



THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM PRESENTS:

## **Model Cases: How Sociologists Select Research Objects and Why it Matters**



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12:30-1:50 PM Central Time  
Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3mQEz6>

Drawing on a comparison between the use of model systems in biology and practices in the social sciences, I distinguish between the material research object (what researchers study) and the epistemic research object (what researchers are trying to understand) to ask how social scientists chose the former. Some research objects, which I call 'model cases', are studied repeatedly and shape our understanding of more general ideas in disproportionate ways. I discuss how an analysis of such patterns in collective knowledge production matter with a view to a discussion about collective, as well as individual methodology.

*Please contact Meredith Clason with questions or for assistance at [mclason@uchicago.edu](mailto:mclason@uchicago.edu).*