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Teeth: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

Peter S. Ungar

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Teeth are amazing -- the product of half a billion years of evolution. They provide fuel for the body by breaking apart other living things; and they must do it again and again over a lifetime without breaking in the process. This means that plants and animals have developed tough or hard tissues for protection, and teeth have evolved ways to sharpen or strengthen themselves to overcome those defenses. And just as different jobs require different tools, animals with different diets have different shaped teeth to deal with the variety of foods that they eat.

In this *Very Short Introduction*, Peter S. Ungar, an award-winning author and leading scientist, presents the story of teeth. Ungar outlines the key concepts, including insight into the origin of teeth and their evolution. Considering why teeth are important, he describes how they are made, and how they work, including their fundamental importance in the fossil record. Ungar finishes with a review of mammal teeth, looking at how they evolved and how recent changes to our diet are now affecting dental health.

About the Series:
Oxford's Very Short Introductions series offers concise and original introductions to a wide range of subjects--from Islam to Sociology, Politics to Classics, Literary Theory to History, and Archaeology to the Bible. Not simply a textbook of definitions, each volume in this series provides trenchant and provocative--yet always balanced and complete--discussions of the central issues in a given discipline or field. Every Very Short Introduction gives a readable evolution of the subject in question, demonstrating how the subject has developed and how it has influenced society. Eventually, the series will encompass every major academic discipline, offering all students an accessible and abundant reference library. Whatever the area of study that one deems important or appealing, whatever the topic that fascinates the general reader, the Very Short Introductions series has a handy and affordable guide that will likely prove indispensable.

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