

# **Social Justice and Web Science: Theory, Praxis and Everyday Life**

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# Social Justice and Web Science

## Implications for Web Science: Theory and Praxis

- Agency and Daily Life
  - How might the web be different if we understand people's ICT frameworks in the context of daily life?
- Multiplicity of Experiences
  - How are people's access to and experience of the web shaped by gender, "race" and class inequalities?
- Research for Empowerment
  - How can we build and understand the web to contribute to equality?

# The Digital Divide: Lessons from Philadelphia

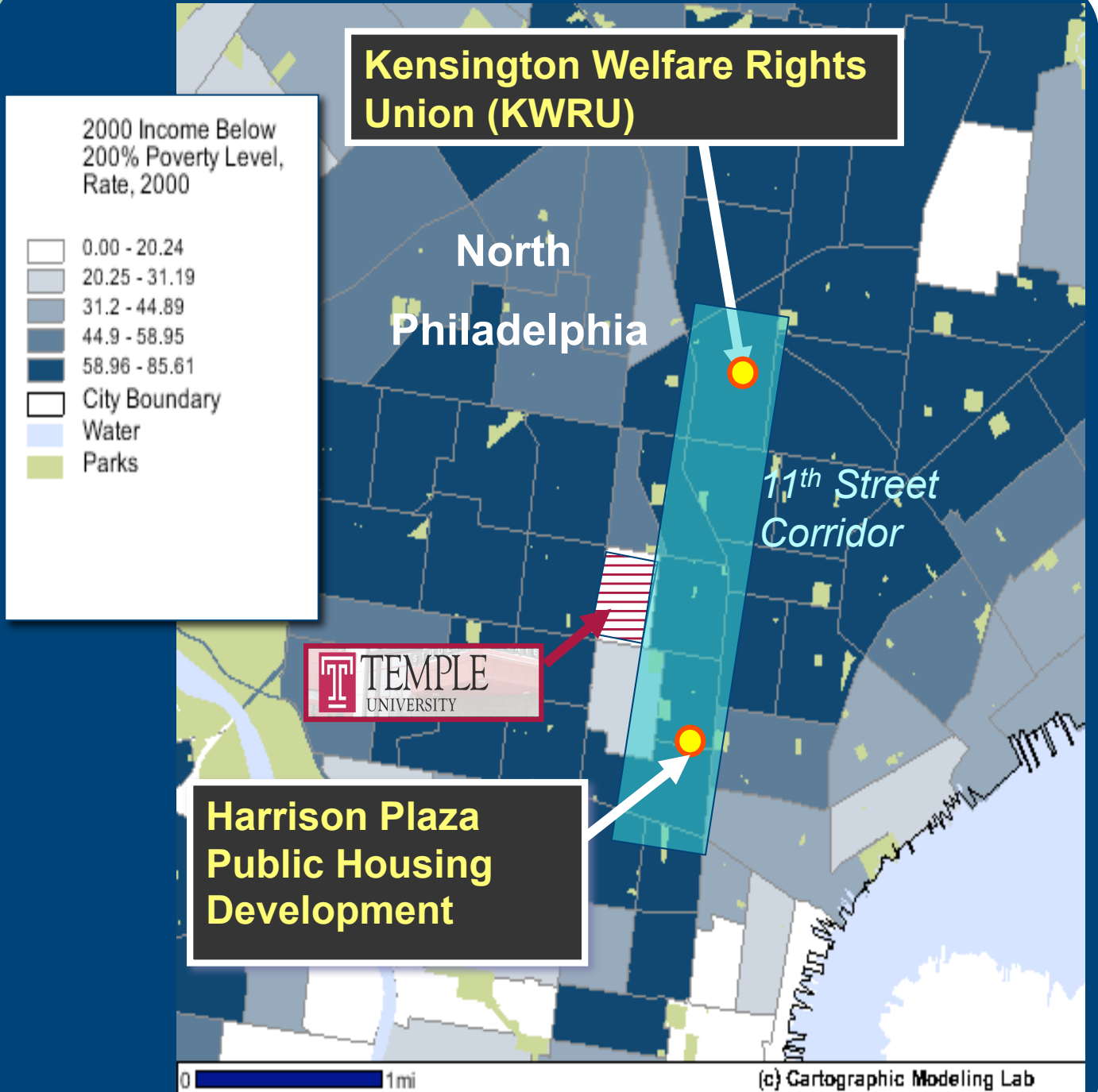
## Two technology use contexts

- Kensington Welfare Rights Union (KWURU)
- Harrison Plaza Tenant's Association (HPTA)

## 11th Street Corridor, Philadelphia PA

- Deindustrialization and Racial Segregation
- African-American and Latino Populations
- Low educational attainment and literacy rates
- High rates of unemployment, poverty, and public assistance

# Two Technology Use Contexts in Philadelphia, PA



# Collaborative Activities

- Assess technology capacity
- Identify ICT needs
- Create technology facilities
- Design curricula
- Develop community information resources
- Develop interfaces and networks

# Case 1: Kensington Welfare Rights Union

- **Organizational Objectives**

Reframe policy discussions about poverty around economic human rights

Network to other grassroots organizations

- **IT Delivery Approach**

Computer and training of staff for database development

Intranet

Information management and technology use workshops

## Case 2: Harrison Plaza Tenant's Association (HPTA)

- **Community Objectives**

Attain access to computers, internet, and educational programs for basic computer literacy and job related computer skills

- **IT Delivery Approach**

Demonstration community technology center (CTC)

Educational programs

- Adult basic computer education
- After-school program
- Internet access course
- Open computer access hours

## Lessons Learned: Building a Different Web

- Poor women have different frameworks for ICT use than “experts”
- Conventional resources (computers, internet, basic training) are not enough
- “Have nots” are highly differentiated
- We need to partner with “have nots”



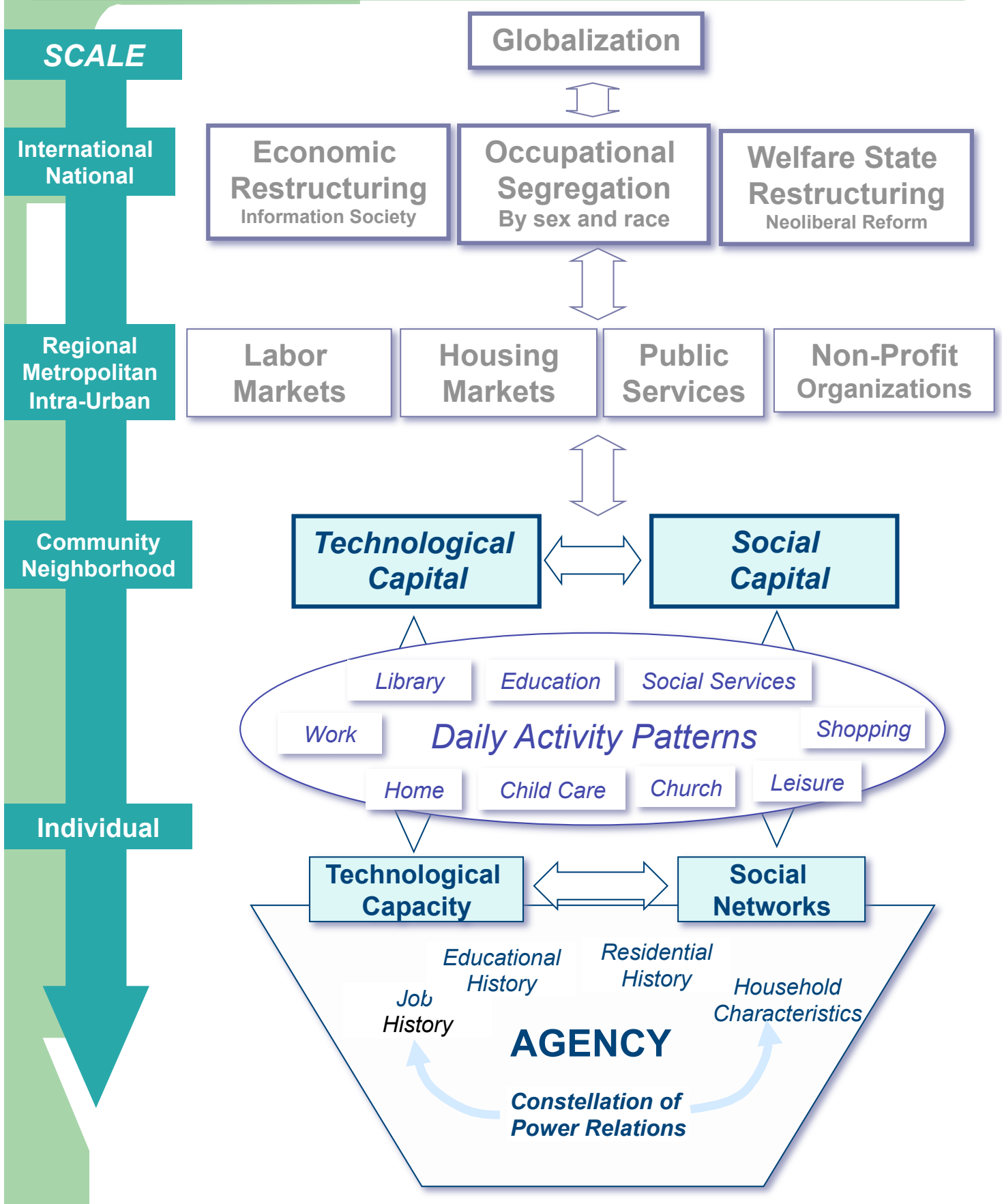
## Lessons Learned: Building a Different Web

- Adjust ICT resources to users
- We need our most sophisticated technology skills
- Move beyond a model of that sees technology as the problem and solution
- We can't just build a better web from our privileged technology use framework

# Conceptualizing Digital Divides and Urban Inequalities

- Digital divide research is descriptive
- Lacks analysis of agency, power, and place
- Social Justice Framework:
  1. Power and Inequality
  2. Place and Scale
  3. Technological Capital/Community Context

# Model for Examining Urban Inequalities and Digital Divides



# Conclusion

## Implications for Web Science

- Examination of empowerment related to people's own web/ICT frameworks
- Treating marginalized ICT-users as full partners to develop web
- Interdisciplinarity requires new institutional frameworks
- Social justice and social action as guiding principals for pro-human web.