

The organizers of the [International QCA Workshop](#) cordially invite you to a public lecture on

## “The Logic of Critical Event Analysis”

by

### Prof. James Mahoney, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, Northwestern University

In his lecture, Prof. Mahoney develops a framework for the analysis of critical events in case study research. To do so, he introduces a regularity theory of token causation that employs possible world semantics. A critical event is defined as a contingent event that is causally important for an outcome of interest. By drawing on logic and set theory to define the concepts of event, contingency, and causal importance, he clarifies the relationship between causally important events and contingent events, showing why it is appropriate to build contingency into the definition of a critical event. During the lecture, he considers the ways in which critical event analysis differs from alternative modes of case study explanation, including gradualist modes of explanation. Substantive examples from comparative and international studies are used to illustrate the framework.

Time: **Wednesday, 11 December 2019, 17h15 – 18h30**

Location: **ETH Main building, Rämistrasse 101, Room HG D3.2**

#### Biographical sketch

James Mahoney is Gordon Fulcher Professor in Decision-Making and Professor of Sociology and Political Science. He is a comparative-historical researcher with interests in political development and methodology of the social sciences. Prof. Mahoney has made seminal contributions, most notably through methodological books such as “A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research the Social Sciences” (with Gary Goertz; 2012) and *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis* (2015; coedited with Kathleen Thelen) but also through several substantive contributions to the field of Colonialism, Postcolonial Development, and institutional change in Latin America. In his latest publication, “The Logic of Social Science”, Prof. Mahoney argues for set-theoretic analysis as a possible solution to several problems endemic in the social sciences.



#### Contact

Please do not hesitate to contact us in case of any questions!

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