



**International College of Prosthodontists  
London Symposium – Satellite Meeting  
August 30 – September 2, 2023**

**Invited Speaker – Aaron LeBlanc**

## **Title**

Putting Evolution Back into Dentistry: A Palaeontologist's Approach to the Study of Teeth

## **Abstract**

Palaeontology and dentistry are seemingly unrelated fields, but they have a surprisingly rich and intertwined history. This talk explores those historical connections, showing how the foundations for dentistry in England were laid through the comparative study of animal teeth, both living and fossil. Comparative dental anatomy and evolution may not be as prevalent in dental education as they were in the past, but they still have tremendous value in pedagogy, foundational, and translational science. As a gateway science for young people today, exploring the connections between extinct animals and their dental anatomy provides an effective tool for engaging students with core concepts in dentistry and oral hygiene. However, palaeontology can also provide scientific insights into the origins of our teeth, why they appear the way they do in health and disease, and potentially reveal new avenues for bio-inspired solutions to current challenges in oral biology.

## **Biography**

Lecturer in Dental Biosciences, Faculty of Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences, King's College London.

### Education

PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Toronto (Canada)	(2011-2016)
MSc in Systematics and Evolution from the University of Alberta (Canada)	(2008-2011)
BSc with honours in Palaeontology from the University of Alberta (Canada)	(2004-2008)

Aaron's research interests are in the evolution and development of teeth, from fish, to dinosaurs, to mammals, and everything in between. He has over 40 peer-reviewed papers and over 50 conference presentations in palaeontology, evolutionary biology, and comparative dental histology, studying the origins of complex enamel, the periodontal tissues, and tooth replacement mechanisms, among others. He joined King's College London first as a Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow in late 2020 before starting a Lecturer position at King's in January 2023.