3 February, 2016 (Wednesday), 5pm, Rooms 8 & 9, FAMES (tea served at 4:45pm)

Dying for an iPhone: Chinese Workers and Student Interns in Apple’s Supply Chain

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Based on fieldwork in Guangdong and Sichuan provinces, Jenny Chan’s co-authored book, *Dying for an iPhone*, narrates the tragic suicides and collective resistance by young workers at the million-strong Taiwanese-owned Foxconn Technology Group (with Ngai PUN and Mark SELDEN, forthcoming, Rowman & Littlefield). Foxconn is the world’s largest maker of iPhones and other high-tech digital products. Within the tight delivery deadlines, some Foxconn workers leveraged their power to disrupt just-in-time production to demand higher pay and better conditions. While all these labour struggles were short-lived and limited in scope to a single factory, protestors exposed the injustice of ‘iSlavery,’ garnering wide media attention and civil society support. In the course of multi-year investigation since 2010, Jenny and her team encountered students as young as 15, who were pressured to work at labour-hungry Foxconn factories in the guise of ‘internship.’ There has been scant attention to teenaged student interns as temporary or contingent workers in the actual workplace setting. At a time of slowing growth and ageing population, properly trained interns will play a central role in China’s development and far beyond. The massive use of interns as ‘flexible’ and cheap workers in global production, with the full backing of local states, however, is a cause of concern.

Jenny Chan (PhD in Sociology, 2014) is Lecturer in Contemporary China Studies in the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies, and Junior Research Fellow of Kellogg College, University of Oxford. She also serves as Board Member of the International Sociological Association’s Research Committee on Labor Movements (2014-2018). Her recent articles have appeared in *Current Sociology, Modern China, Critical Asian Studies, Asian Studies (Official Journal of the Asian Studies Association of Hong Kong), Human Relations, Global Labour Journal, The Asia-Pacific Journal, The South Atlantic Quarterly, New Labor Forum, and New Technology, Work and Employment*. Prior to pursuing her doctorate in University of London, she was Chief Coordinator of Hong Kong-based non-profit labour rights group, SACOM (Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehaviour). She can be reached at jenny.chan@area.ox.ac.uk or wlchan_cuhk@yahoo.com.

All seminars take place on Wednesdays (unless otherwise arranged) at 5pm in rooms 8 & 9 in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge. Tea will be served at the same venue at 4:45pm. All are welcome.