

## **Hypo-interventions Intimate activism in toxic environments**

Tironi, M. (2018). Hypo-interventions: Intimate activism in toxic environments. *Social Studies of Science*, 48(3), 438-455. <10.1177/0306312718784779> Accessed 01 Mar 2021.

### **Abstract**

Chemical toxicity is part of everyday life in Puchuncaví. The most polluted industrial compound in Chile, Puchuncaví is home of fourteen industrial complexes, including the largest copper smelting plant in the country and four thermoelectric plants. Stories of biological mutation, corrosion and death among plants, humans, fishes and cattle are proliferate in Puchuncaví. Engaging with the growing interest in care and affective modes of attention within STS, this paper examines how ill, intoxicated or otherwise affected people in Puchuncaví act upon and know about their chronic sufferings. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, I focus on what I call 'hypo-interventions', or the minimal and unspectacular yet life-enabling practices of caring, cleaning and healing the ailments of their significant others, human and otherwise. By minutely engaging with somatic and affective alterations in the domestic spaces of the body, the home and the garden, Puchuncavinos render industrial harm visible and knowable, and hence a type of political action is invoked. While outside technical validation and alien to conventional politics, these actions have proved crucial for people in Puchuncaví striving to persevere in the face of industrial violence and institutional abandonment. I coin the term 'intimate activism' to describe the ethical and political affordances of the subdued doings and engagements deployed in Puchuncaví. Intimate activism, I claim, draws its political power on its capacity to create minimal conditions for ethical and material endurance..

### **Keywords**

Care, Hypo-interventions, Politics, Pollution, Potentiality.