

YOLANDA LITTLEJOHN, North Carolina
Sister of Jacquetta Thomas,
murdered in North Carolina in
1991

Yolanda Littlejohn's sister, Jacquetta Thomas, was murdered in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1991. Two men were arrested for her murder. One was never convicted; the other was tried, convicted, and sentenced to life in prison. In 2009, he was exonerated and released from prison when DNA evidence proved that he could not have been the killer. The murder of Jacquetta Thomas is now a cold case – an unsolved homicide.

Yolanda has been active in the effort to repeal her state's death penalty and has spoken to groups of victims, telling her story and discussing the effects of exoneration on victims' families.

"I was always on the fence about the death penalty until my sister was murdered. People thought I might be for the death penalty then, but I felt that that would be another life lost. I didn't think the other family should have to suffer like we did – that's not justice in my eyes. Of course, when we learned that the man who had been convicted of my sister's murder could not actually have done it, I felt all this even more strongly. What if he had been executed and then it turned out he was innocent? It's hard enough as it is. For us now, 18 years later, it's like my sister has been murdered all over again and we're back at the beginning, because we have no clue who took her life."

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Yolanda Littlejohn



Jacquetta Thomas