

ZHOU DAN

b. January 19, 1974

“Law and policy always involve compromise and sometimes being a progressive means taking things one step at a time.”



One generation removed from the persecution of gays under the People's Republic of China, today's gay Chinese encounter different obstacles than their American counterparts. Many Chinese believe that homosexuality exists only in the Western world. The absence of legal protection and the threat of social isolation keep most Chinese GLBT individuals in the closet.

GLBT activist and attorney Zhou Dan came out to his friends in 1998 and the media in 2003. A champion of GLBT rights in China, Zhou writes articles on Chinese gay and lesbian Web sites. Although many GLBT Chinese use pseudonyms, Zhou uses his real name. After revealing his sexuality to a Shanghai newspaper in 2003, Zhou appeared across China in newspapers and magazines and on television. Earlier that year, he established the Shanghai Hotline for Sexual Minorities.

In 2004, Zhou attended Yale Law School's China Law Center as a visiting scholar. In 2006, he taught China's first graduate class on homosexuality at Fudan University in Shanghai.

As a lawyer, Zhou fights for the GLBT community and people living with HIV/AIDS. He successfully lobbied the Ministry of Health not to bar HIV-positive people from government jobs. Zhou founded and serves as Executive Director of Yu Dan, the first Chinese organization promoting the recognition and acceptance of gay rights throughout mainland China.

In 2005, Zhou was featured in Tetu, a French gay and lesbian magazine. He also was profiled in Time magazine as China's gay pioneer. In 2006, Equality Forum named Zhou the recipient of the 11th Annual International Role Model Award.



**Zhou Dan is China's Gay Pioneer.
A Shanghai attorney, he is the founder
and Executive Director of the first
national Chinese GLBT organization.**

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