

ulsterman

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Newbie



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Excuse me if I find some of these belated awakenings from the American Zen community rather hilarious. I knew personally several of these rascals and almost everyone was abundantly aware of their shenanigans as early as 1973. Now I have never heard a Zen teacher try to push the this is part of your training bit when he goes on the hustle. I can remember decades ago an argument between Eido Shimano and Taizan Maezumi before they were given the title Roshi that happened in a back room of Zenshuji Temple in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles . Both of them were arguing which one of them should be given the title Roshi first from the two teachers Yasutani Roshi and Nakagawa Roshi. This gave me a clear indication that neither one should be given any kind of transmission until they got their act together. You have to remember that most of these guys came over to the United States in the 1960s when sexual promiscuity, drugs and all other sorts of things were involved. Most of the cases I knew, almost all of them of sexual involvement with Zen teachers was fully mutual. Everyone was also aware of several of the teachers having very serious alcohol abuse problems. It is interesting to note and something that I brought up over 25 years ago that some of the female Zen teachers of today were intimate with the Roshis who gave him transmission. One of them was perfectly happy to look the other way until the teacher got his grubby little hands on her 16-year-old daughter. Then she became horrified at the terrible situation and renounced her relationship with them but kept the title. In this case she didn't have relations with them, but there are several others who did.

None of the staff would have flown in Japan, in fact, I know of one Roshi got thrown in prison for fraud. Guess what the old coot showed up after's his prison term with a young beautiful translator in Los Angeles. Now Eido Shimano Evidently is by far and away the worst offender, basically some have charged him with rape. When I was in Los Angeles in the early to mid-70s there were six Zen teachers from Japan and one from Korea who visited frequently. I knew that every one of those except one was involved with his students there was no secret there.

I was quite outspoken at the time and was persona non-gratta at quite a few Zen centers. Then some of them had the chutzpah to come back to me later whining that it all happened. My usual line which hasn't changed in 30 years if you have to be responsible for your own actions and don't accept anything in religion that you wouldn't accept in the workplace. In fact I had a confrontation with the illustrious Chogyam Trungpa when his group had rented the meditation center I was in charge of. It was obvious to me he was rip roaring drunk and I told him that. "Don't give me any of that crazy wisdom bullshit my ancestors invented whiskey and I know a drunk when I see one."

Back in Japan most of the Roshi's have wives and those were strong women who were not going to put up with but debauchery .. I was sorry to hear about Dennis's escapades, but after all his teachers had the self-control of a bull elephant in rut., So the Bodhi nut didn't fall far from the tree. Also let's face it in Japan women and men didn't practice together. One of my teachers used to say Sun face Buddha, Moon face Buddha. And put them on the other side of the room from each other. He was never accused of doing anything other than giving a white guy the title Zen master. That would be me.

I used to be a columnist in the Buddhist magazine in the 1990s and I brought up all these problems there were scores of women writing in calling me everything but a Reuben sandwich that I might suggest that some of this was going on and that some women were climbing the Dharma ladder one bed sheet at a time.

If you give someone absolute power the chances of them abusing it are almost 100%. I don't believe in Zen centers mixing women with man, bad idea, real bad idea. People should practice at home and come just for meditation and most of meditation should be at home. One of the problems with Zen students in America is that they don't have the vaguest idea of the philosophy and metaphysics of Buddhism. They're doing some meditation and chanting some gobbledygook that even the Japanese can not understand because it's a phonetic rendering of the Chinese version of the Sanskrit.

I have to say I'm not at all impressed with Stephen Batchelor though he writes a good book. Susan Blackwell evidently likes hippie lettuce a lot, and of course Sam experimented with LSD. None of this impresses me Buddhism is an eight fold path not just meditation. I am even less a fan of Christian Zen, doing meditation sure but it's not Zen. I have to tell you a lot of people who are involved in Zen centers are very unstable and probably shouldn't be doing meditation and definitely should not be doing them in conjunction with drugs

Signature

The competition between different stories, whether based on religion or ideology, is far less critical to the prospects for peace in the world, and to the emergence of a global civilization, than the competition between different stories about stories between absolutist/objectivist and relativist/constructivist ideas about the nature of human truth. A pluralistic civilization can only be built with a great amount of tolerance,. W.T. Anderson

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