

Stephen D. Smith

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Education

D.Phil. (Math.)	Oxford University	1973
M.Sc. (Math.)	Oxford University	1971
S.B.(Math.,Lit.)	Mass. Inst. of Tech.	1970

Biographical Sketch

Stephen D. Smith was born on 11 June 1948 in Houston, Texas. He grew up in south Texas, beginning college at St. Mary's University in San Antonio in 1965, transferring to M.I.T. in 1967, and graduating in 1970. He was then chosen a Rhodes Scholar, and pursued graduate study in mathematics at Oxford University, obtaining the degrees of M.Sc. in 1971 and D.Phil. in 1973. His thesis, written under the supervision of Professor Graham Higman, won the Oxford Senior Mathematical Prize.

In 1973 he was appointed H. L. Bateman Research Instructor at Caltech, and subsequently Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1975. There he was promoted to Associate Professor in 1979, and to Professor in 1984. He served as Associate Head and Acting Head of the Department during 1996–1998. He became Professor Emeritus at UIC in 2007.

Smith directed UIC's 1985-86 emphasis year "Computers in Mathematical Research" (including the December 1985 Chicago conference "Computers in Algebra"). He has held visiting positions at the Universities of Giessen, Caltech, Notre Dame, Illinois-Urbana, and All Souls College in Oxford. He has served on or chaired various panels for the AMS and NSF.

Smith's research has primarily been in finite group theory; with some interests in combinatorics, computer science, and algebraic topology. His joint work with Michael Aschbacher, *The Classification of Quasithin Groups*, completed the classification of the finite simple groups. The subsequent "outline" book written jointly with Aschbacher, Richard Lyons, and Ronald Solomon, *The Classification of Finite Simple Groups*, won the 2012 Steele Prize for Exposition of the American Mathematical Society.

Smith married Judith L. Baxter in 1980, and has two adult stepchildren, Dallas Williams and Dawn Williams Peck.

Students and Postdoctoral Scholars

Smith supervised the theses of Peter Johnson (Ph.D. 1988), Steve Cohen (1989), Tony Fisher (with George Glauberman at U.Chicago, 1991), Andrew Mathas (1993), Matthew Bardoe and Kristin Umland (1996), and Phil Grizzard (2007).

Smith obtained shared funding between UIC and NSF and NSA for a number of postdoctoral researchers: Alex Ryba in 1987, Satoshi Yoshiara in 1987-88, and Don White in 1987-89. In addition, Smith worked with Yoav Segev during visits to UIC in the summers of 1984 and 1985; and worked via correspondence with Helmut Völklein during 1985-87. Masato Sawabe was funded by Japanese sources for postdoctoral study during 1999-2001.