information. It is possible to develop separate explanations for each of these findings, but it is more parsimonious (see Chapter 1) to assume that people possess innate tendencies to associate particular psychological qualities with particular facial features.

Does this mean that culture and learning play no role in shaping social perception? Not at all. Cultures determine which qualities a pretty person is thought to possess, and cultures have different norms regarding the events that trigger particular emotions and how these emotions are displayed (Eid & Diener, 2001; Mesquita & Frijda, 1992; J. A. Russell, 1991, 1994; Scherer & Wallbott, 1994). This is undoubtedly one reason why people are most adept at judging facial expressions of emotion for people of their own nationality, region, or culture (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002). The safest conclusion to be drawn from this research is that although a good deal of social perception is shaped by culture and learning, some aspects of social perception are innate and do not require learning.

II. Nonverbal Behaviors

The movie actor Tom Cruise often walks in a manner that exudes confidence and cockiness. His behavior underscores just how much our impressions of others are influenced by nonverbal communication (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998). Nonverbal communication encompasses all the ways people communicate information through...