around the world about the horrific acts that were committed in the not-so-distant past, so that we can avoid a reoccurrence of crimes against humanity such as these. Isabelle explicitly wished to pass on values such as love, happiness, enthusiasm, and curiosity to us. She advised us to pursue what we enjoy doing the most. I think that there is less of a chance that a crime against humanity like the Shoah will happen again if we are able to really respect these values; Isabelle Choko wished for us to protect them. She said to never resent the Germans of today, because it would be unjust for them to pay the price for the murders committed by their grandparents and great-grandparents. Personally, I believe that the only people who have the right to forgive those who participated in the genocide would be the people

who were killed; because they are dead, no forgiveness can be given. This idea is shared by many of the former deportees, including Henri Borlant in his testimony (*Thank You for Surviving*): "Anyway, only the victims, the men that they killed, should be authorized to forgive. They cannot do that any longer. We must neither forgive, nor forget; societies do not need forgiveness, they need justice, and protection."<sup>12</sup>

Isabelle Choko's account captivated me. I had the impression of experiencing what she was saying; I was sad when she was sad, I was afraid when she was afraid. I came to the understanding that the deported were children, teenagers, and adults just like us. Listening to such a story, you identify with the people who lived it.

"Over there, on the German and Polish plains, there are places now stripped bare where silence reigns; it is the frightening weight of an emptiness that forgetting does not have the right to fill, and where the memory of the living will reside forever." Simone Weil

**First year students from the high school Notre-Dame-des-Missions (Charenton-le Pont) and their teacher, Laurence Krongelb.**

***-Translated from the French and annotated by Grace Gorden, Scripps College.  
Edited by Julin Everett, Scripps College.***

**Notes**



- 1 All annotations are the original work of the translator.
- 2 Notre Dame des Missions is private Catholic institution founded in 1955, which includes an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school. It is located in Charenton-le-Pont, a southeastern suburb of Paris. "Présentation." *Notre-Dame des Missions Saint Pierre*, Diocèse de Créteil, <https://www.notredamedesmissions.fr/>. Accessed 9 May 2024.
- 3 Lodz, Poland, in the 1920s was the second-largest city in the country and an industrial center. Approximately one-third of the population was Jewish by 1939. Shapiro, Robert Moses. "Jewish Communal Autonomy in Poland: Lodz, 1914-1939." *Shofar*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1988.
- 4 The Lodz ghetto, in which 160,000 Jews were forced to live, was the first ghetto of its kind established in Poland. There was no sewage system in the area and most houses lacked plumbing. Widespread illnesses included a tuberculosis epidemic. Tushnet, Leonard. "Health Conditions in the Ghetto of Lodz." *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, vol. 18, no. 1, 1963.
- 5 The Warsaw ghetto was established in November of 1940, and by 1943 starvation and disease were widespread. In 1942, the Nazis began to deport thousands of Jews daily to extermination camps in Treblinka. In January and April of 1943, activist groups in the ghetto staged an uprising with smuggled and homemade guns and explosives in a desperate act of rebellion, which was quickly and brutally suppressed by the SS forces. Einwohner, Rachel L. "Opportunity, Honor, and Action in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943." *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 109, no. 3, 2003.
- 6 "Jewish elder," or "Eldest of the Jews," was a leadership position to which the Nazis appointed Chaïm Rumkowski, who acted as an organizer of life in the ghetto and who was responsible for ensuring that SS orders were carried out. While Rumkowski cooperated with the Nazis, it is understood that he did his best to improve the situation in the ghetto. Tushnet, Leonard. "Health Conditions in the Ghetto of Lodz." *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, vol. 18, no. 1, 1963.
- 7 Upon the prisoners' arrival at Auschwitz, their belongings and clothing were confiscated and stored in a warehouse called "Canada" or "Kanada" before being shipped to Berlin. "Auschwitz." *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/auschwitz>. Updated 16 March 2015. Accessed 9 May 2024.
- 8 Celle is a small town in Northern Germany.
- 9 *Kommando* is a German word meaning "detachment" or "squad," used to refer to labor groups in the camps. "Glossary." *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/glossary>. Accessed 9 May 2024.
- 10 Hochtief is a German construction company that used forced labor during the Nazi regime and now operates globally. Lund, Joachim. "Building Hitler's Europe: Forced Labor in the Danish Construction Business during World War II." *The Business History Review*, vol. 84, no. 3, 2010.
- 11 Simone Veil was a Holocaust survivor who went on to become a successful politician in France, working for prison reform and reproductive rights. Marceline Loridan-Ivens was another Holocaust survivor who became a celebrated filmmaker and actress after the war. Veil and Loridan-Ivens were friends who met frequently. Both women were prominent activists for Holocaust remembrance, writing and giving speeches about their experiences throughout their lives. Hottel, Ruth. "Simone Veil." *The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, Jewish Women's Archive, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/veil-simone#pid-15196>. Updated 23 June 2021. Accessed 9 May 2024. Flitterman-Lewis, Sandy. "Marceline Loridan-Ivens." *The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, Jewish Women's Archive, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/loridan-ivens-marceline>. Updated 23 June 2021. Accessed 9 May 2024.

Henri Borlant is a Holocaust survivor, doctor, and author, who writes and testifies about his experience of the Shoah. “"merci d’avoir survécu" Henri Borlant.” *Cercle d’étude de la Déportation et de la Shoah*, <https://www.cercleshoah.org/spip.php?article172&lang=fr>. Published 12 June 2010. Accessed 9 May 2024.