

THE DAILY RECORD

LAW, REAL ESTATE, FINANCE AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE SINCE 1908

Advocate For The People: Freedman's Photography Tells A Story

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With a long-standing goal to help people, Jeffrey M. Freedman often donates his photographic achievements to various not-for-profit organizations to help them raise funds through silent auctions and sales. Anyone who has visited the Bar Association of Erie County has likely seen some of Freedman's photography, but that display is truly only a subset of a vast portfolio he has accumulated in a few short years.

A Pivotal Vacation

Traveling to Thailand in 1994, Freedman discovered how much he enjoyed taking photographs — particularly of people.

"I am fascinated by different cultures," Freedman noted. "I like to talk to people and get acquainted. With a camera in my hands, I can interact with people that I might not otherwise meet. I especially like to come home with pictures of things that others might not normally see — inside houses or schools or people working."

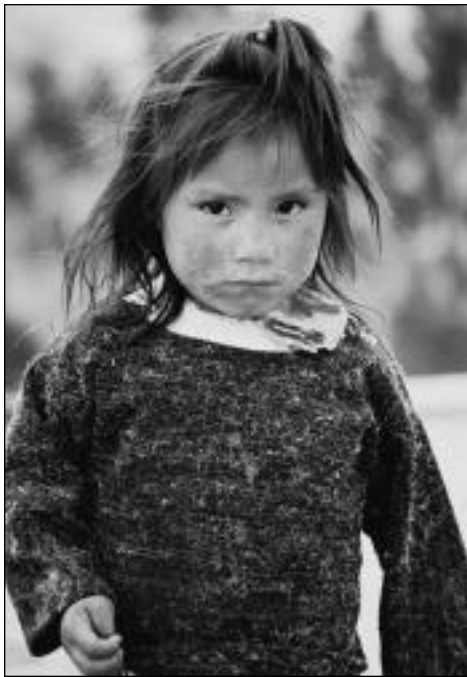
A self-taught photographer, Freedman uses a 35-mm camera with a few different lenses and different speed film. He'll often carry two cameras so he might have two different types of film ready for that perfect shot.

"And they aren't all perfect shots," Freedman admitted. "My real training has been trial and error. I like to shoot tight or wide and try to fill the frame with the subject. I like to use my pictures to advocate for people. Sometimes what seemed like a great shot doesn't work — or worse yet, sometimes I see the perfect shot when I don't have my camera with me."

BEYOND THE OFFICE: FAMILY & FUN



JEFFREY FREEDMAN



LET SUBJECTS TELL THEIR STORY — This child's chafed skin is common in a society where poverty exposes skin to harsh elements due to inadequate housing and clothing.

Around The World

Freedman and his wife, Barbara Hamilton (a "retired" health care sales and marketing professional) have traveled to Europe several times, Hong Kong, Thailand, Mexico, Brazil and Peru, besides throughout the United States and Canada.

Some trips have specifically been with other photographers. Fotoworkshops of the Palm Beach Photographic Centre offers educational activities, magnificent photographic opportunities, and interesting travel companions including many professional photographers who share their insights and techniques.

Freedman's trip to Peru began as a Fotoworkshops experience and included dozens of photographic opportunities and first rate instruction while touring the Peruvian Andes and banks of the Amazon. Freedman and his wife stayed in Peru an extra week to take advantage of a canoe trip down the Amazon River and more "photo ops," while they stayed in the rain forest.

A trip to China and Tibet later this year will likely be an opportunity to learn, explore and photograph.

"I want to learn more about the culture in Tibet and ultimately educate others about what is going on in that country, that culture," added Freedman.

The Particulars

How much film does he use to get a dozen or two excellent pictures?

"In Peru, I probably shot 10-15 rolls of film each day, using a variety of lenses and film speeds," said Freedman. "I like to use natural lighting whenever possible. I don't

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use a flash much. And I rarely use a tripod. Instead I will use fast lenses to get the most sensitive shots."

With only a few years as a serious shutterbug, Freedman is not enamored with digital photography. Since he likes to enlarge his photos, he doesn't feel that the digital quality lends itself to enlargements.

The Man Behind The Camera

Throughout Western New York, both the legal community and the public at large have grown familiar with the name Jeffrey Freedman Attorneys at Law. After all, in the past two decades, Freedman established 13 offices from Buffalo to Olean to Jamestown to Rochester, and he has not been shy about advertising the firm's expertise in



CAPTURING MOMENTS — A shy Peruvian child peeks around his mother's colorful skirt in this candid shot on Jeffrey Freedman's trip to Peru.

bankruptcy, personal injury and Social Security claims.

A 1976 graduate of Western New England School of Law, Freedman gained his first bankruptcy experience while at the firm of Gannon & Gannon when he returned to his native Buffalo to practice law.

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, and my best friend in college was going to law school," said Freedman. "I saw it as a way to help people, and decided that I would go to law school."

Freedman's family owned a bakery and he knew he didn't want to go into the family business. But in hindsight, it is clear that the entrepreneur gene was part of his make up from the start.

"When the law changed to allow attorney advertising, I felt it was a way to reach out to let people know I could help them," admitted Freedman, referring to the 1977 *Bates* decision [*Bates v. State Bar of Arizona*, 433 U.S. 350 (1977)] that eliminated the historical prohibition against attorneys advertising.

Throughout his years in practice, Freedman's firm has helped more than 20,000 families with debt problems, and obtained disability benefits for over 8,000 Social Security disability claimants. The firm also has a very successful personal injury practice. Currently the Freedman law offices employ about 60 people, including a dozen attorneys.

The Personal Stuff

Freedman spends about a third of his time involved with community projects and not-for-profits.

He loves all kinds of music, and the spectrum seemed broad as he



FILL THE FRAME — This photo taken by Freedman in Peru is a great example of the photographer principle of "closer is better."

brought out a Rod Stewart CD, the soundtrack from *Jackie Brown* and meditation and relaxation recordings.

Freedman is an avid reader and will research and read in detail about the countries he is going to visit. On the lighter side, he admits he just recently read *Huckleberry Finn* for the first time and had, already completed John Grisham's latest: *King of Torts*.

His favorite movie of all times is *A Thousand Clowns*, with Jason Robards.

This column appears monthly in The Daily Record. If you have an interesting story for a future column or wish to nominate a co-worker with an interesting hobby, please call or e-mail Nora Jones at (585) 232-6920 or nora.jones@nydailyrecord.com.