

# A FIRST IN ASIA: THE STORY OF YU MEI-NU AND TAIWAN'S SAME-SEX MARRIAGE BILL

## 亞洲第一：尤美女與臺灣同 婚法案的故事

*Taiwan is the first country in Asia where same-sex couples can legally marry. The author of this book describes the personal experience of legislator Yu Mei-Nu, a key figure in the same-sex marriage movement who promoted the marriage equality bill.*

After an era of taboo, doubt, hostility, and homophobia, Taiwan at last officially passed the Marriage Equality Act in 2019, becoming the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. The turbulent and often painful history of the bill is not only of tremendous historical significance to Taiwan, but also serves as a valuable precedent.

*A First in Asia* focuses on Taiwanese legislator Yu Mei-Nu, a key sponsor of the same-sex marriage bill. A skilled and empathetic listener with a legal background, she has long been involved in human and women's legal rights. The book first describes her experiences with the women's movement, then systematically details her involvement with the LGBT movement and the ups and downs that accompanied her staunch support for the same-sex marriage bill during her tenure as a legislator. In the face of a particularly strong backlash from anti-LGBTQ forces, Yu Mei-Nu had to contend with government, legislative, and party pressure. She nonetheless did her best to communicate with all in a rational manner, successfully navigating various hazards along the way. Author Chen Chao-Ju's detailed narrative gives readers a close-up



**Category:** Reportage

**Publisher:** SpringHill

**Date:** 10/2023

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**Pages:** 280

**Length:** 94,000 characters

(approx. 61,100 words in English)

look at previously untold stories of conflict, coordination, and trade-offs that occurred to make this “first in Asia” bill possible.

This book provides both a historical summary of the same-sex marriage movement and tells the story of Yu Mei-Nu’s personal involvement in supporting the bill. Despite the tears, conflicts, and confrontations she encountered on this journey to defend LGBTQ rights, for her, this is a story about remembering the lives and personal struggles of countless individuals. The legalization of same-sex marriage is an undoubtable milestone in Taiwan’s pluralistic democracy, granting all those who love one another a basic right – to marry and remain together for the rest of their lives.

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Chen Chao-Ju is a graduate of the Department of Anthropology at National Taiwan University. She has worked for *The Capital Morning Post*, *Independence Morning Post*, EBC Super TV, and other media outlets. Currently a freelance writer, she is the author of numerous books.