

In my fall 2023 ILC entitled “Storytelling and Social Geography Through Food: Developing a Personal Menu”, I explored food and history through many contexts relevant to family ancestry and personal storytelling. While I read a variety of texts throughout the quarter, I pivoted to focus mainly on one text, *The Cooking Gene* by Michael Twitty, as I felt its relevance to my ILC was both helpful for developing my knowledge base surrounding ancestral and familial foodways, but the writing style and format of Twittys book mirrored the second aspect of my ILC I was hoping to achieve; the creation of a personal menu with memoir/storytelling style text accompanying my recipes. Twittys book taught me much about human foodways, the historical progress of cultural significance of food, and cuisines created or adapted as a means of survival, and in the first half of the quarter before I had really gotten into writing for my menu project, his text served as the basis for writing prompts used to guide my project.

My menu project writing is now 21 pages long and has both family and homemade recipes included amongst the chapters. I pulled from interviews with my family and my personal food history to write narratives surrounding food, sectioned off by the years. While I was apprehensive about the size of the project I was able to work with some peers to improve my writing practices and better enjoy my work I am hoping to take this as a starting point for my next project, which will expand on what I have already done and include other mediums of expression such as poetry and art.

As I get to the end of my time at Evergreen I am beginning to plan how I can take my knowledge into the world, and what occupations may allow me to grow my curiosities while doing some good for the world. Twittys writing as well as my own has helped me not only identify areas in which progress is needed but shown me where these problems began and what prompted them. As I expand my knowledge base to understand food and history in more contexts

I hope to work more closely with the freshman program while they begin to explore ILC's, in an attempt to both support my community of food ways learners, and get a feel for teaching and supporting students in this area. This quarter has been inspiring, and has me more excited for the next project than ever before.