

naturejobs

**THE CAREERS
MAGAZINE FOR
SCIENTISTS**

Scientists bemoaning the lack of fresh talent entering some fields, such as maths and chemistry, sometimes look to popular culture for a boost. Portraying scientists at work in television and film can help to inspire and interest potential students. A good example of this effect is the rising popularity of crime shows such as *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, which has helped to encourage interest in forensic science.

But as Richard Smith notes in this week's Recruiters (see page 794), there can be a slight downside. The interest in forensic science has seen a deluge of applications for a handful of jobs. Perhaps more significantly, those applying are seeing the jobs through the eyes of fiction and are not really equipped with the skills and training needed to excel in their chosen profession. In Britain, one company is helping to launch better training programmes to ground aspiring scientists in the more mundane skills that off-camera researchers use in their day-to-day work.

With Will Smith set to hit the silver screen later this year as a virologist fighting vampires in the aftermath of biowarfare, maybe other sectors of science should brace themselves for a similar deluge of applicants. Smith reportedly spent some time researching his role for *I Am Legend* at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. Perhaps he in turn will help boost interest in the CDC's biosafety role.

In much the same way as forensic science has seen both good and bad things result from its higher profile, *I Am Legend* could prove to be a double-edged sword. If the film gets more young people interested in science, that's a plus. In particular, there could be beneficial effects if it fuels interest in biosafety research, as this sector requires a long training period and currently has relatively few qualified people ready to work and an expanding number of facilities needing new recruits. But if the interest generated isn't matched by sufficient training and outreach programmes to help the newly curious find proper education and jobs, then it will be a missed opportunity.

Paul Smaglik, Naturejobs editor

CONTACTS

Editor: Paul Smaglik
Assistant Editor: Gene Russo

European Head Office, London
The Macmillan Building,
4 Crinan Street,
London N1 9XW, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7843 4961
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7843 4996
e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com

European Sales Manager:
Andy Douglas (4975)
e-mail: a.douglas@nature.com
Business Development Manager:
Amelie Pequignot (4974)
e-mail: a.pequignot@nature.com
Natureevents:
Claudia Paulsen Young
(+44 (0) 20 7014 4015)
e-mail: c.paulsenyoung@nature.com

France/Switzerland/Belgium:
Muriel Lestringuez (4994)
UK/Ireland/Italy/RoW:
Nils Moeller (4953)
Scandinavia/Spain/Portugal:
Evelina Rubio-Morgan (4973)
Germany/Austria/The Netherlands:
Reya Silao (4970)
Online Job Postings:
Matthew Ward (+44 (0) 20 7014 4059)

Advertising Production Manager:
Stephen Russell
To send materials use London
address above.
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7843 4816
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7843 4996
e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com
Naturejobs web development:
Tom Hancock
Naturejobs online production:
Catherine Alexander

US Head Office, New York
75 Varick Street,
9th Floor,
New York,
NY 10013-1917
Tel: +1 800 989 7718
Fax: +1 800 989 7103
e-mail: naturejobs@natureny.com

US Sales Manager: Peter Bless

Japan Head Office, Tokyo
Chiyoda Building,
2-37 Ichigayatamachi,
Shinjuku-ku,
Tokyo 162-0843
Tel: +81 3 3267 8751
Fax: +81 3 3267 8746

Asia-Pacific Sales Manager:
Ayako Watanabe
e-mail: a.watanabe@natureasia.com