

BEN FERENCZ

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



ECHOES & REFLECTIONS

TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST. INSPIRING THE CLASSROOM.



Ben Ferencz was an American lawyer, known especially for his work as an investigator of Nazi war crimes and as the chief prosecutor at the Einsatzgruppen Trial at Nuremberg.

Benjamin Berell Ferencz was born in 1920 in Transylvania, and immigrated with his family to Hell's Kitchen of New York shortly after. After graduating Harvard Law School, in World War II he joined an anti-aircraft artillery battalion in the United States Army and served under General Patton. Near the end of the war, he was assigned to the Army's war crimes division and was tasked with collecting evidence from the newly liberated concentration camps.

While he was honorably discharged after the war, he soon returned to Europe to join as the chief prosecutor at the Einsatzgruppen Trial at Nuremberg. He remained in Germany for a decade with his wife Gertrude and four children, and was key in organizing reparation and rehabilitation.

After practicing private law in the United States for some time, Ferencz focused on fighting atrocity crimes in the world. He advocated for the establishment of international law and the International Criminal Court, and has worked with the United Nations. He spoke out against violence, war, and injustice until his death in April 2023.