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# **The Bamboo Pages: A Textual Analysis of Marvel Comics Justification to Limit East Asian Advancements in The American Labor Force**

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## **Abstract**

The bamboo ceiling, a term coined by author Jane Hyun in 2005, describes the metaphorical barricade in the United States that restricts professionals of East Asian descent from ascending to management and executive positions. Marvel Comics, which currently dominates the comic book publication industry, features very little mainstream superheroes of East Asian descent, and it overwhelmingly features those superheroes as contemporary versions of racist caricatures from the 19th and 20th centuries. Through the lens of critical culture theory, this presentation's objective is to demonstrate how the depictions of four East Asian superheroes, all significant to Marvel Comics in their own ways, explicitly reiterate and reinforce the viewpoint that East Asian males are inherently unsuitable for leadership. The superheroes' dialogues, likenesses, and roles in plots in each of their early renderings and in their latest renderings are exhibited as illustrated versions of racist ideologies maintained to curtail East Asian American progress in the labor force. Much like the bamboo ceiling, the bamboo pages are blockades that impede Asian American men's full integration into American society. The pages erroneously present the marginalization of Asian Americans as not only natural, but also the position in which Asian Americans actually prefer.

**Keywords:** Asian, Asian American, United States, China, Japan, Korea, superhero, Marvel, comic books, race, critical cultural theory, work, labor