Dr. Stephen D. Smith bio

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Dr. Stephen D. Smith, Andrew J. and Erna Finci Viterbi Endowed Executive Director of USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education, holds the UNESCO Chair on Genocide Education. He is also Adjunct Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California and a member of USC Campus Climate Committee. Dr. Smith is committed to making the testimony of survivors of the Holocaust and of other crimes against humanity a compelling voice for education and action. His leadership at the Institute is focused on finding strategies to optimize the effectiveness of the testimonies for education, research, and advocacy purposes.

A theologian by training, Smith has a particular interest in the impact of the Holocaust on religious and philosophical thought and practice. His dissertation, *Trajectory of Memory*, examines how Holocaust survivor narrative – and in particular, visual history – has developed over time and shapes the way in which the implications of the Holocaust are understood. He founded the UK Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire, England and cofounded the Aegis Trust for the prevention of crimes against humanity and genocide. He was also the inaugural Chairman of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, which runs the National Holocaust Memorial Day in the United Kingdom.

In October 2013 Smith was named the inaugural UNESCO Chair on Genocide Education. Smith will collaborate with genocide researchers and educators around the world to develop educator training and multidisciplinary programs that foster learning about the causes and effects of mass violence.

Smith is involved in memorial projects around the world. He is currently a delegate of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and was the project director responsible for the creation of the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre in Rwanda and trustee of the South Africa Holocaust and Genocide Foundation.

In conjunction with his work at USC Shoah Foundation, Smith has also served as producer or co-producer on many of the film projects emanating from the Institute, including *Finding Oscar*, a documentary from filmmaker Ryan Suffern and The Kennedy/Marshall Company that follows the investigation into the Dos Erres massacre in Guatemala that is currently in theatres; *The Last Goodbye,* a 20-minute room-scale virtual reality testimony that debuted at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival featuring the powerful testimony of Pinchas Gutter; and *Auschwitz*, a 15-minute documentary on the history of the Nazi death camp that was shown at the 70th -anniversary commemoration of the camp’s liberation in 2015.

As an international speaker, Smith lectures widely on issues relating to the history and collective response to the Holocaust, genocide, and crimes against humanity. His publications include *Never Again! Yet Again!: A Personal Struggle with the Holocaust and Genocide* and *The* *Holocaust* *and* *the* *Christian* *World: Reflections on the Past, Challenges for the Future*. In recognition of his work, Smith has become a member of the Order of the British Empire and received the Interfaith Gold Medallion. He also holds two honorary doctorates, Honorary Doctor of Letters from Nottingham Trent University and Honorary Doctor of Laws from University of Leicester.

**Publications**

* *The* *Holocaust* *and* *the* *Christian* *World: Reflections on the Past, Challenges for the Future (Continuum International Publishing Group 2000)*
* *Never Again! Yet Again!: A Personal Struggle with the Holocaust and Genocide* (Gefen 2009)
* *No Going Back, Letters to Pope Benedict XVI* (Quill Press 2009)
* *The Void; In Search of Memory Lost* (forthcoming