**Invitation for chapters for an edited book**

**Title-** *'New ideas for new times: A handbook of innovative community and clinical psychologies'.*

**Editors**- Carl Walker, Sally Zlotowitz and Anna Zoli

**Background**

There is a tendency for western contemporary psychological theory and practice to create artificial boundaries between the intrapsychic and the social and-economic contexts, such that we speak of, and act upon, ‘individual people’ and their ‘individual problems’. Consequently, the complex nature of distressing experiences means that often what remains invisible to us all is the routinized misery inflicted upon, and experienced by people, by our society’s structural arrangements. To ‘know’ the complex nature of suffering requires individual biographies to be embedded in the larger matrix of culture, history and political economy which cannot be understood simply through the intrapsychic biomedical lens.

All manner of large scale social forces and discreet local social experiences can come to be translated into distress and misery and ways of knowing the world are structured through experiences of abuse, exclusion, marginalisation, discrimination on the basis of multiple social identities, such as: class, gender, race, disability, sexuality and crushing poverty.

There are a number of ways to construct the key sites for action when creating health responses. Such constructions legitimise what we consider to be appropriate responses to the constructed problem. Rather than contextualize the suffering that has characterised many peoples’ lives as the result of political and economic and political ideology, for example relating to neoliberalism, mental health has been substantially viewed as an individual issue that requires psychological or pharmacological intervention. This text aims to subvert this and construct and legitimise different sites for action and responses to differently constructed ‘problems’.

**This text**

The disciplines of critical community psychology and clinical psychology, often related in many countries and in the UK in particular, are currently experiencing radical innovations that could be characterised as moving from the individualising practice realm toward an altogether more contextualising orientation. Whether through such projects as ‘Psychologists Against Austerity’ or the BPS position statements critical of psychiatric diagnosis, both fields, independently and in conjunction, are responding to an array of political, social and economic injustices and a global political context. Some of those who identify as community and clinical psychologists have found themselves reorienting their practice to confront, resist and subvert the structures that are so damaging to the lives of the vulnerable people that they work with.

These approaches could be argued to refute and resist the psychologising that has strengthened oppressive structures. Such practices are starting to engage in the political character of power-knowledge relationships that demand a more ‘action-oriented’ and less ‘clinical’ psychology praxis and there is a growing interest in, and commitment to, social justice in the field of mental health.

This text will explore and document these new practices of critical community and clinical psychologies that have been developed as alternative ways to challenge recent local, national or global political and economic changes.

We wish to specifically focus on instances where the traditional remits of community and clinical psychology have been subverted, altered, stretched, changed and reworked in order to reframe practice around human rights, creativity, political activism, social change, space and place, systemic violence, community transformation, resource allocation and radical practices of disruption and direct action. In addition, we want to report on approaches that demand different relationships with those who have been constructed as patients, clients or service-users in conventional psychiatry and psychology.

The idea for this edited book arose as the editors appreciate that many practitioners, students, academics and community members want to find novel ways of generating social justice in their work but feel there is a lack of concrete examples to draw on. So the text is intended to be useful as a tool for students and practitioners in both fields who seek to, or are forced to, broaden the scope of activities that they can draw upon in order to take on the challenges that face them and the people, communities and people that they work and live with. We encourage ground breaking, radical and liberatory clinical and critical community psychology projects that showcase innovative practice in whatever form it may take.

**Tentative subsections-**

We are seeking examples not only of radical and innovative practice but also creative and accessible ways of writing. For those whose work is collaborative then co-produced chapters with community members/partners is encouraged and can include art work, poetry or other forms of expression (dance may be a bit difficult). We particularly encourage and welcome chapters from community members, early career academics and practitioners. We welcome national and international, especially non-Western, examples, and we encourage contributions that explain clearly how the project unfolded in the specific context.

We have outlined the following possible subsections below but you may feel that your work matches the ethos of the book but falls outside of these. Please do still send an abstract.

* *Human rights approaches to wellbeing*
* *Community, clinical psychology and creativity*
* *Community and clinical psychology and political activism*
* *Influencing policy*
* *Social and transformative change work*
* *Participatory action research*
* *Space, place and relational wellbeing*
* *Clinical community co-production*
* *Multi-level interventions*
* *Working in radical and disruptive spaces*

**If you are interested in contributing to this edited book, please reply by June 9th with an abstract of your proposed chapter to:**

Carl Walker, School of Applied Social Science, University of Brighton, Brighton, BN1 9PH. Tel: 01273 643475

Email: [c.j.walker@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:c.j.walker@brighton.ac.uk)