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After graduation my well-planned life was supposed to take me to the University of Kansas for a doctorate in entomology. However, the summer after my senior year, I worked for a marine biologist in Panama. During my freshman year at Yale I took scuba on a lark just to get out of calisthenics (we were the last class to suffer that indignity), and I had not looked at the water since. However, once in Panama, I went scuba diving and emerged from that first open-water dive (as opposed to all of my previous scuba experiences scraping the bottom of the Yale pool) with the rather reckless notion that, since I had absolutely no knowledge of anything I had just seen, I should devote the rest of my professional life to studying it. It also did not bother me that the oceans are the one environment on earth that has no insects. Yale was the only graduate school that I had been admitted to that also had a marine program—after all, Plan A was to study insects, not marine animals. Although I had already turned down my Yale admissions offer (thinking I would go to Kansas instead), I called the Graduate School from Panama and got them to reinstate me. I received my Ph.D. in bio ogy from Yale in 1973. I distinctly remember arriving back at Yale in the fall in 1969, after having graduated from there in the spring of the same year, and wondering what contorted logic had led me to face four more New Haven winters. “Toto, this isn’t Kansas.”

I married a Vassaritc, Karen Glaus, who also got her Ph.D. in biology from Yale. We defended our dissertations on the same day, and on special occasions she reminds me that she has had her doctorate for one hour longer than I have! She also admits that, while at Vassar, she voted against the proposed merger with Yale (cruel irony that she too had to spend the next four years in New Haven!).

We both received academic positions at the University of Michigan (yes, it’s a long way from the ocean). Michigan provided two good jobs at a time when landing almost any job was something of a hat trick. We left Michigan in 1977 and both received positions at our present posts as Professors of Ecology at the University of Georgia. Our daughter Delene was born in 1979 and took her first scuba dive with me last summer (Cousteau family, look out).

Increasingly, I am less of a pure academician and more of an environmental activist. How many of you really comprehend what it means that within the next fifty years, humans will exterminate half of all plant and animal species on earth? Last year I testified before a joint U.S. Senate/House of Representatives session on the environment. I have used up most of my Warholian fifteen minutes of fame with an on-camera interview on the “ABC Nightly News” with Peter Jennings. As an environmentalist, I voted for Gore and pray for Clinton. We have so precious little time to get it right.

As I think about Yale and what she gave to me, it is as much the breadth of the liberal arts exposure as the depth of scientific training that prepared me to be effective in my current role as a researcher and educator. Bill Sacco, who was in our class but did not graduate with us, and I created a course on Scientific Photography, offered as a residential college course in Silhman. The course was taught by the best photographers on the staff of Life Magazine. Bill currently heads the photographic department at Yale’s Peabody Museum of Natural History. Since I teach by showing, I thought of this course as I accepted the University of Georgia’s outstanding teacher award several years ago. Through the lens of my camera, the concept of Lux et Veritas is very real.