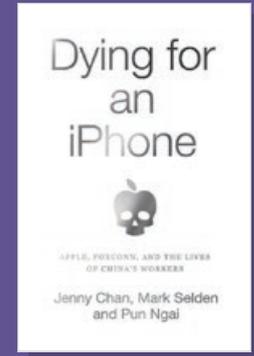
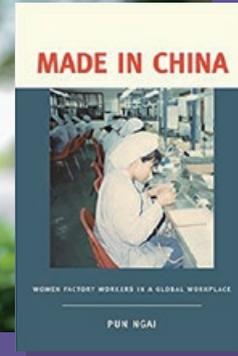


Tackling social and labour problems with research



An internationally renowned scholar of labour issues in China, **Prof Ngai PUN**, Chair Professor of **Department of Cultural Studies** was the first Asian scholar to win the prestigious C. Wright Mills Award with *Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace* in 2005. Her highly respected and acclaimed book, *Dying for an iPhone: Apple, Foxconn and Lives of the Chinese Workers*, has been translated into several languages.

In 2010, Foxconn, which assembles phones for Apple Inc., had a spate of suicides in its Mainland factories. These not only attracted the attention of the press globally, but also persuaded Prof Pun and her research team to relocate from Beijing to the Pearl River Delta.

“A senior executive of Foxconn pointed out that Chinese workers commit suicide for the compensation of several hundred thousand yuan for their poor families, and that the company would no longer indemnify those who committed suicide. We were outraged at this. Not long after this announcement, a female worker jumped off a building and was paralysed. We wrote a lot of reports and put pressure on the government. In the end, Foxconn agreed to pay her 180,000 yuan, which is actually only a small amount of money,” said Prof Pun. After that Foxconn began to pay attention to improving the working conditions of its employees.

To Prof Pun, teaching is as important as research and Lingnan's emphasis on the balanced development of research and teaching was the main reason for which she wanted to join the University. “A liberal arts education attaches great importance to relationships with society and interaction with students, and I firmly believe that research and teaching are closely linked,” she said.



Recently, Prof Pun and a group of Lingnan students went to Tin Shui Wai to look at the difficulties and challenges of job-hunting and unemployment for young people. They visited a social enterprise called Tin Zi Zok Wai, which is formed by a group of immigrated women, and plan to promote its eco-village framework with “time-voucher” labour hours and a product redeeming system.

“ **If research is not to solve problems, what is its purpose? I aim to give the results of my research to society.** ”