

# Sato's misunderstandings of Kries's theory of adequate causation in *Social Science and Causal Analysis*

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This article corrects some of Toshiki Sato's misunderstandings of Johannes von Kries's original theory of adequate causation. Kries, a physiologist in Germany, published *Die Principien der Wahrscheinlichkeitsrechnung* in 1886, in which he advanced a novel view on probability. Two years later, he developed the concept of adequate causation by applying some of the basic principles he presented in his book. Although scholars in law and social science were quick to adopt this concept, Kries's original ideas are all but forgotten in the latter field today. Sato tries to revive them in his recent book, *Social Science and Causal Analysis: From Max Weber's Methodology to the Frontier of Social Inquiry*. He argues that the idea of adequate causation is a prominent methodological framework for identifying causal relations, but his discussion contains some crucial misinterpretations of adequate causation and its related concepts. In this article, we firstly present Kries's conception of adequate causation, and then show that it is not a methodological framework for causal identification or inference, but rather a theoretical framework for distinguishing different kinds of causal relations and the attribution of responsibility.