

Reading Guide for The 1857 Project Essays

“Vulnerable Neighborhood Faces Shorter Life Expectancy and COVID-19 Dangers”
 by Richard H. Weiss, pgs 26-27 [Graphic organizer for this essay](#)

Excerpt	<p>“Preservation Square...located just a mile west of downtown St. Louis, in a ZIP code that has been identified as ranking last in the region in social determinants of health. A lot of factors go into that ranking, but the main one is that, on average, people living in 63106 will die sooner than most anyone else in metropolitan St. Louis. The life expectancy of a person born in 63106 in 2010 was 67 years, according to data from the census and the St. Louis Department of Health. That compares to 85 years in 63105, which covers Clayton, the St. Louis County seat six miles to the west. Residents in 63106 die younger because they suffer from higher rates of chronic illnesses like cancer, heart disease and diabetes. They have less access to health care, nutritious food and fresh air. Higher crime rates in their neighborhood are a factor too, not just because of the physical harm crime brings, but because of the stress it imposes on immune systems. Crime makes residents fearful to venture outdoors and to public spaces where they can enjoy sunshine and recreation. Now add to this toxic stew the looming threat of a pandemic that impacts everyone but falls most heavily on African Americans.”</p>
Key Names, Dates, and Terms	<p>Social determinants of health, Before Ferguson</p>
Supplemental Texts	<p>Essay: “Redlining’s Long Lasting Mark” by Rachel Finan (KHS Student), <i>Gateway Journalism Review</i></p>

	<div data-bbox="462 220 714 346">  </div> <div data-bbox="755 252 1347 325"> <h2>A Tale of Two Zip Codes</h2> </div> <div data-bbox="479 367 1347 808">  <p>A tale of two ZIP codes?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Zip Code</th> <th>Name</th> <th>Life expectancy</th> <th>Racial makeup</th> <th>Unemployment</th> <th>Percent below the poverty line</th> <th>Median household income</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>63105</td> <td>Clayton</td> <td>85 years</td> <td>78% White 9% African American 14% Other</td> <td>4%</td> <td>7%</td> <td>\$90,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>63106</td> <td>North St. Louis City</td> <td>67 years</td> <td>95% African American 2% White 3% Other</td> <td>24%</td> <td>54%</td> <td>\$15,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>Source: City of St. Louis Department of Health—Center for Health Information, Planning, and Research; Census 2010, ACS/SHES, Death ABCA 2010 Notes: ZIP code life expectancies were derived using population counts from Census 2010 and deaths from Death ABCA 2010. Total percentage for race may exceed 100% due to rounding.</small></p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Graphic courtesy of Richard Weis</p>	Zip Code	Name	Life expectancy	Racial makeup	Unemployment	Percent below the poverty line	Median household income	63105	Clayton	85 years	78% White 9% African American 14% Other	4%	7%	\$90,000	63106	North St. Louis City	67 years	95% African American 2% White 3% Other	24%	54%	\$15,000
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<p>Guiding Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some modern consequences of slavery? • How does one's home environment affect personal health and well-being? 																					
<p>Discussion Questions</p>	<p>Research shows that factors like education, employment, income, wealth, and neighborhood status have significant impacts on how well and how long we live. Do you believe that these factors can be overcome?</p> <p>Why are predominantly African American communities more vulnerable with shorter life expectancies? What can be done to combat this? Whose responsibility is it to address this issue?</p>																					