

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 12-7809**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

JAMES PRESTON SMITH,

Defendant - Appellant.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Southern  
District of West Virginia, at Beckley. Irene C. Berger,  
District Judge. (5:99-cr-00161-1; 5:09-cv-01257)

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Submitted: February 26, 2013

Decided: February 28, 2013

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Before MOTZ, WYNN, and DIAZ, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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James Preston Smith, Appellant Pro Se. John J. Frail, Assistant  
United States Attorney, Charleston, West Virginia, for Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

James Preston Smith seeks to appeal the district court's order adopting the magistrate judge's recommendation and denying as successive his 28 U.S.C.A. § 2255 (West Supp. 2012) motion. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2006). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2006). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the motion states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. Slack, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Smith has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal

contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED