

## **THE POLITICS OF PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION OF NATURE IN SILICON VALLEY'S ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This paper explores the politicization of the production process in Silicon Valley's electronics industry in the late 1970s and early 1980s, in the context of growing public awareness of the toxic health effects of the industry. It focuses on the chemical-intensive wafer fabrication process, occupational health issues, and groundwater contamination. These processes are examined in light of theoretical work by Michael Burawoy, James O'Connor, and Neil Smith. After Burawoy (1985), the paper analyzes how contents between production workers and corporate management shape the labor process in electronics manufacturing. After Smith (1984), the paper discusses the "production of nature" as an aspect of the industrial production process. And after O'Connor (1988), the effect of changed "conditions of production" on production processes is examined. Theoretically, this paper extends and enriches Burawoy's concept of the "politics of production", by reemphasizing and incorporating the "struggle in production" between capital and both human and "external" nature. Practically, it discusses the long-term sustainability of electronics manufacturing in Silicon Valley (and elsewhere) *vis a vis* the industry's impacts on occupational health and the environment.