Nonverbal Behavior and Self-Presentation

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Because of special characteristics of nonverbal behaviors (e.g., they can be difficult to suppress, they are more accessible to the people who observe them than to the people who produce them), the intention to produce a particular nonverbal expression for the self-presentational purposes cannot always be successfully translated into the actual production of that expression. The literatures on people’s skills at using their nonverbal behaviors to feign internal states and to deceive are reviewed as they pertain to the question of whether people can overcome the many constraints on the translation of their intentions into expressions. The issue of whether people’s deliberate attempts to regulate their nonverbal behaviors can be detected by others is also considered.