

# Irrigation

By Martha Serpas | Volume 2.1 Fall 2015

we steal water when we make rain, the way  
everything I have is from somewhere else,  
from someone else, what I am

the riverbed looks scalded  
but the wound is full thickness  
and elsewhere

in a variegated field or on a lawn  
of grass named for a saint  
or a saint once removed

we can't walk on it  
eventually it comes up  
dry and tired

the way we wear everything out  
especially each other  
listening with heavy feet

unlike the river which never tires  
whose pocket we pick  
down to the lint

---



**Martha Serpas** has published three collections of poetry, *Côte Blanche*, *The Dirty Side of the Storm*, and, most recently, *The Diener*. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Nation*, *Image*, and *Southwest Review*. A native of Southern Louisiana's wetlands, she co-produced *Veins in the Gulf*, a documentary about coastal erosion. She teaches at the University of Houston and serves as a hospital trauma chaplain. More information about her work can be found at [marthaserpas.com](http://marthaserpas.com).

---

©Martha Serpas, "Irrigation," first appeared in *Bellevue Literary Review*, V14N2, Fall 2014. Reprinted with permission of the author.

This material is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License.

Recommended Citation: Serpas, Martha. (2015) "Irrigation," *The Yale ISM Review*: Vol. 2: No. 1, Article 9. Available at: <http://ismreview.yale.edu>