

## **COVID-19 coronavirus**

**When the virus came here,  
it found a country with  
serious underlying conditions,  
and it exploited them ruthlessly.  
Chronic ills — a corrupt political class,  
a sclerotic bureaucracy, a heartless  
economy, a divided and distracted  
public — had gone untreated for years.  
We had learned to live, uncomfortably,  
with the symptoms.**

**It took the scale and intimacy  
of a pandemic to expose their severity -  
to shock Americans with the recognition  
that we are in the high-risk category.**

**George Packer, *The Atlantic*, June 2020**