

*Psych Lab, SUNY Oswego
November 10, 2008*

WHAT IS MY NUMBER?

Now that you have found my unfaced place
 in the census count
 and pulled me up as a person,
and thus have heard my heartbeat,
and had a glimpse of the interior of my soul,

How will you deal with living a life
that includes rape, murder, bigotry,
 bombs, beatings,
 and the stoning to death of children,
among other things that cannot be *re*-presented
as numbers in a survey?

And if you cannot empathize with things
slicked up wet by floods of blood and tears,
 how will you ever deal honestly
 with the enthrallments
and ecstasies of life that erase the pain
reported so dutifully by your local poet?

Am I you?
 Can you find yourself in me?
 What is my number now?