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# Asian action heroine wins



Michelle Yeoh has been a major name in Asian cinema for decades, but in the last few years she has spearheaded Asian representation in Hollywood, appearing in films such as *Crazy Rich Asians* and Marvel's *Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*. She has fought and won against discrimination in the industry because she refused to accept being looked down.



- Photo: Reuters

Multimedia

Icon of the Year 2022 –  
TIME



Video: Michelle Yeoh tells pianist to shut up while giving winning Golden Globe speech



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**A**T this year's Golden Globe awards, Michelle Yeoh gave a demonstration of her tough, no-nonsense character and her steely determination to do things her way that has propelled her to the top of Hollywood film industry in recent years.

Yeoh was still giving her acceptance speech after winning the award for Best Actress for her role in *Everything Everywhere All at Once* when the exit music started to play, to which she said "Shut up, please," and for good measure added, "I can beat you up, okay? And that's serious," before laughing and continuing her speech.

Yeoh was, of course, joking. People found her quip funny and admirable because her moment to bask in the glory in front of her peers was long overdue. It also sent a message, in this #MeToo era, that women and minority groups will not be looked down upon anymore as weak and invisible in the movie industry.

## Fighting stereotypes

ASIAN women have to contend with historical pressure to make themselves small from within their community and beyond, noted journalist Kimmy Yam. In her NBC News report, Yam quoted author Catherine Ceniza Choy, "We saw Michelle Yeoh take up space and insist on using her voice. We have to live with these stereotypes and expectations of being demure and diminutive. So to witness that on such a big stage of something like the Golden Globes was profound."

Nadia Kim, a sociology professor, said Yeoh's use of humour appealed to those who are more reserved by reflecting elegance. She also simultaneously represented other Asian women who are more compelled to speak their minds.

## You speak English!

YEOH has won numerous awards over her illustrious 40-year acting career, but the Golden Globe for Best Actress has special significance – she is only the second Asian actor to win one.

Acceptance speeches are usually a long thank-you message, but Yeoh used it as a platform to address long-standing issues of discrimination. "I remember when I first came to Hollywood. It was a dream come true until I got here, because, look at this face. I came here and was told, 'You are a minority,' and I'm like, 'no, that's not possible.'"

"And then someone said to me, 'You speak English!' I mean, forget about them not knowing Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Asia, India. And then I said, 'Yeah the flight here was about 13 hours long so I learned'."

## Asian representation

WHEN Chinese-Canadian actor Simu Liu was cast as the first Asian superhero in Marvel's *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*, he highlighted the issue of insufficient Asian representation in the West. He said, "That's really the power of representation: seeing yourself on screen and feeling like you're a part of this world, which for Asian children who have grown up

in the West hasn't always been the case."

Yeoh's Golden Globe victory adds momentum to the wave of Asian representation in Hollywood, a trend she hopes will continue. "I think we've broken that glass ceiling. I hope we've ninja-kicked it to hell, and it will never come back, like Humpty Dumpty together again," she told reporters at the Television Critics Association's winter press tour.

## Work ethics

HITTING 60 years is when many people want to retire. Yeoh turned 60 last year, and she laughed, saying "Yes! Finally! I'm cool!" She is still acting, and pocketing new awards too.

As one of the world's most famous martial arts actresses, Yeoh revealed her secrets in beating ageing, "I've learned some things over the years, and I'm more clever and smarter in how I can sustain my stamina. I'm as fit as I was before, because I know how to look after myself much better than when I was younger."

She said one thing people can learn from *Everything Everywhere*, where she plays a stressed-out laundromat owner, is that "older women can still have adventures!"

She also has impressive work ethics. Pierce Brosnan, who worked with Yeoh in the James Bond film *Tomorrow Never Dies*, described her as a "wonderful actress" who was "serious and committed about her work" and called her a "female James Bond".

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# Easing the e-waste woes



Waste is a by-product of affluent societies, and a particularly worrying kind is e-waste, coming from electronic and digital products. But this waste is also a veritable goldmine of recyclable value.

**E**-WASTE is growing fast – by two million tonnes a year. The Global E-waste Statistics Partnership (GESp) said 53.6 million tonnes of e-waste was produced worldwide in 2019. This has grown to 57 million tonnes in 2021 – heavier than the Great Wall of China.

By 2030, it will grow to 74 million tons a year. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called the e-waste problem a “mounting tsunami”, and it is not an exaggeration. Even disregarding the volume, e-waste is dangerous, as it contains toxic substances that will contaminate the soil and water when it is dumped into landfills, and jeopardise the health of workers that extract useful materials from them.

## What is e-waste?

THE international community calls e-waste “WEEE” – Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment – which includes items such as mobile phones, fridges, kettles, televisions, electric toys and sports equipment.

Hong Kong’s Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has a more detailed list that also includes air-conditioners, washing machines, computers, printers, scanners, monitors, and other video or audio equipment.

WEEE also encompasses smaller household appliances like fans, rice cookers, microwave ovens,

appliances, as well as power tools, electronic dictionaries, portable vacuum cleaners, game consoles and rechargeable batteries.

“WEEE contains harmful materials such as lead, mercury and greenhouse gases, which may cause harm to the environment and human health if not properly treated or disposed of,” warned the EPD.

We, the consumers, are partly to blame for the rise in e-waste, due to our insatiable demand for newer and better electronics.

Makers of these products are also culpable, Pascal Leroy, director general of the expert group the WEEE Forum, said, since they make products with shorter lifespans and limited repair options.

## Poor recycling rate

REDUCING, reusing and recycling are ways to deal with the ever-growing waste problem; recycling is particularly relevant in regard to e-waste.

e-Waste has a low recycling rate. The GESp said that of the 53.6 million tonnes produced worldwide in 2019, only 17.4 percent was recycled. The WEEE Forum estimated that the recycle rate in 2021 was 20 percent.

One particular aspect of the e-waste problem is mobile phones. Most people use one phone, but keep

their old models, for sentimental value or otherwise, and are usually not worth much. The WEEE predicted that 5.3 billion mobile phones would have become waste in 2022 due to being unused. Currently, one-third of the 16 billion mobile phones worldwide lie idle.

## Sitting on a gold mine

NOT only are mobile phones kept from being recycled, other e-products are too.

Surveys by Material Focus showed that in the UK, over 20 million unused but working electrical items are stuffed away in homes, totalling 5.63 billion (HK\$53 billion) in value. If each UK family sold their excess appliances, it would net them 200 (HK\$1,882).

“These devices offer many important resources that can be used in the production of new electronic devices or other equipment, such as wind turbines, electric car batteries or solar panels – all crucial for the green, digital transition to low-carbon societies,” said WEEE’s Magdalena Charytanowicz.

The problem with not recycling is that while we mine new minerals to make new products, we let precious resources stay locked up in old items, even as some are in short supply.

Smartphones, for example, contain 30 different elements, and some might run out in the next century.



These include arsenic and silver, as well as the more obscure indium, yttrium and tantalum, which are used in implants, electrodes for neon lights, hearing aids and pacemakers.

## Mine e-waste, not Earth

THE British Royal Society of Chemistry has called for a global effort to mine e-waste instead of the planet.

Elizabeth Ratcliffe of the organisation said, “Manufacturers and retailers need to take more responsibility. Like take-back schemes, meaning people can return their electronics to a retailer and be assured they will be recycled securely.”

“All this volatility in supply chains really just reinforces the fact that we need a circular economy for these materials. At the moment, we’re just mining them out of the ground constantly.”



• A recycling worker extracting parts from used electronic devices.

- Photo: Reuters

## E-waste in Hong Kong

HONG Kong produces about 70,000 tonnes of WEEE every year. For a long time, we have been exporting this waste to other places to let them handle the reuse or recovery of **valuable** material. But we will not be able to rely on this method in the long run due to falling demand and tightening controls in foreign markets.

As such, the government implemented the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WPRS) in 2018. Under this scheme, users and consumers of regulated electrical equipment (REE) – air-conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors – are provided with convenient recycling channels.

The scheme requires REE be directed to licensed recycling facilities for proper treatment and recycling, turning waste into resources.



## Learning English

VALUABLE is an adjective that means “worth a lot of money”, eg, “The gold necklace your grandparents gave you is valuable, so is a diamond ring.”

Valuable also means very useful or important, like the experience you gain while working as an intern, or tips given to the police that helps solve a crime.

The prefix “in-” means “not, opposite, or without”. So incompetent means “not competent”, incomprehensible means “not understandable”, and incomplete means “not complete”. However, the word “invaluable” does not mean “not valuable”. On the contrary, “invaluable” means “extremely useful”. The advice given to you by your parents

and teachers are invaluable, as is the knowledge you acquire from a university education.

A related word is “priceless”. The adjective suffix “-less” means “without”, hence “homeless” means having no home, and “childless” means having no children. But “priceless” does not mean “not worth anything”; instead, it means “extremely valuable or important”. A collection of ancient coins can be priceless, or an old family portrait.

If something is of no value, we say it is “valueless”. Hoarders amass many things at home, but these are mostly valueless items. The word “worthless” has the similar meaning of “having no practical or financial value”.

## What we can do

EVERYONE can help tackle the e-waste problem by returning old and unwanted devices for recycling.

Look around the house to see if you have any old mobile phones and unused electrical or electronic equipment like computers or printers. You may then contact the sellers of the REE to arrange for a free removal service, which they are required by law to provide. You may also use the Government’s free collection service by calling the recycling hotline at 2676 8888.

Ratcliffe said, “The thing we always say is reduce, reuse and recycle. So perhaps keep a phone for longer and maybe sell an old phone or give it to a relative. It will need everyone working together to scale up these processes and put the infrastructure in place, so we can all recycle our devices.”

Remember, e-waste is, in fact, highly valuable. “A ton of discarded mobile phones is richer in gold than a ton of gold ore,” noted Ruediger Kuehr, director of the UN’s Sustainable Cycles programme.

## WEEE · PARK

HONG Kong has a special facility, WEEE · PARK, that handles e-waste.

The plant, located on a 3-hectare site in EcoPark, Tuen Mun, “adopts advanced technologies to turn regulated WEEE into valuable secondary raw materials through a series of detoxification, dismantling and recycling processes,” the government explained.

Developed by the government, the plant has been in operation since October 2017. It has the capacity to process 30,000 tonnes of regulated WEEE every year.

## E-waste harms women and children workers

THE World Health Organisation said the illegal processing of old electrical or electronic devices are putting the health of children, adolescents and expectant mothers worldwide at risk.

Some e-waste are dumped at landfills, but much more are illegally shipped to low and middle-income countries where informal workers pick through, dismantle, or use acid baths to extract valuable metals and materials from the discarded items.

WHO said that such informal waste workforce involves 12.9 million women, some pregnant, and more than 18 million youngsters globally, some as young as five.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, “In the same way the world has rallied to protect the seas and their ecosystems from plastic and microplastic pollution, we need to rally to protect our most valuable resource – the health of our children – from the growing threat of e-waste.”

## Multimedia

### Turning waste into resources



Video: Wasted – 50 million tonnes of e-waste every year



### INKY instant exercise



## Listening comprehension



- Photo: Reuters

Scan the QR code to listen to a summary of the part of this article about the rise in e-waste.



Download the PDF at [inky.hkej.com](http://inky.hkej.com) to complete the listening comprehension exercise based on this audio.



# Non-verbal communication

**Y**OU normally think that communication is all about talking and listening, but communication actually includes a lot of body cues as well. Your facial expressions, eye movements, hand gestures and even your proximity can say as much – sometimes even more – than what you claim when you open your mouth. Given the HKDSE's Paper 4 involves a group discussion, being aware of non-verbal communication will greatly improve your performance while conversing.



## Facial expressions

A GOOD conversation always involves looking someone in the eye, and that means the face is the first thing a person looks at. It is hard to change a facial expression intentionally, so how you look often is how you feel.

In a conversation, whether you like it or not, how you feel affects the mood of the whole group, as well as what you are saying. Imagine being asked how you are feeling, and you answer “I feel great” – if you are smiling, then it is a straightforward answer, but if you are frowning, you sound sarcastic. It is safe to say that a group conversation first begins with your face, long before you even start talking.

## Gestures

WHEN talking, people also have a tendency to move their arms to emphasise things. This is natural and can actually help keep people engaged in a discussion since such movements will catch their eyes. It is better than just standing stock still. Of course, it is best to be polite where possible. Pointing at someone is rarely taken well, as it interferes with their sense of personal space. On the other hand, leaning forward in your seat shows you are interested in what is being said.


There are other deadly gestures that can kill the mood of a conversation, even if you do not consider this ahead of time. Visibly looking at your watch is not helpful, for one. Nothing makes a discussion worse than someone signalling to the world that the only thing on their mind is getting out of a group. Rolling your eyes also shows disinterest in another way – doing so tells others that you have a different opinion, but that you have no intention of telling others, which helps no one.

## Proxemics

THIS is just another way of saying “personal space”, and controlling this space can either raise or lower the tension in a group. One’s perception of what is their own space changes according to various factors, including the size of the group or familiarity with the others. Naturally, in an exam group discussion, it is unlikely that you will be close to anyone, so it is best to respect the space everyone sets up for themselves. Getting too close to others in such a case can make people more nervous, which will make it hard for anyone to concentrate and have a good discussion.

## Body posture and eye contact

HOW you arrange yourself on your seat expresses how you feel, so it is important to sit and look willing to have a talk. If you are hunched up, with your arms crossed the whole time, it is signalling that you are closing yourself off from others. Crossed legs is often also considered a sign of being defensive. While these are not deal-breakers in and of themselves, it is worth paying attention to how you are acting. Even if you feel more comfortable, it may come at the expense of others.

A similar factor is how you are using your eyes. Eye contact when talking is a basic courtesy, but even paying attention to a speaker addressing the crowd is good manners. Averting your gaze while speaking at someone might make you look dishonest, and looking around bored definitely is the last thing you should do. 



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