

## ***"looking at El Segundo Energy Center"*** I. molina, 2018 — *S C R I P T*

created for IS270 at UCLA, led by Professor Miriam Posner

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0:00 - 0:17

"It is easy to know the beauty of *inhuman things*, sea storm and mountain; it is their *soul* and their *meaning*.

Humanity has its lesser beauty, *impure and painful*; we have to harden our hearts to bear it."

\*unspoken credit: Robinson Jeffers, *The World's Wonders* \*

0:23 - 1:04

Sometime in the 1950s, on the coast between Dockweiler state beach and the city of Manhattan beach in Southern California a power generating plant was built, burning fossil fuels to capture energy deliverable to residents of its locality. Using water collected from the ocean, the plant cooled its constantly warming tanks. Oil tanks which rusted over as they aged, leaking toxic liquid runoff onto the shore which was then lapped up by the tide – taking the waste into the water.

1:18 - 1:52

Fifty years later, national energy company NRG joined with Southern California Edison to develop a plan for a new flexible electricity plant. The project involved the removal of the rusting oil tanks and compliance with strict, 21st century air quality standards as well as employing new techniques to use reclaimed water for air-cooling and to cease the drawing of water from the pacific.

2:03 - 2:40

Two white towers rise above the massive plant, surrounded by concrete, chain-linked, and still rusting barriers - a mechanized man-made island not quite isolated as interrupting the landscape between the shoreline and pacific coast highway. Was the intention for the blued metal staircases to disappear into the horizon? For the white stacks to mimic clouds?

2:51 - 2:34

Ignoring infrastructures everyday, we accept that if we pay our bills the lights will turn on and the faucet will produce hot water. Often inconsiderate of how energy gets to us and what it costs others, the tax on the environment, land even the plant and animal lives that are compromised so that we can continue to live with convenience wired into the walls.

3:35 - 4:14

"What has happened here will do  
To bite the living world in two,  
Half for me and half for you.  
Here at last I fix a line  
Severing the world's design  
Too small to hold both yours and mine.  
There's enormity in a hair  
Enough to lead men not to share  
Narrow confines of a sphere  
But put an ocean or a fence  
Between two opposite intents.  
A hair would span the difference."

\* unspoken credit: Boundary, Adrienne Rich \*

4:21 - 5:02

It looks strange, almost archaic, this site (sight) of infrastructure on the coast so close to a place used as recreation and appreciated for its year-round sunshine, here energy is both created and collected — where Southern Californians continue to promote lifestyles that embody efficiency. Clean eating, low emission automobiles, repurposed public spaces.

It does look strange.

Maybe if we keep looking west, we'll forget it's even there.