Passing Cats

Two cats passed by at the door today.
One was orange and the other was grey.
I did not walk past them you see.
Just held the door as they passed me.
One went out, and the other went in
As if some shift would soon begin.
Whose burden would start was hard to see,
The house was peaceful and so was the street.
Yet, perhaps this was the sign of their success.
Though what exactly they do,
I must confess,
I haven’t a clue.

Sherman T. Fulland

FORUM
What’s Good for the University?

Jane Donahue Eberwein
Looking over fall 2001 contributions to this Forum, I agree with most of my colleagues’ suggestions but am struck by different ways in which they comment on time. David Maines feels the pressure of “an entrenched status quo,” while Kevin Murphy complains that we have “wandered aimlessly for the last seven years.” Ronald Horwitz characterizes himself as “a mere ‘kid’” on the basis of his “only 22 years at Oakland,” knowing full well that we still have Professors Burke and Tompoulian among us with 42 years of service. Myself, I’m in the middle with 32 years. I arrived when Oakland celebrated its tenth anniversary and was in the last faculty orientation group to hear Woody Varner relate “the Oakland story.” Now I’m the one narrating an ironically inflected version of that story for new faculty orientations. Having felt like an acorn in a forest of Charter and Old Oaks, I hope I won’t be classified as deadwood for suggesting that one thing that would be good for Oakland is decidedly more systematic access to its historical memory.

We are preserving that history through the Tompoulian’s Oakland Chronicles and memorial articles in this Journal. On ceremonial events such as presidential investitures and ten-year celebrations, we recall Woody’s story. It has subsequent chapters, though, that we aren’t really documenting. The history we expected from George Matthews never got written. In