



# Chasing Justice: My Story of Freeing Myself After Two Decades on Death Row for a Crime I Didn't Commit

By Kerry Max Cook

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## Chasing Justice: My Story of Freeing Myself After Two Decades on Death Row for a Crime I Didn't Commit By Kerry Max Cook

Kerry Cook is an innocent man who wrongly served two decades in Texas's notorious death house for the brutal 1977 rape and murder of 21-year-old Linda Jo Edwards. His struggle for freedom is said to be one of the worst cases of police and prosecutorial misconduct in American history.

In the summer of 1977, Cook was staying in Tyler, TX. He met an attractive young woman named Linda Edwards and was invited back to her apartment for a drink and left his fingerprints on the sliding glass door. Four days later, Ms. Edwards was found brutally murdered. When the police dusted for prints, they found Cook's and immediately arrested him. Edward Jackson testified that Cook confessed to the murder during a jailhouse conversation. Jackson was set free, only to kill again several years later. Cook, on the other hand, was convicted and sentenced to death.

He was thrown into a world for which no one could be prepared, and he survived beatings, sexual abuse, and depression; all the while, he fought against a justice system that was determined to keep him quiet and loath to admit a mistake. Through the work of a crusading group of lawyers who forced a series of retrials, his case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ordered the case be reconsidered. It wasn't until the spring of 1999 that Cook was finally able to put the nightmare behind him: long-suppressed DNA evidence had linked James Mayfield, Linda Edwards's ex-lover, to the crime.

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