

Week 2

Judy Wajcman—
*Addressing Technological Change:
The Challenge to Social Theory*

**Wajcman sees 3-privotal issues
around which society is affected:**

- 1. Information society**
- 2. Post-Fordism**
- 3. Postmodernism**

**1. Information society/knowledge economy
are moving beyond labor and capital and
into an information and knowledge based basis.**

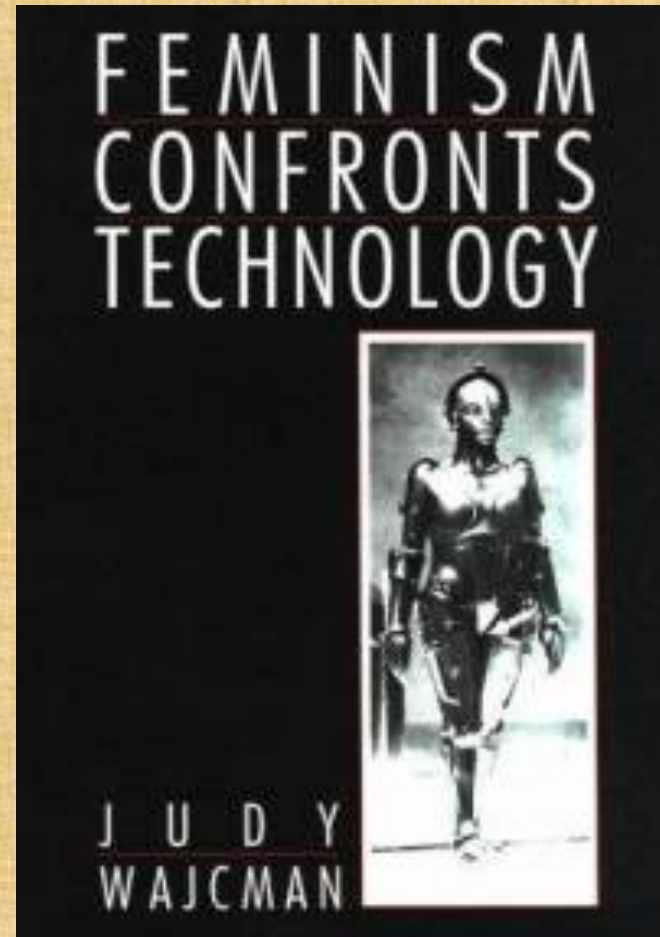
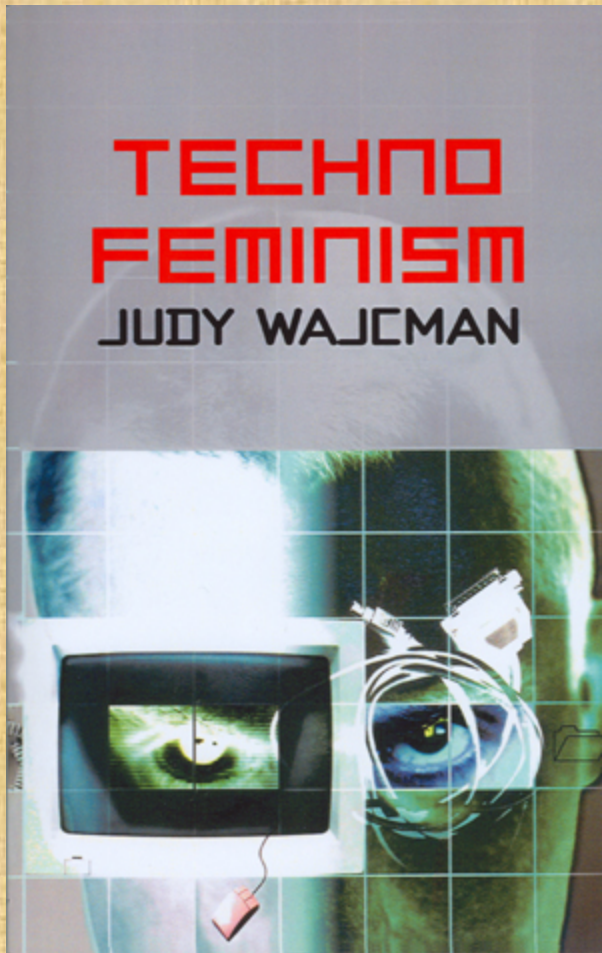
**We are living in a network society
rather than an industrial society.**

**Castells talks about
“the space of flows and timeless time.”**

Social Theory and Technoscience

Castells and Gates can see how we can bridge the divide whether it is digital or something else.

Sheer information will make it possible for the haves and the have nots to join together... thus bridging the divide— so it was thought.



Wajcman then theorizes that the question is basically the conflict with patriarchal knowledge.

Social Studies of Technology

Wajcman's argument is that technology is seen as a part of and informs society.

The question about gas or electric refrigerators was not a technologically based decision nor was the white color.

Much of the decision making process was sex-based... meaning sexist not technological.

Wajcman wrote, “Gender roles and sexual divisions are part of the socio-technical system or network.”

**The microwave morphed
from a US military device
to a tool for men to reheat foods
that they did not make.**



**Microwave designers were men,
and therefore thought
in a more limited mindset.**

**When the microwave did not sell quickly,
it was because the men had not thought
about women doing most of the cooking
in the post-WWII era.**

**The microwave was finally moved
from the televisions and stereo equipment
and sold in the kitchen appliance department.**



Wajcman concludes,

**“Technologies are not fixed at the innovation stage
but evolve in their implementation and use.**

**It becomes a type of *quid pro quo* situation
where technology and society grow together
not as separate spheres of influence...**

yin and yang is a good example of *quid pro quo*.



**Again, Wajcman is moving the debate
to “a doing rather than a being” situation.**

It is fluid rather than static.

**Another interesting example of which
one would not normally think are
the racial issues in black and white film.**

**A black and white face
are not equal on black and white film.**

Gender and Technology

Men's monopoly on technology is sexist at the first level, but it is a more subtle sexism of keeping women from education in the technology areas, since it is not a job for women.

It is also interesting about the some studies indicate that women tend to be more right brain than men and vice versa. Left brain people are linear and analytical, like math and science.

<http://viewzone2.com/bicamx.html>

**Anne-Jorunn Berg discussed
smart homes of the future.**

**Since men design *smart* homes, their design
was mainly one of a command and control design.**

**This meant that things that traditionally women
have done in the home were not considered
in the master plan.**

The Internet ironically can allow for discussions and debate devoid of sexism or as Wajcman said that we are living in a computer-mediated world.



