

## Standing Out of Sight: A History of Denominational Statistics in the Southern Baptist Convention 1882-2009



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*(Dr. Pat Hegmann)*

## STANDING OUT OF SIGHT: A HISTORY OF DENOMINATIONAL STATISTICS IN THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION 1882-2009

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Bookmark Publishing (NY), United States, 2016. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 226 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. #147;Accurate statistics are at the base of every advanced movement,? #151;l. J. Van Ness, 1918. Southern Baptists have been compiling statistics about themselves for nearly 130 years, ranging from the numbers of baptisms to the number of filmstrip projectors in each church. The kind of information gathered and the methods of collection have changed over the years, but the importance of doing so has not. Data collection helps individual churches, associations, and the Southern Baptist Convention determine where they are, how they can best allocate resources, and their choices about shaping their future. From the days when geographical distances meant sending numerous letters to churches whose data was incomplete or late to the use of sophisticated software programs and the Internet, Cliff Tharp traces the history of the denomination?s statistics-gathering process. More than just dry facts and figures, the process itself, as well as the kind of information sought, tells us much about the history and inner workings of the Southern Baptist Convention. Gathering information has not been without controversy, and indeed there is nothing glamorous about the work involved, prompting Van Ness to write that #147;the man who does it has to stand out of sight.? As the man who stood out of sight for many years, Tharp presents an insider?s view of the data-gathering process and a compelling argument for its continuing importance. You?ll see Southern Baptist history through a different lens and learn why statistics will play an even more significant role in the denomination?s future.

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