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| Career | Primatologist; Research Videographer/Filmmaker |
| Your Name | Bill Wallauer |
| Business Name | The Jane Goodall Institute |
| Street Address | 8700 Georgia Ave, Suite 500 |
| City | Silver Spring |
| State | MD |
| Zip | 20910 |
| Phone | 503 557 9089 |
| E-mail Address | Billwallauer271@yahoo.com |
| Website Address | www.janegoodall.org |
| What training is needed to work in this field? | <p>If you want to be involved in field research, you can start in your own backyard studying and recording the behavior of birds, dogs, cats, frogs -- anything out there. It is good to have a solid science background with ecology, biology, physiology, and botany. For primatology, it is important to study human history and evolutionary theory, as well as the study of human behavior and sociology. During the summer months look for positions with researchers as an assistant or with a conservation organization which has a local protected area.</p> <p>For filmmaking, many aspiring camera operators work as assistants to professionals already established in the field. You will need a basic understanding of photography and a good eye for light, composition, and framing. Filmmaking is all about storytelling. It is a good idea to study the films of producers you admire. There are plenty of professional film schools which are great for getting experience with all aspects of documentary filmmaking.</p> |
| What is a typical week like or what do you spend most of your time doing in your job? | <p>One of the things I love about my job is that I don't really have a typical week. I spend most of my time following the Gombe chimps observing them and recording their behavior on film or video. The days can be long and tiring. The steep slopes and thick vegetation make it very difficult to see the chimps, much less film their behavior. But every day is different and often I see things that are absolutely amazing. Much of what I do is for the Jane Goodall Institute's video archive. I also work with producers and editors in the wildlife filmmaking industry to tell the stories of the Gombe chimpanzees through films for television.</p> <p>Beyond my work with the chimps, I work with individuals from the Jane Goodall Institute's TACARE project to document the ongoing community development work which they do in the areas surrounding Gombe National Park. When I am in the states, I document some of the work being done by Roots & Shoots (a global youth program of the Jane Goodall Institute) groups as well as</p> |

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| | <p>give talks about chimpanzees and conservation. Roots & Shoots groups study problems effecting people, animals, and the environment in their communities and take action to make a difference.</p> |
| <p>What is the job outlook for this field?</p> | <p>Both primatology and wildlife filmmaking can be challenging careers to get into. There is a lot of competition in both fields and limited job availability. Having said that, those who are dedicated and determined do find ways to break in. You may have to do volunteer work first to get field experience.</p> |
| <p>What are the benefits of working in this field?</p> | <p>Doing field research and wildlife filmmaking is a perfect career for people who love the natural world and want to dedicate their lives to conserving natural resources. Animal behavior has always fascinated me. Trying to unlock the secrets of the other beings with whom we share the planet not only satisfies my curiosity, but learning about other species helps us to determine how better to manage the areas in which they live. Documentary filmmaking helps to bridge the gap between the science in the field and the general public. The work I do benefits chimps and chimpanzee conservation by educating people through the media about this fantastic, intelligent being and the dangers that threaten their survival.</p> |
| <p>What advice or other information do you want to share with someone considering this field?</p> | <p>I have an ecology and habitat management background, and ended up as a primatologist, conservationist, and wildlife filmmaker. Having a fascination with and a desire to protect and conserve our world is a prerequisite for the kind of work I do. The rest tends to work itself out as you meet people and apply for jobs which interest you.</p> <p>Many people I meet say that they would love to be doing what I do and that I am very lucky to be out of the rat race of the traditional high-pressure work world. The question is, why are they not happy with their lives and their work? Most people tend to wrack up a large debt, then work the rest of their lives to get out from under it. My advice to students interested in any field is to leave your options open and never take "No" for an answer. It is all about setting goals for yourself and not stopping until you have succeeded. If you want to learn about other parts of the world, meet as many people as you can who work overseas. Take volunteer jobs and work hard. There are plenty of people who will tell you that you are crazy or that you can't possibly study chimps or gorillas in Africa. Others will tell you there are no jobs for wildlife filmmakers. If these kinds of statements make you more determined than ever to achieve your goals, then you will make it in these fields. My boss, Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE, is a living example of someone who has achieved the seemingly impossible, on many levels. She is an inspiration to me and countless</p> |

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| | others. There is a great description of her career and achievements at www.janegoodall.org . |
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