

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 21-6053**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

DEAN PAUL STITZ,

Defendant - Appellant.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, at Charlotte. Robert J. Conrad, Jr., District Judge. (3:16-cr-00083-RJC-1; 3:19-cv-00141-RJC)

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Submitted: October 19, 2021

Decided: October 21, 2021

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Before GREGORY, Chief Judge, AGEE, Circuit Judge, and SHEDD, Senior Circuit Judge.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Randolph Marshall Lee, Monroe, North Carolina, for Appellant.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Dean Paul Stitz seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 motion. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B). 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). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists could find the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims debatable or wrong. *See Buck v. Davis*, 137 S. Ct. 759, 773-74 (2017). 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. *Gonzalez v. Thaler*, 565 U.S. 134, 140-41 (2012) (citing *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)).

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Stitz 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*