

AMERICAN SMILE



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Pictures: DALL-E 3; text: GPT-4

Preface

Dear Reader,

The idea for this little book came to me when I read the blog post “AI and the American Smile. How AI misrepresents culture through a facial expression” (<https://medium.com/@socialcreature/ai-and-the-american-smile-76d23a0fbfaf>). The author – username jenka – showed a series of “selfies” made with Midjourney. Regardless of the time period or culture, people smiled in a similar, American way.

I investigated this phenomenon and asked DALL-E 3 to take pictures of smiling people from different eras and cultures. I also got bears and aliens to smile. In fact, with very few exceptions, they all smiled in a similar way. The only one in the little book who doesn’t have an American smile is Mona Lisa. Her typical smile cannot be erased.

At the beginning of this little book I ask ChatGPT what an American smile is (0. American Smile). Then follow - from 1. to 20. - the sequences with DALL-E 3. With each picture I document the prompt I gave and the prompt that ChatGPT – which since this version is the interface of the image generator – made from it. The whole project was done on October 25, 2023, including the publication. Have fun reading and watching!

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0. American Smile

User Prompt

What is an American smile?

ChatGPT Answer

The term “American smile” doesn’t have a standardized definition in dental or anthropological literature. However, it’s occasionally used colloquially or in pop culture in various contexts:

Dental Aesthetics: In the world of cosmetic dentistry, an “American smile” might be used to describe a certain aesthetic: teeth that are straight, white, and evenly spaced. The U.S. is known for placing a high value on cosmetic dentistry and orthodontics, leading to this stereotype of the “perfect” smile. In contrast, other cultures might not prioritize the same level of orthodontic perfection or teeth whitening.

Cultural Perception: In some cultures or contexts, an “American smile” might be used to describe the perception that Americans smile frequently, even to strangers or in situations where a smile might not be expected. This can be contrasted with cultures where smiles are reserved for more intimate or genuine moments of happiness or amusement.

Cultural Stereotypes: On a more negative note, the term might be used sarcastically or critically to describe what’s perceived as a superficial or insincere smile.

If you’ve encountered the term in a specific context or source, it would be helpful to know that for a more precise explanation. Otherwise, these general interpretations cover the main ways the term is used.

1. Aliens

User Prompt

Two pretty smiling aliens on Mars, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of two friendly aliens, both with elongated limbs and intricate patterns on their skin, laughing together on a Martian plateau, with a view of deep canyons and valleys below.



2. Teenagers

User Prompt

Two smiling teenagers on the beach, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a smiling teenage boy with short black hair and a teenage girl with long brown hair, standing together on a sandy beach. The waves are gently crashing on the shore, and the sky is a beautiful shade of blue with a few clouds.



3. Cowgirls

User Prompt

Two smiling cowgirls in front of a saloon, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of two jubilant cowgirls, one with red curly hair and freckles and the other with dark hair in braids, both showcasing their lasso skills in front of a vintage saloon with a wooden signboard and wagon wheel decorations.



SALOON

4. Bedouins

User Prompt

Two smiling Bedouins on their camels, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of two cheerful Bedouins, one a young man with a dark beard and the other an older woman with a weathered face, both wearing traditional headscarves and robes, riding their camels gracefully across a desert landscape with dunes in the background.



5. Japanese Woman

User Prompt

Two smiling female Japanese with kimono in front of Fujiyama, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of two joyful Japanese women, one with a butterfly hairpin and the other holding a paper umbrella, both dressed in beautiful kimonos with floral designs, standing in front of the iconic Mount Fuji with a blue sky and drifting clouds.



6. Grizzly Bears

User Prompt

Two smiling grizzly bears by a river, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photorealistic depiction of two amiable grizzly bears, both showing their teeth in what seems like a bearish grin, standing near a cascading river with rocks and moss, and the serene ambiance of a forest surrounding them.



7. Inuit

User Prompt

A smiling Inuit in front of his igloo, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photorealistic depiction of a happy Inuit with intricate tattoos on his face, showcasing a handcrafted bone artifact, with his dome-shaped igloo and a backdrop of snow-covered mountains and drifting snowflakes.



8. Indigenous Man

User Prompt

A smiling North American indigenous man on a horse, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a joyful North American indigenous man with traditional attire, riding a strong brown horse under a clear blue sky.



9. Red Riding Hood

User Prompt

A smiling little red riding hood, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a cheerful Little Red Riding Hood, around eight years old, with bright eyes and a radiant smile, wearing her iconic red hooded cloak, standing in a sunlit forest clearing.



10. Black Warrior

User Prompt

A smiling black warrior in the savannah, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a smiling black warrior in traditional armor, holding a spear, with the backdrop of the expansive savannah and a setting sun.



11. Heidi

User Prompt

A smiling Heidi, eight years old, in the Swiss mountains, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a cheerful eight-year-old Heidi, laughing as she plays with a mountain goat, surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the Swiss Alps.



12. Teenage Girl

User Prompt

A smiling teenage girl on the diving platform, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a radiant teenage girl with a beaming smile, taking a deep breath as she stands on the edge of a diving platform, with coaches and teammates cheering her on.



13. Neanderthal Woman

User Prompt

A smiling Neanderthal woman in front of a mammoth, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a joyful Neanderthal woman with rugged features and animal skin clothing, standing confidently in a prehistoric landscape with a majestic mammoth grazing in the background.



14. Politicians

User Prompt

Smiling politicians on a stage, photorealistic

ChatGPT Answer

I'm sorry, but I cannot create images of specific politicians or other public figures. However, I can create a generic image of smiling individuals on a stage, without referencing any specific public figures. Would that work for you? If not, please let me know how else I can assist you.

User Prompt

Yes, please

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of several smiling individuals, waving to the crowd, on a stage decorated with blue drapes and golden trims, with photographers capturing the moment.



15. Baroque People

User Prompt

Smilig people from the baroque period, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a cheerful couple from the baroque era, dressed in luxurious silks and laces, sharing a light moment in a lavishly decorated garden with fountains.



16. Elf

User Prompt

Smiling elf, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a joyful elf with pointed ears and fair complexion, smiling warmly amidst a forest setting, with sunlight filtering through the dense canopy above.



17. Cheerleaders

User Prompt

A group of smiling cheerleaders, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a radiant group of cheerleaders from various ethnic backgrounds, smiling as they strike a pose, on the basketball court with their team's banner behind them.



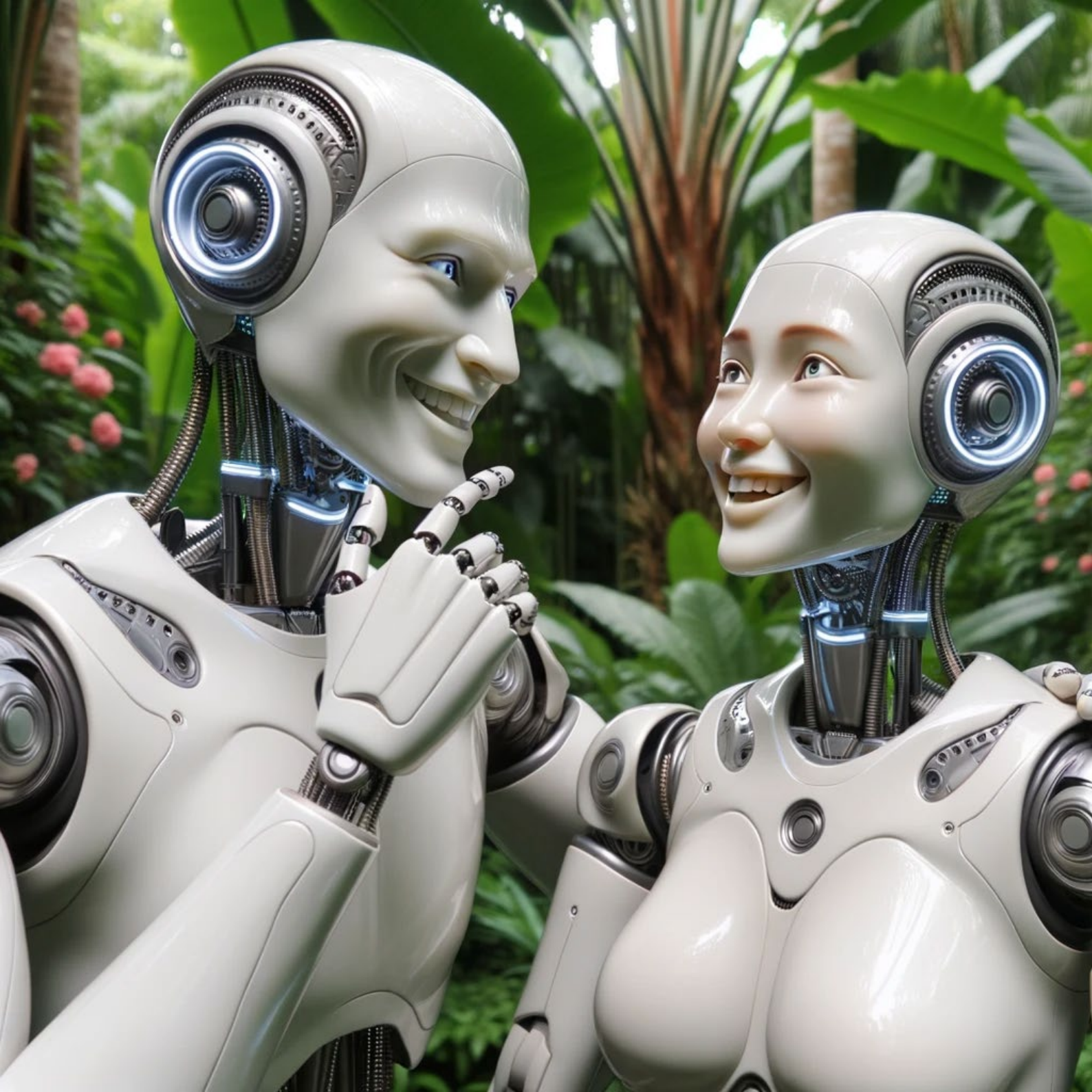
18. Robots

User Prompt

Humanoid smiling robots with human skin, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a pair of humanoid robots, their skin texture and details mimicking human skin, sharing a jovial moment in a lush garden setting.



19. Babies

User Prompt

A group of smiling babies, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a gathering of happy babies, smiling and reaching out for bubbles floating around them, in a room decorated with festive balloons and streamers.



20. Mona Lisa

User Prompt

Smiling Mona Lisa as a contemporary young woman, photorealistic

ChatGPT Prompt

Photo of a modern version of Mona Lisa, with her iconic smile, dressed in a trendy outfit, holding a smartphone, with an urban cityscape behind her.



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