

**Report on the Salzburg Global Seminar. American Studies Program 2024**  
**Crossing the Pacific: The Asian American Experience in U.S. Society and Discourse**  
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Diana Villanueva-Romero  
Universidad de Extremadura, Spain  
Recipient of EAAS Partial Funding

From September 18 to 22, 2024, I had the opportunity of participating in the Salzburg Global Seminar (SGS) - American Studies Program as the recipient of partial funding from the European Association for American Studies (EAAS). The history of this professional association is intimately connected to the SGS because EAAS was founded at Schloss Leopoldskron in 1954. This landmark in the history of American Studies in Europe is reason enough to emphasize the importance of continuing to nurture the relationship between the Salzburg Global Seminar and EAAS. However, over the past days at the *Schloss* I have learned that there is more to add to the list of opportunities that being a SGS fellow brings.

- The SGS matches the aim of EAAS as stated in its mission statement: “to encourage the study and research in all areas of all American culture and society and to promote cooperation and communication between European scholars of the United States from all parts of Europe and from various disciplines”.
- The SGS serves to update fellows on the state of scholarship on a specific topic within the discipline of American Studies. It does so from a global perspective because over the years the SGS has transitioned from being centered on U.S. - Europe exchanges to being driven by a global perspective while still paying attention to the European standpoint. This year’s topic focused on analyzing the Asian American experience in U.S. Society and Discourse. Such discussion has allowed participants to cover a range of issues: the meaning of the term “Asian American”, the AAPI<sup>1</sup> community and the 2024 Elections, political rhetoric, the rivalry between the U.S. and China, the significant role Asian Americans might play in the future to serve as mediators between their countries of origin and the U.S., cultural representations of the Asian American experience and their inclusion in the curriculum, etc.
- The SGS is true to its goal of encouraging dialogue across diversity. It fosters international, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational debate. Fellows are always reminded of their right to disagree within a framework of mutual respect. This facilitates a multiplicity of perspectives over the topic under discussion and thus, stimulates a critical take on today’s current debates without buying into facile conclusions or extremisms.

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<sup>1</sup> Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

- The SGS implements a methodology based on non-hierarchical dialogue and inclusive participation.
- The SGS also embodies the transnational spirit of 21<sup>st</sup> century American Studies by inviting as discussants professionals from across the globe.
- By attending the SGS, fellows expand their network exponentially through the SGS community on Mobilize. This together with a long list of new recommended readings to take home is yet another outcome resulting from participation in the SGS.
- The SGS goes against the ivory tower syndrome by offering scholars a closer perspective to reality through contact with different stakeholders (advocacy groups, philanthropists, local communities, etc.) as well as prestigious leaders from around the world.
- Because of its retreat-like format, the SGS creates the kind of momentum needed to come up with alternative and unique ideas.
- The SGS organizers stand out for their professionalism as conveners of an event with a history that can be traced back to more than 75 years ago.
- The SGS location at Schloss Leopoldskron constitutes a once in a lifetime experience for participants.

In short, being as we are in a time of geopolitical polarization, I cannot insist enough in recommending strengthening the connection between EAAS and the SGS so that members of our association continue to benefit from the values and ideals embodied by the Salzburg Global Seminar as a champion of peaceful coexistence and cross-cultural understanding.



Dr. Diana Villanueva-Romero  
Associate Professor  
Universidad de Extremadura