



# Adventures with Ed: A Portrait of Abbey

*Jack Loeffler*

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## Adventures with Ed: A Portrait of Abbey Jack Loeffler

No writer has had a greater influence on the American West than Edward Abbey (1927-89), author of twenty-one books of fiction and nonfiction. This long-awaited biographical memoir by one of Abbey's closest friends is a tribute to the gadfly anarchist who popularized environmental activism in his novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang* and articulated the spirit of the arid West in *Desert Solitaire* and scores of other essays and articles. In the course of a twenty-year friendship Ed Abbey and Jack Loeffler shared hundreds of campfires, hiked thousands of miles, and talked endlessly about the meaning of life. To read Loeffler's account of his best pal's life and work is to join in their friendship.

Born and raised in Pennsylvania, Abbey came west to attend the University of New Mexico on the G.I. Bill. His natural inclination toward anarchism led him to study philosophy, but after earning an M.A. he rejected academic life and worked off and on for years as a backcountry ranger and fire lookout around the Southwest. His 1956 novel *The Brave Cowboy* launched his literary career, and by the 1970s he was recognized as an important, uniquely American voice. Abbey used his talents to protest against the mining and development of the American West. By the time of his death he had become an idol to environmentalists, writers, and free spirits all over the West.

"Ed Abbey and Jack Loeffler were like Don Quijote and Sancho Panza. Loeffler delivers his friend, warts and all on a platter full of reverence and irreverence and carefully researched factual information, interspersed with hearty laughter and much serious consideration of all life's Great Questions. Jack's story elucidates and demythifies the Abbey legend, giving us powerful flesh and blood instead."--John Nichols

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