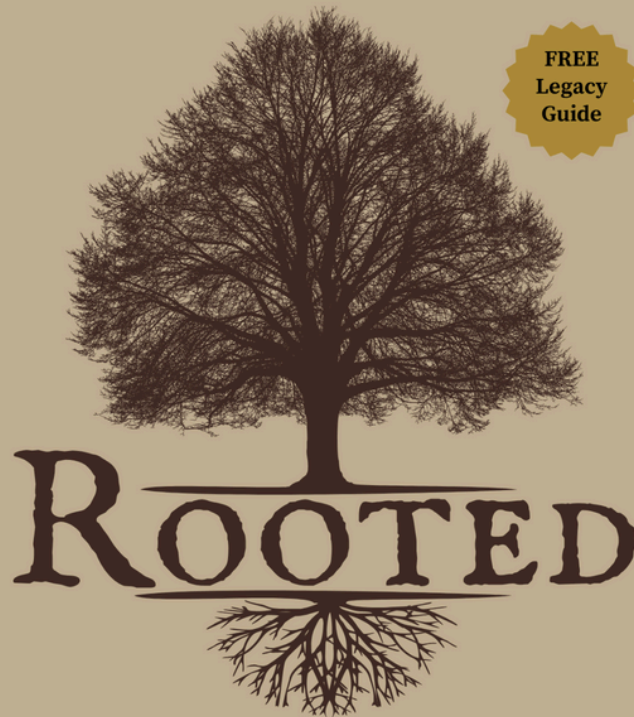


*"There are years that bring joy, and there are years that
bring sorrow; the heart remembers them all."
— Zora Neale Hurston*

FREE
Legacy
Guide



How a Daughter of the South Traced Her
Bloodline Back 44,000 Years and Calls Us to
Remember Who We Really Are

Includes Full Black & White Photos

MICHELL F. PULLIAM

Rooted

Michell F. Pulliam
A Cultural Memoir
Press Kit

PRESS RELEASE

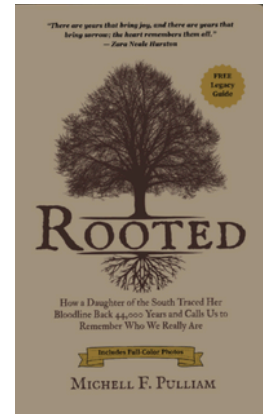
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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South Carolina Native Traces Her Maternal Line Back 44,000 Years in New Book Honoring the Women Who Carried Her



Cover of *Rooted: How a Daughter of the South Traced Her Bloodline Back 44,000 Years and Calls Us to Remember Who We Really Are*

Eastover, SC — When Eastover native Michell F. Pulliam examined a cousin’s DNA results during a family reunion, she had no idea it would lead her on a 44,000-year journey into her maternal ancestry. What began as curiosity evolved into *Rooted*—a deeply personal memoir exploring legacy, identity, and spiritual reclamation.

Through mitochondrial DNA research, Pulliam discovered that her maternal line traces directly to the Hadza and Sandawe peoples of East Africa, placing her within one of the oldest living maternal haplogroups on Earth.

“I thought I was writing a family memoir,” Pulliam says. “But it became something bigger. A remembering, a homecoming.”

Rooted moves from shotgun houses in rural South Carolina to sacred landscapes in East Africa, honoring generations of women—especially her grandmother Caroline, her mother Mary, and her seven aunts—who carried strength in silence and dignity in motion.

As part of Black History Month, *Rooted* offers a deeply personal lens into ancestral memory, cultural inheritance, and the often-unrecorded stories carried by Black women across generations.

The book has begun to gain local momentum. Pulliam was recently featured alongside other Midlands writers in *The Post and Courier* / *Free Times* roundup highlighting new books by local authors, and she hosted a successful author event at All Good Books in Columbia that drew community members into a conversation around ancestry, memory, and legacy.

A storyteller, advocate, and founder of a copywriting agency, Pulliam now uses her voice to inspire others, particularly Black women, to reclaim the richness of their roots.

“This isn’t just my story,” she says. “It’s for anyone who’s ever felt there was more. More to their name, their beginning, and their becoming.”

Rooted is available through Amazon, Walmart, Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, and bookstores nationwide, and will be featured at upcoming local book events, libraries, and cultural gatherings throughout the Midlands.

Book Overview / Fact Sheet

Book Title:

Rooted: How a Daughter of the South Traced Her Bloodline Back 44,000 Years and Calls Us to Remember Who We Really Are

Author:

Michell F. Pulliam

Genre:

Memoir | Cultural History |
Family Lineage

Release Date:

November 16, 2025

Available At:

Amazon, Walmart, Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, and bookstores nationwide.

Rooted is a cultural memoir that traces Michell F. Pulliam's maternal lineage back 44,000 years through mitochondrial DNA research. What begins with a family DNA discovery expands into a multigenerational exploration of ancestry, identity, and inheritance, moving from rural South Carolina to East Africa. Through family history and personal reflection, Pulliam examines the legacy carried by Black women across generations and the ways lineage, memory, and place shape who we become.

Why This Story Matters

When a Southern woman's family DNA test uncovered an extremely rare 44,000-year-old lineage through her maternal line, it redefined everything she thought she knew—about identity, inheritance, and the women who came before her.

One test. 44,000 years. A lineage from East Africa to Eastover.

A journey to reclaim the stories history tried to erase.

At a time when some try to erase our history, rewrite the narrative, or pretend that we didn't build, endure, and persevere, *Rooted* steps in with both honesty and grace. This isn't just a cultural memoir. It's a reclamation of stolen history, voices that were silenced, and a legacy that refuses to die.

When Michell F. Pulliam discovered her maternal line carried the rare East African haplogroup L4b2a—tracing back 44,000 years to the Sandawe and Hadza tribes—it redefined everything she thought she knew about identity, inheritance, and the women who came before her. Her story becomes a mirror for anyone longing to understand where they come from and who they truly are.

Rooted is a powerful reminder that while blood carries truth, history carries trauma, and both must be faced if we are to truly heal. It speaks to every woman who's ever felt the call to come home—to herself, to her lineage, and to the God who never forgot her name.

About the Author



Michell F. Pulliam is a storyteller, founder of a copywriting agency, communications chair for a local branch of a national civil rights organization, and a midlife advocate dedicated to empowering women through life's transitions.

Her work focuses on helping others reclaim their voice, rewrite their story, and remember who they are. Over the course of 25 years, she and her former husband pioneered ministries across four states, centering their work on building faith-driven, compassionate communities.

A proud mother of three adult children, a beloved son-in-law, and grandmother of two, Michell draws from lived experience to craft stories that resonate deeply. Her previous works include *Real Talk*, *The Roots of Roswell*, and *Bliss*. *Rooted* is her most intimate work to date.

Press & Community Highlights

- **Featured in *The Post and Courier* / *Free Times* roundup of new books by Midlands writers (2026)**
[\(Read the full article\)](#)
- **Author Event — All Good Books (Columbia, SC)** — In-store author event with community turnout and discussion
- **Selected for inclusion by the Tennessee State Library and Archives**
[\(WorldCat catalog listing available\)](#)

Interview Topics & Questions

Interview Topics

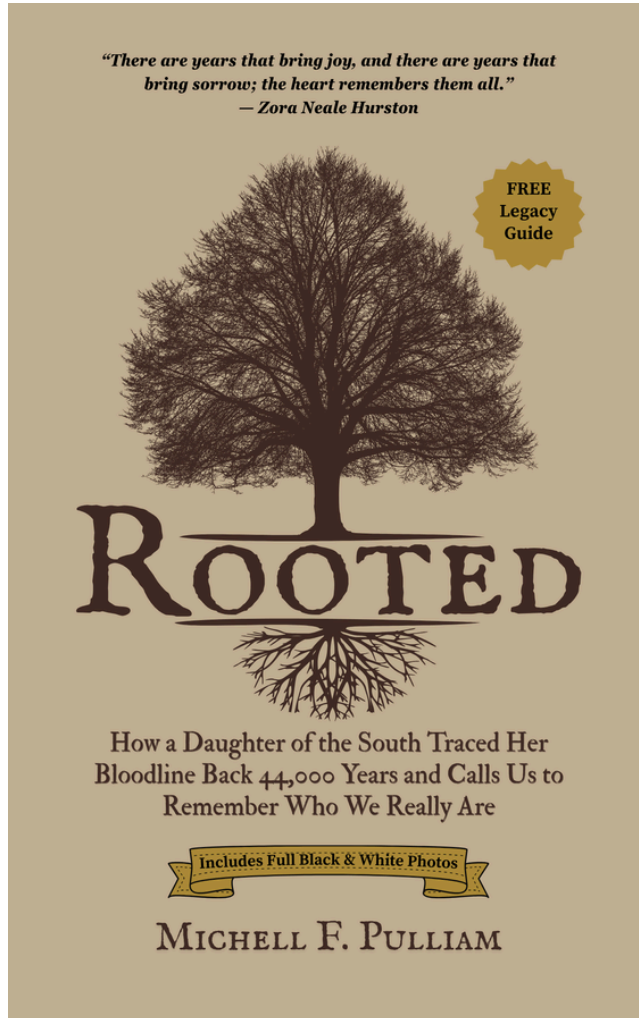
Broad angles for discussion

- The inspiration behind *Rooted*
- When science meets Spirit: what DNA can—and can't—tell us about identity
- The spiritual and emotional impact of tracing Black lineage through the maternal line.
- What *Rooted* offers Black women seeking connection, clarity, and belonging
- How *Rooted* connects family, faith, and ancestral identity.
- Honoring untold stories and the hidden strength carried through generations

Suggested Interview Questions

- What surprised you the most when you received the DNA results?
- Why was it important to write *Rooted* from the perspective of the maternal line?
- How did your upbringing in Eastover shape the way you approached this book?
- You describe this project as a “homecoming.” Can you explain what that means?
- What would you say to readers who feel disconnected from their roots?
- How does *Rooted* differ from your previous books?

Images/Visual Assets



Book Cover — Rooted



Author Headshot — Michell F. Pulliam

High-resolution images and additional visual materials are available upon request.

Author's Note

***“Our history isn’t behind us—it’s
inside us.”***

Every story has a beginning. This is mine.

I didn’t set out to write *Rooted*. I set out to understand a stirring in my spirit I couldn’t ignore. A pull that something deeper was waiting to be remembered. When a maternal DNA test revealed a rare lineage in my family stretching back 44,000 years to East Africa, it didn’t just rewrite my family tree. It awakened a journey of ancestral remembrance and cultural healing that changed how I saw myself and the women who came before me.

Through this book, I share the discoveries, the questions, and the revelations that reshaped my sense of belonging. I explore what it means to honor the women who carried us, to recognize the resilience coded in our DNA, and to step fully into the lives we are meant to live.

I wrote this book because I believe our history isn’t behind us—it’s *inside us*. And when we dare to trace the lines of who we’ve always been, we unlock the power to walk forward with clarity, freedom, and in our divine purpose.

Rooted is for every woman who’s ever felt the call to come home... to herself, to her lineage, and to the God who *never* forgot her name.

In honor of those who came before,

Michell

ROOTED *excerpt...*

It would've been enough to discover that I come from the first mothers. That my DNA stretches back 44,000 years to East Africa. It would've been enough to learn that my maternal line is rare, deeply rooted, and remarkably *intact*. But honestly, that discovery wasn't the end of the story. It was just the beginning. Because while the blood carries truth, *history carries trauma*.

Somewhere between the thriving lands of East Africa and the enslaved fields of the American South, something was violently severed. Slavery didn't just take people—it took possibility. It took dignity. It stripped names, took away whole families, erased languages, buried stories, and reduced women who carried royal blood to laborers, caregivers, and survivors. Brilliance was silenced. Power was hidden. And the world kept moving *as if nothing had been lost*.

They bore burdens that would've broken most. Carried children on their hips and entire households on their backs. Worked sunup to sundown, then stayed up through the night—nursing babies, patching clothes already so worn they were falling apart, wiping tears, and praying prayers they weren't sure anyone heard. They weren't given a comfortable life. They weren't handed opportunity. But what they did with what they had? *That's the part that takes my breath away*. They made legacies out of scraps. Faith out of famine. And strength out of silence. No one gave them rest, so they took refuge in their faith. No one called them powerful, so they became the power—generation after generation.

Many of them witnessed the unthinkable—fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons taken and beaten—or worse, lynched right before their eyes. Grief didn't give them time to fall apart. They had to pick up the pieces of their pain and find a way to go on. To keep their children alive... *and their hope*.

I come from women who had *every reason* to give up... *but didn't*. Who were told to shrink, but somehow found a way to stretch beyond themselves. They fed whole families with next to nothing. Pressed through sorrow and still stirred joy into a pot of food. And had the insight to whisper encouragement to their children *while nobody was encouraging them*. These women weren't soft in the way the world portrays softness. They were tender in the places that mattered—and tough in the places where it counted. Their lives weren't perfect, but their love? *It lasted*. They endured the unendurable—and *still taught us how to be kind*. They kept the family together when everything was trying to pull it apart. And somehow—*somehow*—they gave us joy. *Real joy*. The kind that don't come from circumstances, but from God. And I now understand... *royalty doesn't die*. It hides, not out of fear, but to preserve itself. It endures. And when the time is right—when it senses readiness—it rises again.

When I saw that DNA report showing my maternal line, and realized we had not only survived the unimaginable but originated from the very root of humanity—something changed inside me. It wasn't just knowledge. It was a calling. I wasn't just meant to discover this truth, but now called to share it.

Contact / Media Inquiries

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Hometown: Eastover, South Carolina

ROOTED



A journey to reclaim
the stories history
tried to erase.

An unbroken
lineage—spanning
44,000 years—of
women who refused
to be forgotten.

Scan to step into a journey
centuries in the making



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bring sorrow; the heart remembers them all."*

— Zora Neale Hurston

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