Book: Why Smile?: The Science Behind Facial Expressions

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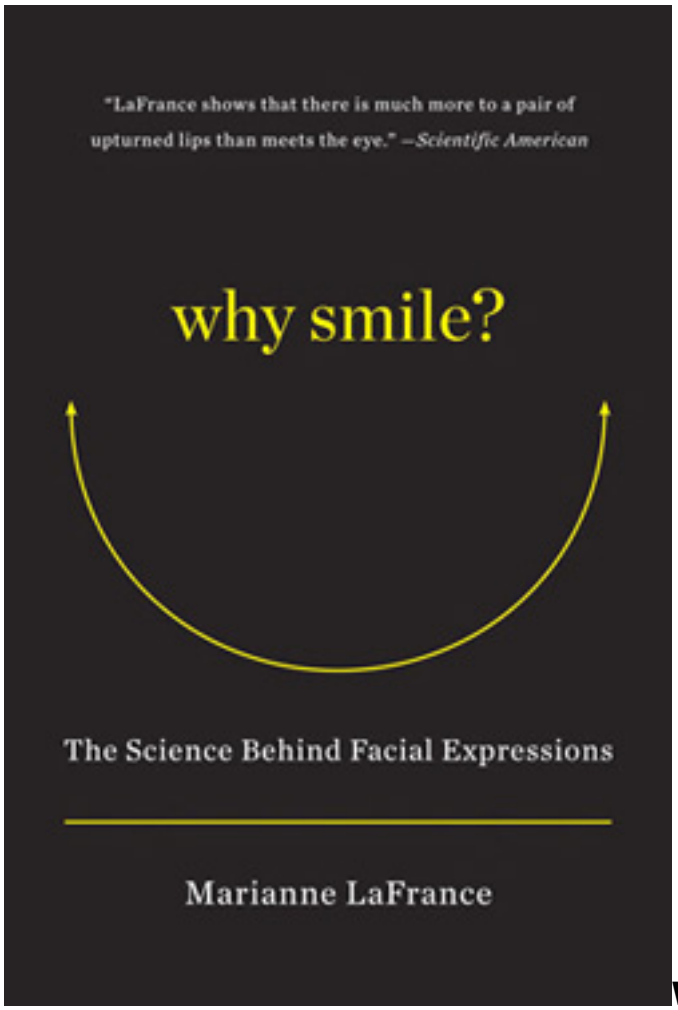

Why Smile?: The Science Behind Facial Expressions

Marianne LaFrance, *professor of psychology and of women's, gender, and sexuality studies*

(W.W. Norton & Company)

When someone smiles, the effects are often positive: a glum mood lifts; an apology is accepted; a deal is struck; a flirtation begins. But change the circumstances or

the cast of a smile, and the terms shift: a rival grins to get under your skin; a bully's smirk unsettles his mark. Marianne LaFrance investigates the familiar grin and finds that it is not quite as simple as it first appears. LaFrance shows how the smile says much more than we realize — or care to admit: not just cheerful expressions, smiles are social acts with serious consequences.

Drawing on her research as well as the latest studies in psychology, medicine, anthropology, biology, and computer science, LaFrance explores the science behind the smile. Who shows more fake smiles, popular kids or unpopular kids? Is it good or bad when a bereaved person smiles? These are some of the questions answered in "Why Smile?"

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