

Manhattan.” And Nurse T explains that the “Ritchie Rich” private hospitals, often already profitable with wealthy patients and private donors, receive Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements at three times the rate her hospital gets for the same procedures.

Nurse T represents the failure as political as well. While she movingly documents many experiences with patients, one that stands out is the patient who listened to right-wing pundits such as Trump and drank a bottle of cleaning fluid, destroying his esophagus and doing serious permanent damage to his body. Even the best health care, she laments, cannot counteract this political poison.

Most vivid and important in the diary is simply Nurse T’s representation of her work and the traumatic toll it takes on her and her colleagues. Because they work in an infectious environment, the nurses stay in hotels and rarely see their families. Because they do not have proper equipment and because the hospital does not have up-to-date filtration and ventilation systems, the workplace is far more dangerous and deadly than it needs to be. Because politicians and the population at large do not take the pandemic seriously and promote basic precautions, they have to treat many more patients than they would need to otherwise. Because the hospital is ill-equipped, they cannot treat patients optimally.

The diary also highlights how we all share in the interests of gender equality and of women workers. It needs to be noted, while Nurse T overtly addresses racial and class inequalities, roughly 90% of nurses in the United States are women. It is no secret that women and their work have historically been devalued and less recognized.

Nurse T wants us to recognize that labor solidarity is human solidarity. The inhumane working conditions do not just hobble and hurt nurses, they impact all of us. We all share in labor’s interests.

Chan, Jenny, Mark Selden, and Pun Ngai. *Dying for an iPhone: Apple, Foxconn, and the Lives of China’s Workers*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2020. 273 pp. \$19.95 (paper).

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The iPhone is one of the best-selling consumer products of all time. Since 2007, when Steve Jobs introduced it on stage during one of Apple’s signature razzle-dazzle press events, it has taken the world by storm.

But the story of the iPhone’s rise and Apple’s stunning success with that product is inextricably linked to another company: Foxconn. Foxconn is an electronics manufacturing company based in Shenzhen, China, and it produces most of the world’s iPhones. As Apple has sold billions of phones around the world, Foxconn has expanded to meet the demand, hiring workers from largely rural areas across China and bringing them to its factory in Shenzhen. There, and at over forty other factories

across China, Foxconn workers live in prison-like conditions in company housing. In 2010, as demand for iPhones began to skyrocket and Apple put increasing pressure on its suppliers, workers at Foxconn began to commit suicide. By December 2010, eighteen workers at the Shenzhen plant attempted suicide. Fourteen succeeded.

Dying for an iPhone tells the story of Foxconn's workers: why they end up at Foxconn, what they find there, and their efforts to organize for a better life. It's a story of 21st century capitalism and globalization. It's also a story of the way an American company can squeeze its suppliers so hard in a relentless effort to turn a profit while the workers directly responsible for the production of the company's most popular product – but who do not work for the company – bear the cost.

Dying for an iPhone includes both personal interviews with Chinese workers and, zooming out, detailed statistics regarding the composition of Foxconn's workforce, including everything from the gender of workers (p. 124) to their migration patterns in order to work at Foxconn (p. 178). The personal interviews are compelling, and the study is extremely well-researched, but the big-picture charts and graphs sometimes seem designed for a quantitative research paper. Still, when the book tells a human story or provides the authors' own opinion regarding the working conditions at Foxconn, it is compelling.

The book is at its best when the authors take a position on Foxconn and Apple's labor issues. After detailing working conditions in Shenzhen and the changes Foxconn and other electronics manufacturing companies have wrought on Chinese society at large, the authors show their colors, pointing to the "anti-suicide nets and locked and barred windows surrounding the manufacturing buildings and worker dormitories" as a "grim reminder of worker hardship and the shared corporate failure of Foxconn, Apple, and other tech companies, as well as the failure of the Chinese state to guarantee worker rights" (p. 192). As a thesis statement, this is powerful and undeniable, but it seems tacked on to the research study that precedes it.

Dying for an iPhone's epilogue brings the narrative up to the present day, chronicling Apple's increasing efforts to "educate" its suppliers regarding human rights as well as the increasing pressure Foxconn's workers have put on Apple and Foxconn through anti-sweatshop protests and the "iSlave" campaign, all increasing consumer awareness about the link "between electronics manufacturing and the plight of workers" (p. 200). The book concludes with a look at Foxconn's promises to expand to Wisconsin with the aid of the Trump administration and Governor Scott Walker – grandiose promises that fizzled after Foxconn scaled back its commitment to hire thousands of American workers. The book would be useful to a class looking at global capitalism and its human toll on workers, especially those who remain invisible to Americans glued to their phones.