SHORT BIO:

Thomas S. Popkewitz, , The University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. His studies concern the systems of reason that govern pedagogical reforms, research, and teacher education. His recent books include *Cosmopolitanism and The Age of Reform: Science, Education And Making Society By Making The Child.* (2008); *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century: Comparative Visions* (2011); edited with D. Tröhler and D. Labaree; and *Globalization and The Study of Education* (2009 with F. Rizvi, eds). His current work is a history of the present, examining the historical and political limits of social science as planning who people are and should be.

TITLE: The Practice of Everyday Life and the (Im)practicality of Research

ABSTRACT: The issue of social and cultural transformations is pressing. There are enough horrors in the world to want change. The problem of change, however, has haunted the human sciences since their institutionalization at the turn of the 20ᵗʰ century. Initially responding to The Social Question about the moral disorder and economic dislocations of the city, the quest today is for the practical (useful) knowledge that makes possible the Enlightenments' cosmopolitan dream.   That dream of change is expressed in PISA, the New Public Management and constructivist psychologies, among others.

While the promise of finding the future is daunting and enticing – as Sirens' singing to beckon the Ancient mariners - my task is more limited. It is historical by asking about the conditions that make possible the notion of designing everyday life and people.   Whether the future is the lifelong learner or the "practical knowledge" necessary for the Knowledge Society, the sciences to change social conditions are project to design particular kinds of people. Three limits of such planning are discussed. One is the making of kinds of people are practices that exclude and abject in the impulse to include.   Second and paradoxically, the principles for making the future conserve rather than challenge the existing frameworks that govern the present. And third, the expertise of designing people produces a hierarchy and inequality in the processes of shepherding social and personal transformations. With these limits, what seems practical and useful is impractical. The remaining question is whether it is perhaps time to (re)vision the human sciences in processes of change.