

## Query

I have completed a 95,000-word memoir that includes aspects of travel memoir—*Ferment: Wine, Vineyard, and Manic Depression*. I seek an experienced agent to represent my work.

*Ferment* opens with me, as a seven-year-old, getting drunk at my first communion and leads the reader on a journey through alcoholism, mental illness, and an audacious move to Germany that brings me to redemption.

*Ferment* is my search for the truth behind my hopping a plane in a depressive haze to escape a dead-end existence in Kansas City, MO, and find work in Germany's vineyards. The exploration reveals the influence of alcoholism and mental illness on my decision making, the course of my life, and the formation of friendships that have endured three decades. As a 22-year-old, I landed in Germany with no language ability, money, or contacts—or even a home to come back to. I lucked into work at a famous winery in the ancient city of Trier, where strangers who became life-long friends ushered me into another culture and mindset. In *Ferment*, present-day visits to these Germans take the reader through central Germany and rural France, and, ultimately into a now-mature American man's search for more of himself. Throughout this pilgrimage, family and friendly relationships, foibles, and joys grow—while breakout depression and mania lurk in the shadows much like Robert Pirsig's Phaedrus in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*.

The University of Nebraska Press published my two travel memoirs. *Seldom Seen: A Journey into the Great Plains* (2009) recounts my 1,450-mile walk from Kansas City to Helena, Montana. *Canoeing the Great Plains: A Missouri River Summer* (2015) takes readers down 2,200 miles of the Missouri River from Helena back to Kansas City. *Canoeing the Great Plains* won the creative nonfiction category of the 2016 High Plains Book Award and the 2016 Thorpe Menn Literary Excellence Award.

I write book reviews and articles for scholarly journals. My poems and essays have been published in numerous newspapers and literary journals, including *New Letters*, *daCunha*, *Indiana Voice Journal*, *Garó*, *Wood Coin*, and others. I arranged dozens of book talks at libraries, clubs and organizations, book clubs, and forums. Midwestern newspapers have interviewed me about my books and I'm not shy when it comes to selling my books. I even keep stock in the car trunk for the opportunity to sell one in my day-to-day routines.

I earned a doctorate in American History and Literature from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2013. I have been an award-winning journalist, book editor, college professor, and ironworker. Presently, I teach American History, Modern Latin American History, and Western Civilization at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, KS. I conduct memoir-, nonfiction-, and travel-writing workshops at the Writers Place, a Kansas City literary center and at the Mid-Continent Public Libraries.

**Patrick Dobson, *Ferment: Wine, Vineyard, and Manic Depression***

*Ferment* is ready for your review. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dr. Patrick Dobson

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