

I Keep Forgetting
LILY BRETT

I keep forgetting
the facts and statistics
and each time
I need to know them

I look up books
these books line
twelve shelves
in my room

I know where to go
to confirm the fact
that in the Warsaw Ghetto
there were 7.2 people per room

and in Lodz
they allocated
5.8 people
to each room

I forget
over and over again
that one third of Warsaw
was Jewish

and in the ghetto
they crammed 500,000 Jews
into 2.4 per cent
of the area of the city

and how many
bodies they were burning
in Auschwitz
at the peak of their production

twelve thousand a day
I have to check
and re-check

and did I dream
that at 4 pm on the 19th January
58,000 emanciated inmates
were marched out of Auschwitz

was I right
to remember that in Bergen Belsen
from the 4th–13th of April 1945
28,000 Jews arrived from other camps

I can remember
hundreds and hundreds
of phone numbers

phone numbers
I haven't phoned
for twenty years
are readily accessible

And I can remember
people's conversations
and what someone's wife
said to someone else's husband

What a good memory
you have
people tell me.

**WHY DOES THE POET KEEP FORGETTING THE STATISTICAL DATA SHE
LISTS IN THE POEM? CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE USE OF IRONY HERE?**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW THE NAZIS WERE OBSESSED WITH
KEEPING ACCURATE RECORDS OF GENOCIDE GO TO THE ATTACHED WEB
SITE WHICH SUMMARIZES THE NAZI'S USE OF IBM TECHNOLOGY.**