

DNA testing can help untangle roots for Africa-Americans

Interest in African origins surged in 1976 with publication of Alex Haley's historical fiction "Roots: The Saga of an American Family" and the TV series a year later.

"It's very challenging for African-American families to trace their family history back before 1860," said Cathy Ball, PhD, vice president of genomics and bioinformatics at AncestryDNA. "If you had an ancestor who was enslaved they were enumerated on documents but not named. So paper records are phenomenally difficult to find."

Almost anybody of African heritage will bump into a bunch of brick walls. It's as if the ancestor just appeared in the world when emancipated. Our hope is that through DNA testing they can get a little bit of interesting information about where their ancestors came from."

Read the full, original story here: [Tracing African-American Roots Through DNA](#)