



**Senior Health COVID-19 Virtual Town Hall
August 20, 2020**

"Strategies to respond to COVID: Reducing Racial Inequities and Creative Coping through reading and writing"

Presenters:

Joseph Betancourt, MD, MPH
Vice President and Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer

Suzanne Koven, MD
Primary Care Internal Medicine, Bulfinch Medical Group
Writer in Residence

Matthew Russell, MD
Clinical Director of the Geriatrics Section and Medical Director of Senior Health

Resources provided by Dr. Koven related to the topics of the Town Hall:

For writing, local adult and community ed programs often have writing courses and I am sure these will all be virtual this fall.

Some other resources for virtual writing courses:

[Grub Street](#), [Sackett Street Writers](#).

I also mentioned using “writing prompts,” questions that we can answer on the page, including:

- What was the nightly dinner table like when I was a kid?
- How aware was I of race during my childhood?
- How has every aspect of my life changed (or not) during the Covid 19 pandemic”?

For reading, in addition to the many writings mentioned on racism and anti-racism, some wonderful readings about plagues of the past include:

- *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* a novella about the 1918 flu pandemic by Katherine Anne Porter
- *Kyrie*, a book of poems about the 1918 flu pandemic by Ellen Bryant Voigt
- *Angels in America*, a play about the AIDS era by Tony Kushner, also a superb HBO 6 part drama starring Al Pacino and Meryl Streep
- “The Nature of Plagues” by Lucretius is a narrative poem about the plague of Athens, excerpted and with some historical explanation [here](#).

Finally, I think I mentioned this extraordinary op-ed by Caroline Randall Williams: ["You Want a Confederate Monument? My Body is a Confederate Monument"](#)