

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July:

*A Passion for Science*

John Campbell, Manny Noakes, Tim Radford, Norman Swan

Popular culture does not serve science well. Scientists are generally patronized as geeks and, where they are represented as showing any passion, they routinely morph into the mad scientist stereotype.

Perhaps this problem is intractable, as popular culture is dominated the stupid notion that all good things come easily. The scientific method is justly antipathetic to this stupid notion and, in an ideal world, wouldn't need to bother about addressing it. In an ideal world, enough people would see the deep significance of scientific research to keep the quotas in university courses full. We do not appear to live in an ideal world.

Science isn't easy, but it can be good. That is the tricky argument. So tell us:

- Why do you find it passionately engaging?
- Why should a bright teenager choose to devote her or his life to scientific exploration rather than, say, law or medicine or commerce?
- What is the most exciting thing in your scientific life?
- What would you pursue if you were starting today?

No-one disputes that science is useful. Convince us that it is also enchanting.