



# Qualitative Research and Theory Development: Mystery as Method

Mats Alvesson, Dan Karreman

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### **Qualitative Research and Theory Development: Mystery as** Method

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Qualitative Research and Theory Development: Mystery as Method Mats Alvesson, Dan Karreman Empirical data is one of the cornerstones of knowledge in the social sciences, and yet the researcher often takes it for granted, reserving his or her imaginative faculties for finding a theory that 'fits the data'. This revealing account of the theory-data relationship calls this faith in data into question and establishes a reflexive framework and vocabulary to explore the creative, political and philosophical elements of data production.

Rather than thinking about the theory-data 'fit', Alvesson and Karreman will encourage you to consider the research process as one of theory-data interplay, asking if creative empirical material can challenge established theory and inspire new lines of development, and if breakdowns and mysteries encountered in research can be a constructive rather than destructive process.

They will encourage you to think critically about empirical data in terms of construction rather than verification, and most importantly they will encourage you to develop theory that is interesting and novel, rather than naive or irrelevant, making this title essential reading for those who often find the traditional vocabulary and frameworks of social science research obvious or simplistic.



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