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## CULTURAL CHANGES IN A PANDEMIC THROUGH AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL LENS

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# Cultural Changes in a Pandemic through an Anthropological Lens

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## **ABSTRACT**

The culture of American society has changed quickly and dramatically during the past year. Changes in the culture of the workplace have been the highest profile changes observed, as many employees are now working remotely from home. Intentional changes such as using technology to connect with coworkers and complete work tasks has forced many unintentional consequences onto workers, specifically regarding workplace morale, job satisfaction, and overall mental health. The pandemic has also highlighted that culture is differentially shared: people of color, women, and people in the working class and lower middle class are feeling the effects of COVID-19 medically and financially more than their white, wealthy, male counterparts. The variance in cultural values associated with pandemic precautions, such as mask wearing and social distancing, between liberally-minded people and conservatively-minded individuals demonstrates that culture is context-dependent and arbitrary. I will answer how naive realism, ethnocentrism, and a lack of cultural relativism increase culture shock associated with the pandemic within the American subcultures of liberalism and conservatism. I will also describe how social distancing and isolation has changed our culture.

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