

Sacramento Book Review



Below is a clipping of your book review that appeared in the January 09 issue of the *Sacramento Book Review*. Thank you for sending us the book.

The Art of the Public Grovel

By Susan Wise Bauer

Princeton University Press, \$26.95,

352 pages

The act of confession is either a public act (for Evangelicals) or a private one (for Catholics). Bauer explains the history of confession, starting with the 1215 Forth Lateran Council and ending with Oprah's couch. The many examples she brings are a who's who of sexual sin, and reading through them is like reliving the events again. Some men (and almost all of the examples are men

- Bauer explains why) are able to use the act of public confession to overcome the stigma of their bad act (Bill Clinton), others cannot (Jim Bakker). The use of confession and all its religious ties has become an important part of public life in the last century, and there doesn't seem to be any change coming. People interested in the reasons why confession is different than apology, and how to tell the difference the next time a Senator is caught in a men's room with a "wide stance" will enjoy this humorous and fascinating book. Wannabe politicians and public figures should keep a copy for reference on hand for the almost inevitable slip up.

