



華僑中學

HWA CHONG INSTITUTION

Philosophy, Politics, Economics (PPE)

APPENDIX F: *FOXCONN Controversy* (Issues for panel discussion)

2 June 2010

Veronica P. Roberts

10 workers commit suicide at Apple 's Foxconn in China:The iPad: how much does it cost again?

13 workers at Apple's Foxconn factory in China have attempted suicides this year. 10 have succeeded. Apple's CEO, Steve Job said today that the company is "troubled" and that they were giving it their full attention. Foxconn, one of their giant factories in Shenzhen, China, have produced such popular gadgets as the iPhone and iPad.

What is going on? Are workers working in a hostile environment? Is Foxconn more sweat shop than sophisticated high tech complex? Apple is quick to squash any such accusations and assures the public than the factory operates and follows all legal and humane guidelines.

So what caused 13 Foxconn/Apple workers to try to take their lives? Lets not forget sadly,10 were successful. It's important to note that workers eat, sleep, and work at the giant complex. In fact, they practically live there. How many of us would like to eat, sleep and socialize where we work? Hmmm.

Employees are paid approximately \$235 monthly, which includes room and board. Some earn even less. There have been three instances of child labor at the plant, but Apple management vowed to be more vigilant in the future and stressed that they do not operate that way.

Some of the other tech companies operating in Shenzhen,China are Hewlett-Packard, HP, Sony,Nokia and Nintendo. Cheap labor plus high retail price equals astronomical profits. But at what price to the lowly worker on the production floor?

How much do we pay for these electronic toys on our end? The iPhone, iPod and the latest, the iPad? Some of us lined up around the block and waited overnight, just for a chance to purchase the highly anticipated/hyped iPhone when it first arrived on the US market. I think the latest iPad is doing surprising well at \$600. or \$700. a pad. Hmmm.

23 November 2010

Foxconn Steps Up iPad Production, Digitimes Says

By Tiernan Ray

Yenting Chen with Digitimes this morning writes that Apple (AAPL) contract manufacturer Foxconn Electronics is adding production capacity in its factory in Chengdu, China, to produce an additional 40 million iPad units per year, citing anonymous sources.

That would seem to be a target for higher production rate than the current iPad assembly line, at Foxconn's facility in Shenzhen, China, where production is averaging 2.5 million units per month, or 30 million on an annualized basis, Chen notes.

iPad shipment volume is expected to surpass 7 million units in the current quarter, Chen writes, without citing a source.

**Panelist:**

1. Chairperson is responsible for the overall conduct and the proceedings of the discussion. He is to submit an overall report (within 24 hours), after reviewing all the evidence provided by the panelist.
2. A European Human Rights Activist:  
Guideline: Both researchers must find out and articulate from the position of the EU 1998 Human Rights Act
3. Foxconn, Public Relations Spokesperson  
Guideline: Both researchers must find out and articulate from the actual press statements of the Foxconn representatives and the measures taken by the factory.
4. A Family member of the deceased worker  
Guideline: Both researchers must find reflect the same persuasive sentiments of the family members; videos from Youtube available.
5. Apple Inc., Public Relations Spokesperson  
Guideline: Both researchers must find out and articulate from the actual press statements of Apple Inc.
6. China Government Official from the Trade Bureau  
Guideline: Both researchers must find out and articulate from the actual press statements from PRC, Trade Bureau
7. A medical practitioner (Psychologist)  
Guidelines: What is psychology, and what assessments would a psychologist provide in view of the workers. These are the issues both researchers must raise.
8. A Marxist College Professor  
Guidelines: Both researchers must summarize, the main cause of conflict in a society according to Marxism. How does a professor of theoretical Marxism view TNCs (Transnational Corporations)? These are some issues to be raised.
9. A local teenage consumer  
Guidelines: Both researchers must be able to reflect the sentiments of teenage consumers of Apple products after a primary survey.
10. AV Representatives:  
Guidelines: To record and download the files for review. 2 recorders in total; first for recording the panelist, the other to record the participants. AV reps are also to review the files and write a reflection documenting the advantages and areas for improvement.

**\*All notes, survey findings, drafts must be submitted as evidence for grading purposes.**

