

## SERGE KLARSFELD

Serge Klarsfeld is the foremost investigator into the fate of French Jews during World War II.

*"I am a hunter of Jewish souls, looking for traces of those Jews who perished. The victims have always been more important to me than their executioners. That said, I have gone after Nazis—after all, someone had to hunt them down."*

Serge Klarsfeld was born in 1935 in Bucharest, Romania during his mother's visit to her family. Serge's parents, Raissa and Arno had lived in France since 1928 when they left Romania to complete their university studies in Paris. In 1939, at the outbreak of war with Nazi Germany, Arno enlisted in the French Foreign Legion. He was captured by the Germans but escaped to the Free Zone in southern France where he settled in Nice with his wife and two young children.

In September 1943, SS teams commanded by Alois Brunner entered the city to hunt down Jews. His father was arrested while Serge, his mother and sister hid in a closet in their apartment. Arno was deported to Auschwitz where he was gassed.

Serge's mother and the children made their way to the village of Le Chambon where they remained and survived the war. When France was liberated in 1944, they returned to Paris where Serge later attended the Sorbonne and the Institute of Political Studies.

Serge has labored tirelessly to expose the crimes of the Vichy regime during the war and to end the immunity which former Vichy officials enjoyed. A Docteur des Lettres and a lawyer at the Court of Appeals of Paris, he has worked on trials against Nazi criminals that operated in France, namely Lischka, Barbie, and Brunner. He also initiated and led the Bousquet, Leguay, Papon, and Touvier cases. Serge is the founder and president of the organization of Sons and Daughters of the Jewish Deportees of France. He has published dozens of books and produced many exhibits about the deportation of Jews from France. In addition, he has received numerous awards in recognition of his achievements.

In 1963, Serge married Beate Kunzel with whom he lives in Paris. They have worked side by side and continue to oppose political oppression and injustices throughout the world. Their son Arno, named for his grandfather, is a lawyer in and has also participated in trials of Nazi war criminals.