

Women in the Sangha

Evidence

- Both men and women have had roles as Buddhist monks and lay devotees
 - *bhikkus* (monks) and *bhikkhunis* (nuns)
 - *upasaka* (male lay devotee) and *upasika* (female lay devotee)
- However female Buddhists are considered less than male Buddhists
- Also, some countries don't have any female Buddhists, like Thailand and other places where Theravada Buddhism is the majority
- In Sri Lanka, debate about ordaining women as Buddhist nuns has recently intensified
- In the 80s and 90s, calls for Buddhist women in Sri Lanka to be ordained grew
 - *Bhikkus* defended their declination of ordaining by saying that the people who ordained the nuns were Mahayana and not Theravada, therefore making the ordinations invalid
- Additionally, some of the *dasa sil matavo* declined ordination, saying that ordination would make the status of women in Buddhism even lower