The purchase of 20 Africans at Jamestown, Virginia during 1619 occurred weeks before the first meeting of the Virginia House of Assembly. The 400th anniversary of the simultaneous beginnings of slavery and democracy in British North America, and the continuing dilemma of democracy and race, provide a context to discuss the experiences of Africans brought here to labor under a brutal system of slavery. This panel examines the history and nature of this first landing of Africans in America, as well as legacies down to our own time. What was the meaning of liberty and community for 17th Century Americans? What does it mean to be American for their descendants and fellow minorities? What resonance do these issues have as the United States faces a Presidential election threatening to become the most racist appeal to voters in living memory?

Africans in America, 1619-2019

September 12, 2019
5:30 – 6:30pm
Center Church on the Green
250 Temple Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Commemorating the 50th anniversary of African American Studies at Yale University

INTRODUCTIONS: David W. Blight (Sterling Professor of History and Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center, Yale University)

MODERATOR: Ed Rugemer (Associate Professor of African American Studies and History, Yale University)

PANELISTS:
Jim Horn (President of Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation and COO of Historic Jamestowne)
Stephanie Smallwood (Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Washington)
Brenda Stevenson (Professor and Nickoll Family Endowed Chair in History, UCLA)

Co-sponsored by the Department of African American Studies; the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition; and the Afro-American Cultural Center; and the Department of History