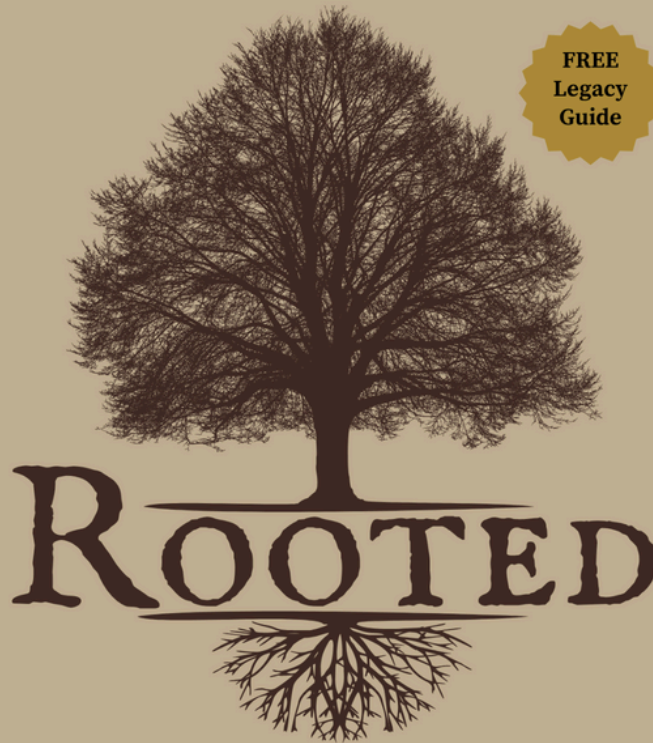


*"There are years that bring joy, and there are years that
bring sorrow; the heart remembers them all."*

— 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

A Cultural Memoir

Press Kit

Book Overview

About the Book

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

Release Date

November 16, 2025

Available At:

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

Genre:

Memoir | Cultural Heritage | Family Lineage

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.

Rooted is a soul-stirring memoir that weaves together family history, spiritual remembrance, and cultural lineage. When a maternal DNA test revealed a rare unbroken lineage stretching back 44,000 years to East Africa, Michell Pulliam didn't just discover a genetic thread—she awakened a calling.

What began as a quiet curiosity became an assignment.

Told with the warmth of oral storytelling and the depth of spiritual reflection, *Rooted* moves between front porches in South Carolina and the ancient soil of Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Egypt—between family memory and divine revelation. It is a story of remembrance—a love letter to the women who came before her and the stories they were never given the chance to tell.

Blending the historical intimacy of *Barracoon*, the multigenerational grace of *Black Cake*, and the emotional truth-telling of *The Warmth of Other Suns*, *Rooted* is more than a memoir. It is a reawakening. For every woman who has ever felt disconnected from her lineage, *Rooted* is a homecoming.

This book isn't just about DNA. It's about divine design. And the blood that remembers what the world tried to make us forget.

Behind the Book

***“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, my family, and the stories we carry—especially those of my grandmother, mother, and aunts.

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

Images from Rooted

The photographs featured here are a small selection from the more than 100 black-and-white images included in *Rooted*. Each one offers a glimpse into the people and places that shaped Michell's story — the faces that carried strength, the land that held memory, and the moments that held generations together. These photographs are more than family keepsakes; they are living echoes of legacy and love, preserved within the pages of *Rooted*.



Family members and descendants of Lee and Caroline Isaac Brown stand in front of St. Thomas Episcopal Church—originally built in 1885 as a mission church for freed African Americans in Eastover and now listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#). It's on these grounds that Michell's grandparents are buried, and where some family members still worship today.



Downtown Main Street in Eastover, the small South Carolina town Michell affectionately calls the "Black Mayberry." There's still no stoplight—just a railroad track down the center and generations of stories that refuse to fade.



Kawawa Leba of the Sandawe tribe, photographed in Handa village, Tanzania. A distant cousin of Michell's, his community faces displacement and the erosion of their cultural identity—a reminder of how fragile yet enduring ancestral ties remain. His story appears in a short documentary (link found in *Rooted*) chronicling their fight to preserve their heritage.

Photo by **Kasosi Kerry Purengei**, c. 2025



The land where Michell's mother and her siblings grew up. This space holds the memories of childhood, family, and the everyday moments that shaped their lives.

About the Author



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

Her work is rooted in helping others reclaim their voice, rewrite their story, and remember who they are. Over a span of 25 years, she and her former husband pioneered ministries across four states, centering their work around building faith-driven, compassionate communities.

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

As a writer, Michell's voice is where narrative meets poetry—soulful, intimate, and spirit-led. She doesn't just tell stories. She resurrects them. Her work blends memoir, reflection, and ancestral memory into a cadence that feels both personal and universal—inviting readers to remember who they are, reclaim what's been lost, and rise from the silence that's been passed down. Whether exploring maternal lineage or reflecting on the quiet strength of womanhood, her words speak to something deep and enduring, offering honest insight into identity, legacy, and faith.

Her motto? "Do you well." A call to honor yourself in every season of life.

For Review, Endorsement, or Interview Request

Name: Michell F. Pulliam

Email: contact@michellpulliam.com

Website: www.michellpulliam.com/rooted

Location: Fairfax, Virginia

Hometown: Eastover, South Carolina

Suggested Interview Topics

- What sparked the inspiration behind *Rooted*?
- When science meets Spirit: What DNA can—and can't—tell us about who we are.
- The spiritual and emotional impact of tracing Black lineage through the maternal line.
- What Michell hopes Black women, in particular, will take away from this story?
- How *Rooted* connects the dots between family, faith, and ancestral identity.
- What it means to honor untold stories and hidden strength.

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?

PRESS RELEASE

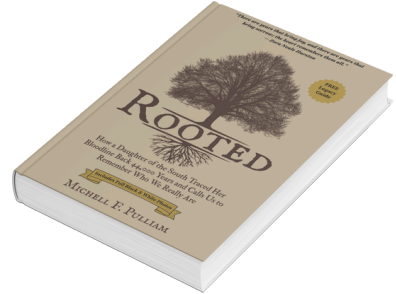
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact:

Michell F. Pulliam

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Website: www.michellpulliam.com/rooted

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



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

Through mitochondrial DNA, Pulliam discovered her maternal line traces directly to the Hadza and Sandawe peoples of East Africa—making hers one of the oldest living maternal haplogroups on Earth.

"I thought I was writing a family memoir," she 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, mother Mary, and seven aunts— who carried strength in silence and dignity in motion.

A storyteller, advocate, and founder of a copywriting agency, Pulliam now uses her voice to inspire others—especially 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, their becoming."

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

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FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES; Michell F. Pulliam

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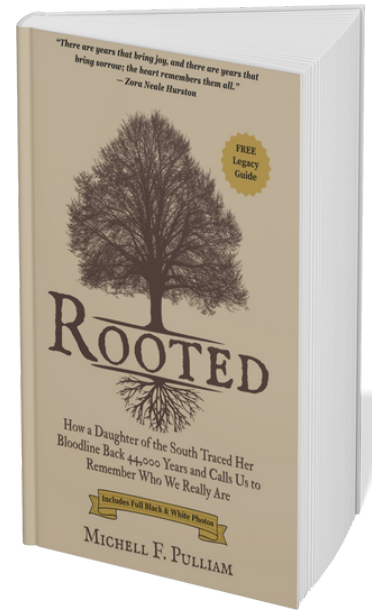
www.michellpulliam.com/rooted

ROOTED

A journey to reclaim the stories history tried to erase.

Tracing a maternal lineage 44,000 years from East Africa to the American South.

One test. 44,000 years. From East Africa to Eastover.



Why This Story Matters Now

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 passionate storyteller, founder of a copywriting agency, and advocate dedicated to helping women reclaim their voice, rewrite their story, and remember who they are. With a warm and authentic voice, she blends personal narrative with the quiet strength of womanhood, inviting readers into conversations that heal, empower, and inspire. Michell writes with the soul of a storyteller and the rhythm of a poet.

Review Copy Available Upon Request

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.