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[Why America failed to contain the coronavirus pandemic](#)

As the coronavirus pandemic spreads throughout the globe, there is a hard feeling that America failed to take the threat seriously and heed to the warning of scientists.

There are at least four sources of this heedlessness: political scheming, entrapment in the politics of "culture wars," a profound ignorance of our own fragility, and a general distrust of science.

Together they are prime examples of what the Jesuit philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984) called human *bias*.

In *Insight* (1957), his monumental study of the human process of learning, Lonergan discusses the conditions not only for knowing but also for *unknowing*—that is, for the ways we can get knowing wrong.

We are, by our God-given nature, oriented toward truth by the ineluctable drive within us to ask questions and to seek reality through inquiry.

This will be remembered as a moment when American society either further entrenched itself in its dangerous biases or worked to correct them in order to promote the general welfare—here and throughout the world. Let us pray it will be the latter.

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