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## Southern Baptist Politics: Authority and Power in the Restructuring of an American Denomination

By Arthur Emery Farnsley

Pennsylvania State University Press, United States, 2008. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 230 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*.Unlike other recent studies of the Southern Baptists, *Southern Baptist Politics* was written after the culmination of the Baptist battles of the 1980s, when Fundamentalists had effectively taken control of the denomination. It also considers the SBC not simply as a denomination but as an organization with characteristics similar to other voluntary associations in American society an approach that promises to be useful for the study of other religious groups in America. Arthur Farnsley concludes that the SBC, as an American denomination, had within itself the seeds of pragmatism and individualism that characterize most American voluntary organizations. Of primary interest to Farnsley are the crucial issues of authority and power. Taking his cue from Paul Harrison's classic study, *Authority and Power in the Free Church Tradition*, Farnsley considers how authority has traditionally been exercised within the SBC, and how Fundamentalists maneuvered within this existing authority structure to seize power. According to Farnsley, disgruntled Fundamentalists soon discovered that they could exploit the democratic elements within the SBC polity to their advantage. So successful were they...



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