



The Monkey Wrench Dad: Dispatches from the Backyard Frontline

Ken Wright

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What happens to ski bums when they grow up? In his essay collection *The Monkey Wrench Dad*, Ken Wright provides his answer to this question. Wright has clearly avoided living the unexamined life that Socrates cautioned against, and his insights about his choices are sharp and witty. *The Monkey Wrench Dad's* many fine essays offer plenty of insights for everyone who seeks to combine parenting with wilderness adventure.

-- from *NewWest.net*

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Make no mistake, this isn't a how-to book on parenting. This is more of a where-to book on parenting that celebrates the places that have provoked the thoughts and responses Wright seeks to see in his children as they learn to explore and appreciate the natural world. It's in the exposure to the larger world, Wright argues -- the sandstone nooks and crannies or the alpine cirques and valleys where his children stop and stare and wonder at the amazing world around them -- that a younger generation will find the strength and wisdom they will need to face future challenges, including taking on the stewardship skills necessary to preserve those same unique places.

-- from *The Durango Herald*

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It's been over 30 years have passed since the publication of *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, and nearly 20 since its author, Edward Abbey, died. The generation of eco-warriors who were Abbey's contemporaries have passed on or are fading fast. In the '70s and '80s, a second generation, inspired by Abbey's books, took up the "monkey wrenching" cause and continued to resist wilderness exploitation. But this next generation are now in their middle years. Have they kept Abbey's flame of activism alive? Are they still a voice for wilderness preservation? Or have they turned their backs on the struggle and drifted into sedate, bourgeois lives? And perhaps most importantly, are they passing the cause along to their children?

Ken Wright answers these questions in *The Monkey Wrench Dad*. As the title implies, Wright, like many activists from his generation, has managed to balance family and career with a continued defense of wilderness. And, yes, he is definitely bringing his children into the fold.

-- from *Inside Outside Southwest*

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