

An unfiltered Q&A with Patrick in, *Revealed*:

1: First memory in a canoe or kayak? *It was the mid-1980s and I don't really remember it. I know that it was a canoeing trip on a central Missouri River. I went with friends. We started drinking Friday afternoon. I blacked out pretty soon after. I still don't know how I got home. With that much experience, then, ten years later, I stepped into my canoe on the Missouri River at the Wolf Creek Bridge just outside of Helena.*

2: Who's your favorite band or musician? *I love so many different kinds of music that putting a finger on a favorite is difficult. For me, music is a mood thing. How as I feeling? What music goes with that? I dig the classics but also every other kind of music you can imagine. I can tell you, however, that I think I would like Mozart's 41st Symphony (Jupiter) and R.E.M.'s "Nightswimming" played at my funeral.*



Norm Miller and Patrick Dobson during Missouri Paddlers Reunion- 2015

3. Are you related to anyone famous or have any brush with fame? *I come from a long line of Irish dirt farmers and German charcoal burners and miners. After they came to America in the early 20th century, most of my people either worked unskilled jobs for a living or they drank themselves to death, or both. The closest I've ever come to fame is my uncle, Charles Dobson, who pitched for the Kansas City and then Oakland Athletics in the late 1960s and early 1970s.*

4: Favorite Missouri River moment? *Every minute on the river is my favorite. I spent one of my most memorable evenings on the river at Cow Creek Island on the upper Missouri. The night was so quiet and the river so still, I could hear the blood rushing in my ears. The sun set over the hills in a million shades of pinks, oranges, and purples. The only sound I heard in those lovely hours*

was a beaver slapping its tail on the water. It gave up, I suppose when it figured I wasn't going anywhere. I've never experienced quiet like that since.



Patrick & friend during book signing.

5: Strangest or most unique job you ever had? *When I took off on my Missouri River trip in 1995, I worked in a luxury hotel (the Ritz Carlton) in Kansas City. I repaired and refinished all the antique and reproduction furniture in the hotel. Since I was the only person who knew what I was doing, I made my own schedule and came and went as I pleased. But it wasn't my favorite job and I wasn't happy at it. After all, I left it to walk to Helena, Montana, from Kansas City, and then to canoe home on the Missouri.*

6: Best piece of paddling advice that you have ever been given? *When I was on my Missouri River trip, I met Dianne and Jim McDermott in Great Falls. Since I didn't have any experience in the boat before I got in the river, I didn't really know anything. Dianne and I were in her backyard and she asked me to pack my boat so she could see what I was doing. After I stood up, very proud of myself, Dianne patted me on the shoulder and said, "When you're in a boat by yourself, you sit with the stern forward, not the bow forward like you're doing now." It was the single best piece of advice I ever got from anyone, anywhere about paddling a canoe.*

7: Who or what are your biggest inspirations? *Eddy Harris wrote "Mississippi Solo: A River Quest" and "Native Stranger: A Black American's Journey into the Heart of Africa." These books, along with Dick Gregory's autobiography, "Nigger," changed my life. I also take a lot of inspiration from Richard Brautigan's "Trout Fishing in America," Joseph Heller's "Catch-22," and W. Somerset*

Maugham's "The Razor's Edge." These are, you might say, my foundational texts. Eddy Harris is a good friend of mine today.

8: Something no one knows about you? On March 13, 2011, I almost hung myself but went to the mental hospital for a week instead.

9: If you had the enough money what would you do? I'd give it all away.

10: Most unique paddling or camping gear you have? When I was in Helena in 1995, I befriended a tall Native American named Gordon Longtree. He noticed that I carried a pocket full of rocks. On my walk from Kansas City to Helena, people had often given me small stones they called their lucky rocks. I carried them with me because I thought I had an obligation to. Gordon said that the stones were the prayers those people sent with me. He made me a medicine bag to hold those stones. I always have it with me in the canoe.

