

ALUM PROFILE

Celebrating Milestones

Richard Steckel's photographs of children around the world capture small moments and common experiences

TEN YEARS AGO, Richard and Michele Steckel, married thirty-six years, took out a second mortgage, maxed out their credit cards, bought cameras, and set out to change the world.

Their plan was simple: to diminish the enmity that divides races, religions, and nations by taking and showing photographs of children from around the world doing what children everywhere do — losing a tooth, celebrating a birthday, starting school. Five years, many countries, and thousands of photographs later, their Milestones Project

went public, with an exhibition, a book contract, and a Global Tolerance Award from the Friends of the United Nations.

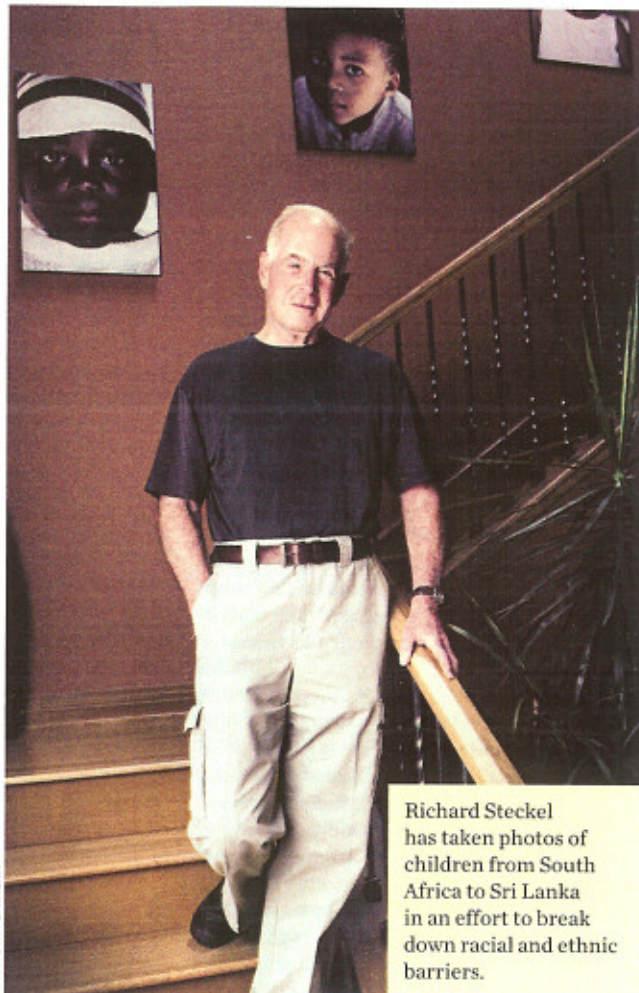
With a bachelor's degree in history from Adelphi College and a master's in social work from City University of New York, Richard Steckel (SED'75) was previously, among many things, director

of the Children's Museum of Denver and a consultant on fundraising to nonprofit organizations. But "I realized my field was adult education," he says. "That was what my SED dissertation was about. The idea of the Milestones Project is that images of deeply held values can stimulate dialogue."

The Steckels, who live in Littleton, Colorado, have produced eleven books, traveling exhibitions, curricula, workbooks in Spanish and English, conferences, public art, a Web site (www.milestonesproject.com), and other educational materials. Last July, the two were honored with the Author-Illustrator Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association.

For their new project, the Steckels are asking children

WEB EXTRA
See a slide show of Richard Steckel's photographs at www.bu.edu/bostonia.



Richard Steckel has taken photos of children from South Africa to Sri Lanka in an effort to break down racial and ethnic barriers.

around the world (and some adults) for advice and words of wisdom, from which they anticipate developing a book, a Web site, special events, and posters, DVDs, and other resources for teachers and parents.

"It's thrilling to see our principles and values take new forms," Richard Steckel says. As ever, he is struck by "the important things young people have to tell us, if we just ask." Among the gems so far: "Don't trust a dog to watch your food." "Never try to hide your broccoli in a glass of milk." "Stop drawing lines around countries; there are people in them." NATALIE JACOBSON MCCrackEN

ANTHONY CAMERA

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Watching the Saffies

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