

## Almost 50 years after brutal rape and murder, DNA cracks cold case, suspect commits suicide before conviction

For 47 years, the case remained cold, with little evidence of who assaulted and murdered [20-year-old Jody] Loomis — until last year, when a DNA sample from a coffee cup matched semen found on Loomis's boot. Police said they used genetic genealogy to trace it to Terrence Miller, who was charged last April in her death.

On [November 9], though, just hours before a jury convicted Miller of first-degree murder, the 78-year-old defendant died in an apparent suicide at his home, the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office said in a news release.

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According to investigators, the DNA sample from the cup was the exact match to the sample found on Loomis's boot.

Laura Martin, Miller's public defender, argued the DNA sample on the boot was dubious and the lab's procedures caused a "miscarriage of justice."

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At 1 p.m. on [November 9], three hours after sheriff's deputies found Miller dead, the jury convicted him of first-degree murder. A follow-up hearing is set for Dec. 17, where the prosecution will argue Miller's family should pay fines in the case.

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In a statement to The Post, Martin reasserted her client's innocence, adding the entire situation, including Loomis's murder, is a "terrible tragedy."

"Death seemed preferable to letting a jury decide a verdict on tainted evidence," she said.

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