

## Zen Buddhist Master, 105, Accused Of Sexual Harassment

Posted: February 12, 2013



Mount Baldy, CA — Joshu Sasaki, a revered Buddhist master who has taught in the United States since 1965, has been accused of groping female students for decades during private training sessions.

Sasaki, age 105, has been teaching Zen Buddhism primarily in the Los Angeles area since moving to America from Japan in 1962.

According to the London's *Daily Mail*, the elderly master's alleged sexual misconduct has been something of an open secret:

"An independent council of Buddhist leaders recently admitted to ignoring years of accusations against the famously charismatic 'roshi' ...

"Accusations have been circulating since the early 70s and in 1997 members of the Mount Baldy Zen Center put forward a letter to the then 90-year-old Mr. Sasaki, with no consequences.

"It was not until a letter was published on the popular practitioners' website *Sweeping Zen* in October last year that the true story of the abusive Zen master began to unfold."

In a post on the *Sweeping Zen website*, Buddhist monk Eshu Martin set forth these allegations:

"[Joshu Sasaki's] career of misconduct has run the gamut from frequent and repeated non-consensual groping of female students during interview, to sexually coercive after hours 'tea' meetings, to affairs and sexual interference in the marriages and relationships of his students ... For decades, Joshu Roshi's behavior has been ignored, hushed up, downplayed, justified, and defended by the monks and students that remain loyal to him."

According to the *New York Times*, "Women say they were encouraged to believe that being touched by Mr. Sasaki was part of their Zen training."

The *Times* notes that senior priests under Joshu Sasaki are conducting an inquiry into the allegations. Sasaki himself is apparently in declining health and is no longer actively teaching Zen Buddhism.

Are you surprised that there is alleged sexual harassment among the Buddhist leadership?

[Image credit: [ngelight](#)]

