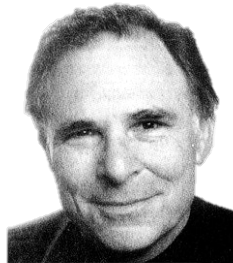


A



B

Why do we smile? Some experts suggest that the answer lies in **evolutionary psychology**, which seeks to explain every aspect of human behavior as the outcome of **trial-and-error patterns**. One of the first attempts to analyze the social functions and goals of smiling came from **Charles Darwin** himself, who (in his book *The Expression of Emotions in Men and Animals*) suggested that humans may have adopted the behavior of animals by baring their teeth. Even though it may have originally retained the **aggressive implications** of such a display, as more and more tribes began to use it as a **form of greeting**, in time it eventually lost its predatory edge. **Guillaume-Benjamin Duchenne** (1806-1875), a contemporary of Darwin specializing in **neurology**, also turned his attention towards this social phenomenon, and – by zapping single muscles on the face with electricity and then observing the changes – found out a primary distinction: some smiles come from the soul, while some others are social instruments consciously used for some purpose. Thanks to Duchenne's research, scientists who study facial expressions now distinguish between **social non-Duchenne smiles** and **spontaneous Duchenne smiles**. Not that it takes a scientist to make this distinction: as you can ascertain from the pictures on the left, if the smile engages the musculature around a person's eyes (B), it's probably a Duchenne smile; if it doesn't, then the smiling person may be trying either to conceal their embarrassment or to endear their interlocutors.

Click on the Pictures for a **VIDEO** and an **ARTICLE** on this Topic