



# Spoils of the Kingdom: Clergy Misconduct and Religious Community

*Anson Shupe*

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## **Spoils of the Kingdom: Clergy Misconduct and Religious Community** Anson Shupe

In *Spoils of the Kingdom*, Anson Shupe investigates clergy misconduct as it has recently unfolded across five faith-based groups. Looking at episodes of abuse in the Roman Catholic, Mormon, African American Protestant, white Evangelical Protestant, and First Nations communities, *Spoils of the Kingdom* tackles hard questions not only about the sexual abuse of women and children, but also about economic frauds perpetrated by church leaders (including embezzlement, mis-represented missions, and outright theft) as well as cases of excessively authoritarian control of members health, lifestyles, employment, and politics. Drawing on case evidence, Shupe employs classical and modern social exchange theories to explain the institutional dynamics of clergy misconduct. He argues that there is an implicit contract of reciprocity and compliance between congregants and religious leaders that, when amplified by the charismatic awe often associated with religious authorities, can lead to misconduct.

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