

# The Asian Reporter

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**MY TURN**

■ Wayne Chan



## A thwacking is worth a thousand words

Some of you may have run across a viral video of a trainer lining up a group of employees who work for a Chinese Bank and spanking them with a wooden paddle in front of their peers for poor performance evaluations.

It's a shocking display. It's demeaning. It's humiliating.

And yet, I actually have mixed feelings about it.

Of course, I'm sympathetic to those poor folks on stage getting thwacked on the backside. I don't see how any performance evaluation should ever incorporate corporal punishment as part of its training methods.

On the other hand ...

In this day and age, with all of life's inconveniences, politicians with too much political correctness (and some with too little), and all the little injustices in life, I can't deny the satisfaction I would receive if I had the power to administer at least a symbolic thwacking to some of those on my list. Yes, I have a list — it's a theoretical list, but a list is still a list.

So here goes ...

To the waitress in Shanghai who took so long to clean up a table for us to be seated that we started cleaning the table ourselves, which led to her complaining to us that we didn't do a good enough job. — Thwack!

To the salesperson who gave us a really outrageously high estimate to replace a window in our home only to find out the same exact brand window was 30 percent cheaper at our local Home Depot. — Thwack!

To my teenage son, who plays tennis and recently said, "I want to beat you in tennis while you're still young enough to play." — Thwack!

To the same teenage son, who a couple of weeks

later while playing me in tennis said, "You know, you don't have to hit the ball so soft to me." Which was followed up by me saying, "I wasn't trying to hit the ball soft to you!" — Thwack!

To my teenage son, yes, the same one, who while playing tennis with me a couple weeks later, smiled at me with a sheepish smile and said, "You're hitting the ball much harder now — good for you!" Which was followed by me saying, "I want you to stop talking to me now." — Thwack! (He's probably getting pretty sore by now.)

To a certain presidential candidate who was also a first lady, a senator, and a former Secretary of State, when asked if she will tell the truth to the American people, responded by saying, "I've always tried to." — Thwack!

To another presidential candidate who made a name for himself by firing people on a reality show, and has said — well, there are just *too many* to mention, so I'd like to administer a number of thwacks set to the beat of Queen's "Another One Bites the Dust." Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwackie, thwack, thwackie thwack!

Finally, a few thwacks reserved for some inanimate objects.

For the scale in my bathroom, which manages to show a higher number even after I've only eaten an apple, two walnuts, and a glass of skim milk for the day. — Thwack!

For the air conditioner in my home that seems to turn on randomly in the winter, but decided to stop working on the hottest day of the year. — Thwack!

Finally, for the GPS navigation system in my car, which seems to routinely reroute my drive to head into the middle of a lake or on a 36-hour journey to Milwaukee. — Thwack!

Now, I feel much better. Hand's a little sore; next time I'll wear gloves.

*Opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the authors and not necessarily those of this publication.*

### Farewell to VCRs: Japanese maker to shelve once-hit product

*Continued from page 5*

"To give up on keeping such records is like denying the history of humankind," said Norimatsu. "Production ending is going to present problems for some people."

Funai will continue selling VCRs through its subsidiary until inventory runs out and will provide maintenance services as long as it can, the company spokesman said.

Videotapes can still be converted using VHS-DVD recorder-players made by other, mostly Chinese, companies. Secondhand products abound in Tokyo's electronics district as well. But a time may come when all such options also disappear.

But many are shrugging off the VCR's disappearance as inevitable.

"I think only hardcore fans of old machines are going to be

using VCRs," said Isao Tokuhashi, author of *My Eyes Tokyo*, a book about newsmakers in Japan.

Like most people, Tokuhashi invested hours 10 years ago to transfer video he wanted to keep to DVD, and these days stores video in his iPhone and computer. He no longer owns a TV and has not recorded any shows recently, he added. "None of my friends still has one," he said of the VCR.