

Foreword by Charlotte Loppie

It is with great pleasure that I write to support and honour Jacqueline M. Quinless as the author of *Decolonizing Data: Unsettling Conversations about Social Research Methods*. The writing and analysis are highly sophisticated but also provide a level of accessibility for people who aren't necessarily well-versed in statistical analysis. The book is written in an eloquent style and provides a deep reflection through which Quinless invites researchers to look at the ways in which everyday research practices, especially in the social sciences, continues amidst the ongoing colonization of health outcomes for Indigenous peoples. Quinless provides a clear and insightful articulation of the ways neoliberal mechanisms of the current colonial system explicitly define and frame questions of well-being, how they should be conceptualized, measured, and evaluated for Indigenous peoples. In doing so, she writes of the ways in which these measures fail to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems as they relate to health and wellness. As a BIPOC researcher, Quinless' strength in research is amplified by the way she works alongside (and in partnership with) Indigenous peoples, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and the First Nations Health Authority through active listening, which is evidenced throughout her writing. I believe this book will open your mind and heart to decolonizing research methodologies by centring Indigenous knowledge systems and ethical protocols, which are at the core of Jacqueline's work.

Quinless is a scholar and an activist with decades of participation in research with Indigenous peoples and communities, which she explains at the onset of the book. Her ideas promote data governance and data sovereignty and are aligned with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as well as the principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP). The book appropriately begins with Quinless' story about her own journey as an

early career researcher and the professional decisions she later made to leave the federal government as part of her experience of decolonizing her own perspectives. Quinless' ability to apply a First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness to state-generated data to where she previously worked was both informative and innovative. The book presents social capital and advances Bourdieu's relations-based, interactive understanding of community and individual "resources," which fits well with Indigenous peoples who understand health from a holistic perspective. As an applied framework that invokes a relational approach to social research, this theoretical orientation supports Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews, as families and communities that have been severely disrupted by capital-colonialism. The book provides a thorough review of the literature on well-being at national and international levels and the many types of measurements that have historically ignored Indigenous peoples. The ideas presented provide a shift away from deficit thinking about health and conventional health research, and makes room for a political stance for a relational research approach to well-being rooted in a holistic understanding of well-being for Indigenous peoples.

The multi-level analysis included in the book is highly sophisticated and demonstrates Quinless' statistical prowess. Her introduction of two-eyed seeing was clearly demonstrated throughout the book as she applied both Indigenous and western knowledges to address health inequalities. She makes compelling arguments that invite readers to pause for deeper reflection as she provides a thoughtful critique of the shortcomings of two-eyed seeing in practice. She then offers insights to what might be a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive approach to community-based health research co-authored with Cherokee scholar, Jeff Kanohalidoh Cornassel, called responsive research and the TRAC method. This methodological approach to community-based research holds promise as an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, trauma-informed, and gender diverse way of weaving Indigenous knowledge systems and social scientific methods to address health inequalities, especially in a COVID-19 pandemic world.

Overall, it is refreshing to read such powerful work — this book is timely and provides scholarly contributions to the field of Indigenous health research and community-based research. The book also yields incredible insights into the decolonization of research methods by addressing health inequalities for Indigenous peoples. I see the ideas presented in this book as making innovative contributions to the field of Indigenous health and the determinants of health research. It should be read by academics, policymakers, health researchers, and graduate students who are seeking effective frameworks for projects of decolonization and Indigenous health.