

Jennifer Thompson  
co-author, *Picking Cotton*

Jennifer Thompson, a native North Carolinian and mother of twenty two year old triplets, has become an outspoken voice on the need for judicial reform to reduce wrongful incarcerations. Her strong convictions were born of a brutal rape she suffered as a twenty-two year old college student. It was her compelling testimony in that case that sent a young man to prison, not once, but twice, for a crime he did not commit. That man, Ronald Cotton, was eventually freed thanks in large part to his persistence in proclaiming his innocence and the development of sophisticated DNA tests. Jennifer credits Ronald with teaching her the healing power of forgiveness and grace. Together they have successfully convinced state legislatures to compensate the wrongfully convicted and enact eyewitness identification laws shown to reduce wrongful convictions. She is now a member of the Actual Innocence Commission, advisory committee for Active Voices, and a member of the Constitution Project and Hidden Voices.