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Connecting People and Place Prosperity: Workforce Development and Urban Planning in Scholarship and Practice

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Abstract

In recent years, the field of workforce development has emerged as a distinct area of policy and practice. While planning scholars have begun to engage with the workforce development field, its relevance and points of connection to planning scholarship remain underexplored. This article attempts to define the workforce development field by articulating its core concerns as well as its domains of practice and scholarship outside the planning field. The article locates workforce development within three stands of planning scholarship, concluding that workforce development represents an important bridge for planners between "place" and "people" prosperity within communities.

I. Introduction: Workforce Development and "Place" vs. "People" Prosperity

The question of whether urban planners should focus on "place prosperity" versus "people prosperity" remains evergreen within the field (Bolton 1992). Although planners care deeply about improving the lives of poor and disadvantaged populations and achieving more socially just communities, many of the tools that they have at their disposal – such as land use planning and zoning, transportation investments, and affordable housing construction – are place-based in nature, implemented with a goal of improving the vitality of neighborhoods and communities where people live. Yet as a consequence, the actual connections to improvements in the lives of those populations are indirect and sometimes tenuous, as neighborhood enhancements give rise to gentrification and displacement.

In contrast, programs and policies that directly assist individuals to improve their economic standing occupy a less established position within the planning field. One such area is workforce development, which I define as the policies, programs and institutions that assist workers and employers in connecting with one another, making future-oriented investments in labor force skills, and promoting career advancement and mobility toward goals of household, business and community and regional economic prosperity. Employment and job training programs have a long history in social policy as part of anti-poverty programs, and the educational policies have long focused on vocational and occupational skills training. Yet the emergence of the term "workforce development" in the 1990s was suggestive of new connections to planning and place prosperity. As Robert Giloth (2000) writes:

> The phrase *workforce development* implies more than employment training in the narrow sense; it means substantial employer engagement, deep community connections, career advancement, integrative human service supports, contextual and industry-driven education and training, and the connective tissue of networks. This definition represents the common core of the new paradigm of workforce development. (342)

Since this time, a number of planning scholars have begun to engage with the workforce development field and its potential to affect more inclusive modes of development within communities and regions (Melendez and Harrison 1998; Fitzgerald and Leigh 2002; Chapple 2006a; Lowe 2007; Clark and Christopherson 2009). Yet workforce development remains ill-understood as a subfield within planning. This is in part because of its operational focus on people (and increasingly, firms) rather than places, an issue also confronted by other, more established planning subfields such as housing and community development. But this is also because of the relative novelty of the workforce development field, which has emerged in a fragmented way across three distinct domains of scholarship and practice, each somewhat peripheral to the core of planning: employment and social policy, career and technical education, and organizations and human resource management. Each of these domains, established in its own right, has adopted the workforce development paradigm, with its own set of programs, policies and institutions to support them. Although a growing number of planning scholars and practitioners are engaging with workforce development as an object of study and action, it remains elusive and somewhat illegible, making it harder for planners to define their substantive contributions and points of connection.

In this article I provide a comprehensive overview of the workforce development field and its connections to urban planning scholarship and practice. I begin by laying out what I consider the three essential concerns of the workforce development field – skills formation, employment networks, and career advancement – and discuss how changes in labor markets in recent years have affected the need for workforce development programs to promote more efficient and equitable outcomes. Second, I review the three "domains" of workforce development scholarship and practice – employment and social policy, career and technical education, and organizations and human resource management – and discuss the key policies and institutions that govern those domains. From there, I discuss three areas of engagement between workforce development and planning scholarship, highlighting both areas of existing planning scholarship but also areas of future engagement within the planning field. I conclude with an argument for the increasing importance of workforce development to planning scholars of all interests who are concerned about equity and inclusion. At the same time, I argue that planners, with their attention to the dynamics of community, space and place, bring an important contribution to the workforce development field

II. Skills, Networks, and Careers: Workforce Development's Core Concerns

An essential task in defining a field like workforce development is to delineate the core concerns that are shared by practitioners within that field, and those who study it within the academic realm. In this section I discuss three such concerns animating workforce development – skills formation, employment networks, and career advancement – and describe how the field addresses them. Although there are many potential ways of categorizing these concerns, I argue that these three represent analytically distinct forms of labor market failure, loci of labor market change, and sources of inequality, each of which has generated a distinct corpus of scholarly research and debate within fields ranging from economics to sociology to industrial organization. Of particular importance are the ways in which workforce development policies and institutions have attempted to respond to these issues – both emergent and long-standing – through institutional innovations at a variety of scales, from community-based initiatives to regional efforts to federal policy shifts.

Skills Formation. Workforce development programs and institutions focus, first and foremost, on the development of skills on the part of workers, helping them to access better jobs within the labor market. Increasingly, workforce development institutions attempt to augment and coordinate the broader systems through which employers, individuals, and the public invest in the formation of skills within particular industries, occupations, and locations.

This aspect of workforce development is informed by theories of "human capital" developed over the past several decades by economists like Gary Becker and Jacob Mincer (Becker 1993; Mincer 1994). These theories conceptualize human capital as an asset that accrues through education, training and work experience, from which income-generating workforce skills (e.g., wages and other forms of labor income, including returns from innovation and entrepreneurship) are the return. Economic actors – in particular individuals/households and firms/organizations – make investments in human capital where they anticipate that the long-term, discounted returns on those investments, in terms of increased wages and productivity, will exceed the costs, including the opportunity cost of time spent obtaining education.

Human capital theorists draw a distinction between *general skills* and *job-specific skills* (Becker 1993, chap. 3). Although perhaps best conceptualized as a continuum rather than binary categories, this distinction underscores the (dis)incentives for actors to invest in different types of human capital. General skills are those that apply to a broad range of potential occupations and employers (e.g., language and writing skills, general computer training), whereas job-specific skills apply narrowly to one or a small range of employers (e.g., a particular computer application). The more job-specific the skill, the more likely it is that an employer would consider it rational to invest in its production, because a worker would be less likely to take that skill with her to a new job, which would lower that employer's return on investment and allow other employers to "free ride" on others' investments. In broad terms, this distinction between general and job-specific skills can be mapped onto a distinction between *education* on one hand, and *job training* on the other.

The role of the public sector in skills formation is varied. On one hand, public investment in education of all levels – from early childhood to advanced graduate education – is justified in terms of the positive externalities that it generates for the collective productivity and economic development potential for places. In other words, when individuals and families invest in their own human capital and that of their children, they are likely to experience improved earnings potential; but communities also experience "spillover" benefits in terms of their development capacity. Left to market forces alone, we would see systematic underinvestment in education. However, many countries also focus public investment in education and job training toward targeted segments of the workforce, including the long-term unemployed and recently laid-off workers. These workers possess skills that were either underdeveloped due to failure in (or of) the traditional education system (leading some, like Stone and Worgs (2004), to call the workforce development system a "second chance" system), or have been rendered obsolete due to technological change and globalization. In these cases, the role of "active labor market policy" (Robinson 2000) is to target "at risk" populations and enhance their capability to compete for better-paid, higher-skilled jobs within the labor force.

The scope of public investment in skills formation varies considerably from country to country (Crouch 2005). In "liberal market" economies like the United States and United Kingdom (Hall and Soskice 2001), the public sector plays a much less active role than "coordinated market" economies like Japan, Germany and other countries on the European continent (Crouch, Finegold, and Sako 1999), where the public sector plays an extensive role in vocational training tied to particular occupations, working extensively with trade unions and employer associations to promote dialogue about ongoing changes in workplace skill needs. Many have argued that Germany's skill formation system is a critical source of competitive advantage because it facilitates ongoing, incremental innovation around highly-skilled precision production activities (Hall and Soskice 2001; Herrigel 2010).

Corporate and industrial restructuring since the 1980s has placed new challenges on public workforce development systems with respect to skill formation. The imperatives for employers to maximize both their flexibility and their profitability have made it increasingly common for corporations to restructure and shed workers and entire business lines, even in relatively good times (Osterman 1999). As a consequence, firms operate under much shorter time horizons than in generations past, and are less willing to make investments in the skills of workers who may not be around – by choice, or otherwise – long enough to recoup those investments. Peter Cappelli talks about this in terms of the shift from "making" talent within organizations to "buying" it from within the labor market (Cappelli 2008). While rational on a micro scale, this impulse to offload training costs pushes the onus of investment in job skills onto workers and the public. The irony, as Salzman (1998) notes, is that firms have become increasingly dependent on the skills and innovative capacity of their workforce, at the same time that their incentives for providing them internally have diminished.

Many economists argue that a "mismatch" has developed between the skills required by employers in the economy, and the skills developed by workers within the U.S. educational system (Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce 1990; Lerman 2008). They argue that this skills mismatch problem has the dual effect of undermining national and regional competitiveness for firms and industries competing globally, but also of promoting income inequality by leaving workers, especially from failing public schools, without sufficient skills to access high-wage employment opportunities[1]. Although the policy implications of the skills mismatch argument have been directed mostly toward reform of primary and secondary education systems (e.g., federal No Child Left Behind Act), workforce development programs have also attempted to respond in piecemeal ways, especially to skills shortages occurring within particular industries and occupations. In some places, state and local officials have attempted to target job training funds toward industries, such as manufacturing and health care, where persistent skills shortages have been identified. However, the ability of workforce development systems to resolve industry-specific skills shortages has generally been limited in the absence of broader, sector-wide efforts to get employers, education and training institutions and where relevant, labor unions, to the table to overcome collective action problems that reduce their incentives to invest in skills (Dresser and Rogers 1998). Still, many argue that the tendency of the market to underinvest in human capital and skills is among the most important arguments for local and regional economic development (Bartik 1990; Clarke and Gaile 1998; Mathur 1999).

[1] See Osterman and Shulman (2011) for a rebuttal of the skills mismatch argument, especially is it relates to income inequality and the prospects for low-wage workers.

Employment Networks. A second core area of concern for workforce development is the process by which workers find jobs, and employers find workers, within the labor market. Workforce development systems attempt to make this matching process more efficient for workers and employers; but at the same time, they also attempt to address systemic inequities that result from labor market processes. Although this form of mismatch is related to skills-related mismatch as a form of labor market failure, it deserves to be treated separately due to its distributional consequences for labor market outcomes, but also because it implies a somewhat different mode of policy intervention from those focused solely on skills.

Labor economists have developed theories of job search that build upon George Stigler's pioneering work on the role of information in market processes (Stigler 1962; Rogerson, Shimer, and Wright 2005). Under conditions of positive (and often substantial) information costs, jobs may go unfilled while qualified workers search for them, and employers look for those workers. Such informational frictions produce ongoing unemployment even under full employment conditions, while information asymmetries in the matching process (e.g., about worker skills, and job attributes) generate a variety of observed phenomena in the labor market, from worker turnover to wage inequalities among similarly-skilled workers. While search theory implies a number of different policy tools to stimulate efficient labor market matching, in practice it has meant a strong role for the public sector in building out labor market information of a variety of sorts, from job banks to connect jobseekers and employers to occupational employment projections to inform workers and educational institutions about the kinds of skills that will be in demand in the future.

For their part, sociologists have also found job search and matching processes to be fertile ground for analysis. Mark Granovetter's landmark study of job search strategies of technical workers yielded an important critique of economic theories of job search – namely, that both workers and draw heavily on social networks in order to gain information about potential employment opportunities, and employers use networks as well to identify prospective workers and overcome uncertainty about worker attributes (Granovetter 1995). While a somewhat obvious finding to anyone who has ever looked for a job, Granovetter's work emphasized "the strength of weak ties" – associational connections that individuals had through previous work experiences, education or other social networks – in structuring the matching process.

Network theories call attention to *who* workers know rather than *what* they know (i.e., skills and experience), and provided a new lens for analyzing inequality in labor market processes. Hanson and Pratt (1991) studied the differential job search patterns of men and women and found that job search networks had both a gendered character (i.e., that women found out about job opportunities from other women, and men from other men) and a spatial character (i.e., women searched for jobs closer to home than men), both of which were likely contributors to ongoing patterns of occupational segregation and wage inequality by sex. Similarly, others argued that the disconnection of poor, inner-city minority residents from networks of gainfully-employed workers perpetuated their isolation (Massey and Denton 1993, 160–162; Wilson 1996), in part by reinforcing negative, racially-tinted stereotypes about workers from those communities (Moss and Tilly 2001). Others built upon the spatial dynamics of employment networks, examining how the suburbanization of employment opportunities in the post-War period – especially semi-skilled jobs in manufacturing – was creating a "spatial mismatch" between suburban jobs and inner-city workers (Kasarda 1989; Holzer 1991; Ihlenfeldt and Sjoquist 1998).

For workforce development practitioners and policy makers, this strongly suggests that skills are only half the challenge when it comes to connecting the disadvantaged to good jobs. Programmatic models like the Center for Employment Training (CET) in San Jose were found to generate successful results for the low-income populations they served in large part because their successful cultivation of "loose tie" networks on the demand side of the labor market (i.e., with employers) to identify skills in demand and inform program design, but also because of their "strong tie" networks to the (primarily Chicano) population they served, which fostered a sense of mutual solidarity and commitment (Melendez and Harrison 1998). While not all community-based organizations have been capable of matching CET's results, the workforce development community has increasingly turned to them as a resource for connecting disadvantaged communities to training and employment opportunities (Harrison and Weiss 1998; Melendez 2004). At the same time, for the broader workforce development community, the "workforce intermediary" paradigm has reinforced the imperative to cultivate network relationships to employers, both to ensure that job training programs are matched to their needs, but also to get their graduates a "foot in the door" in occupations and industries that are well-paid and offer opportunities for career advancement (Giloth 2004; Benner, Leete, and Pastor 2007), especially ones experiencing rapid growth and other types of labor shortages (Chapple 2006a).

Career Advancement. The third broad area of concern for workforce development is career advancement. In particular, workforce development policies and institutions focus on helping workers navigate increasingly complex career ladders within and across industries and occupations, and to a lesser extent, on helping employers better articulate career advancement paths and address barriers to advancement.

The need for an active labor market policy to help address challenges of career advancement is a relatively recent phenomenon. For most of the 20th century, career advancement was governed by the practice of "internal labor markets" (ILMs), whereby organizations maintained well-defined internal pathways for skill formation and career advancement. First documented by Doeringer and Piore (1971), ILMs facilitated long-term – often lifetime – employment relationships between workers and firms, in which workers were hired at entry-level positions (both in managerial and non-managerial levels) and groomed for upward mobility through extensive on-the-job training. ILMs were common across a wide swath of the economy, including both industrial and service firms, private and public sector, and both unionized and non-union workplaces (Osterman 1984). Although ILMs reduced the capacity of firms and organizations to make rapid adjustments in the size and scope of the workforce, they promoted predictability, stability, and long-term skill development. Companies like General Electric developed extensive managerial training programs that took freshly-minted college graduates and taught them how to manage, virtually irrespective of the product or industry (Cappelli 2008). Similar labor-management partnerships existed on the shop floors of industrial firms from the Detroit automakers to aerospace giants, steel mills, electronics manufacturers like IBM and so forth.

To the extent that Industrial Age policymakers worried about ILMs, it was about their absence. Analysts at the time worried about the "dualization" of labor markets into "primary sector" jobs where ILMs facilitated stability, high skills and high wages, and "secondary sector" jobs where workers – often women and minorities – were subjected to instability, low skills and wages, and rapid turnover (Vietorisz and Harrison 1973). Antipoverty "manpower" policies of the time, such as those of the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty, sought to extend access to primary sector jobs for underrepresented population segments through basic skills training, on-the-job work experience programs, and so forth. Although many large companies developed minority hiring programs during this time in response to Equal Employment Opportunity policies, public-sector efforts to influence hiring practices were rarely popular with employers and unions (Weir 1992).

However, it is hardly an overstatement to say that in the last three decades the labor market institutions and organizational practices governing career advancement have undergone radical change, especially in the United States (Cappelli 2012). The prevalence of ILMs throughout the Industrial Age gave way in the 1980s and 1990s to a diverse suite of corporate restructuring practices and strategies – from outsourcing to "downsizing" and flattening of organizational structures, to broadening of individual job tasks, to increased use of part-time and contingent work (Moss, Salzman, and Tilly 2001, 98) – that were designed to provide firms with greater flexibility and ongoing profitability in the face of instable product markets (Cappelli et al. 1997). Guarantees of lifetime employment – explicit or implicit – were a thing of the past. As Paul Osterman (1999) notes, what was striking about these new forms of corporate restructuring was that they were often undertaken as a pre-emptive measure in relatively good times to satisfy financial markets – not simply as a response to declining sales or overcapacity, as in recessionary periods.

For workers, the impacts of these breakdowns in career advancement systems have been wide-ranging, and especially for less-educated workers, their net impact has been negative.Internal labor market systems relied heavily on on-the-job, tacit skill formation, especially around employer- and job-specific skills. As a consequence, workers laid off from a long career at one company faced dismal odds finding employment elsewhere that used those same skills – or employers capable of recognizing those skills in the absence of credentials. Although aggregate data show that job tenures held relatively steady between the 1970s and the 2000s, this masked considerable differences in the experiences of women and men, the latter of whom benefited most from ILM structures, and have seen the greater negative impact of their demise (Farber 2008). At a more basic level, however, ongoing corporate restructuring has shifted risk of economic instability from firms onto workers and households (Hacker 2006, chap. 3), rendered opportunities for upward mobility within firms more opaque and elusive (Fitzgerald 2006), and weakened institutions (i.e. unions) for worker voice and democratic decision making on the job (Kochan 2006). Still, others point to more benign impacts, such as what Arthur and Rousseau (1996) call the "boundaryless career." For professionals and other "creative class" workers, organizational restructuring has meant greater flexibility for exploration, personal growth and adaptation over time; for organizations, it has meant balancing their need for a committed, capable workforce with the imperatives for longer-term flexibility and adaptability, between organizational structure and individual worker agency (Craig and Hall 2006).

This new career paradigm has driven a range of responses from the workforce development field. On one hand, it has implied a greater role for workforce development programs in helping workers, especially those laid-off from jobs, adapt and find new careers and occupations. But it has also implied a more proactive role for workforce development agencies and practitioners to help workers map out the "career pathways" that their existing skills and credentials might allow them to pursue. As firms have retrenched from their training activities – especially for non-managerial workers – institutions like community colleges have adapted to articulate the relationship between short-term occupational training for entry-level positions, work experience on the job, and further credentials (certificates, degrees) that afford mobility within and across occupations and industries (Poppe, Strawn, and Martinson 2004; Jenkins 2006). At the same time, a key element of sector-based workforce strategies has been to rebuild career ladder infrastructure within particular industries, often relying upon labor-management partnerships to facilitate workplace-based training and development activities (Fitzgerald 2006). In some cases, industry trade associations have played a role. For example, in the 2000s the National Retail Federation, concerned about high rates of turnover within the industry and growing perception of retail as "dead-end jobs," partnered with the U.S. Labor Department and large retailers like Macy's and Home Depot to promote best practices in the articulation of internal career advancement practices, training and development modules (Prince 2003; Carre, Tilly, and Holgate 2008). The emergence of career ladder initiatives across a variety of industries, from biotech manufacturing (Lowe 2007) to hospitality (Bernhardt, Dresser, and Hatton 2003) to healthcare (Wolf-Powers and Nelson 2010), strongly implies that the breakdown of skill formation and career advancement systems are not isolated to industries experiencing turbulence and restructuring, but represent a broader, secular response to a changing set of norms and practices in the relationship between workers and employers.

Together, these three concerns for skill formation, employment networks, and career advancement form the core of workforce development policy and practice. In each case, workforce development policy makers and practitioners are responding to changing labor market needs and practices, ones that perpetuate existing market failures and inequities while at times generating new ones. Yet even as we can point to a common core of concerns underpinning the workforce development field, both practitioners and scholars studying the field are spread across multiple domains and institutions, rendering the field less coherent in practice. In the next section I turn to this issue.

III. Three Domains of Workforce Development Scholarship and Practice

One of the persistent challenges in characterizing the workforce development field is that it is fragmented across three distinct domains of scholarship and practice – employment and social policy, career and technical education, and organizations and human resource management. Although recent workforce development scholarship and practice within planning interfaces with each to at least some extent, these domains have developed independently of planning, emphasizing a somewhat different set of institutions and policy frameworks. As with the preceding discussion of the workforce development field's core concerns, there are likely to be multiple potential approaches to categorizing the various "worlds" of workforce development; the approach taken here focuses on distinct sets of public policies (and policy objectives) and labor market institutions. As I discuss further below, each domain addresses the workforce development field's core concerns of skills, networks and careers in its particular way, emphasizing some concerns over others, while recent innovations have attempted to address deficiencies in addressing other concerns. In this sense, there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the concerns and domains of the workforce development field. What is important about characterizing the workforce development field in this way is that it underscores the "silos" – both scholarly and practical – that planners and planning scholars tend to encounter when engaging with the field. In this section I provide a brief overview of these three domains and how "workforce development" is defined and pursued in the context of that domain's key objectives and institutions.

Employment and social policy. The first of these domains, *employment and social policy*, is grounded in (primarily) federally-funded programs to assist workers – especially disadvantaged and dislocated workers – to find and maintain employment. Delivered by a combination of state-level employment security agencies and public, non-profit and for-profit entities at the local level, these services are mostly organized around "One Stop" employment centers where jobseekers scan databases of available job openings, meet with agency staff and case managers to identify and access available publicly-funded assessment and skill training services, and interview with prospective employers.

Publicly-funded programs for employment and job training have a relatively long history within American social policy. Dating back to the labor exchange functions of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, which created the Employment Service, the federal government took the lead in helping dislocated and unemployed workers find jobs and employment (Eberts and Holzer 2004). Although the first comprehensive federal effort in the area of job training, the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962, was primarily concerned with mitigating the effects of dislocation resulting from industrial automation (Kremen 1974; Barnow 1993, 76), this concern was soon replaced in the 1960s with the burgeoning problem of inner-city poverty. Federal initiatives like Job Corps and Model Cities (which had a major employment component) formed central elements in the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty, and as MDTA gave way in the 1970s to the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), employment and training policies were viewed primarily as a vehicle for anti-poverty efforts. Indeed, amendments to CETA in the 1970s explicitly instructed local officials to focus their resources on the most disadvantaged clients, in response to concern about "creaming" of the best clients on the part of providers (Barnow 1993, 80–81).

The current shape of the federally-funded "workforce investment" system – reflected in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 – reflects several policy shifts since the 1970s. One has been the shift toward business- and locally-led system governance. Responding to concerns that CETA programs were insufficiently attentive to the needs of employers (Robison 1978; Franklin and Ripley 1984), federal officials required local agencies to create "private industry councils" – now called "workforce investment boards" – to oversee federally-funded programs and ensure that they were well-run and attuned to areas of unmet local workforce demand. At the same time, reflecting the trend toward "New Federalism," states were given greater discretion in the administration of federal workforce programs (Barnow 1993). And a related shift was the move toward privatized, contract-based service delivery under the 1982 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), which was intended to promote competition and accountability in federally-funded workforce training. Although the programs remain almost entirely federally-funded, the locus of decision-making and program oversight has shifted increasingly toward local and non-governmental actors. WIA extended this shift even further by replacing contractual relationships between workforce agencies and training providers, in which local officials would choose a portfolio of training options available to program clients, with voucher-based "Individual Training Accounts" that empowered training recipients to choose from a wider variety of training offerings within community colleges, for-profit training institutes (e.g., ITT, DeVry), and in some places, community-based organizations.

The second important shift in federal employment policy has been the move toward a "work first" orientation. This shift can be traced to large-scale evaluations of federal JTPA programs in the early 1990s (Orr et al. 1996) that found that short-term job training programs for disadvantaged populations yielded minimal, if any, gains for many participants, while "work first" welfare-to-work programs – those that emphasized that "any job is a good job" – generated similar, if not better, earnings gains at significantly lower costs (Brown 1997). The logic of welfare-to-work soon found its way into the structure of federal workforce programs serving the disadvantaged. WIA de-emphasized job training in favor of job search assistance ("core" services under WIA) and case management, job development and soft skills training ("intensive" services under WIA); program participants could only access training after demonstrating an inability to find a job through core and intensive services.

Finally, there has been a shift toward "universal access" to workforce development services. Prior to WIA, employment and training programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers were operated separately from other federally-funded programs providing job search assistance to all populations. Aside from the issues of fragmentation and inefficiency, there was a concern about the stigma associated with having programs serving only the disadvantaged. By opening up the core job search assistance services of One Stops (and increasingly, online job-matching databases) to all jobseekers, officials hoped that workers and employers of all types – not just those looking, or hiring, for minimum-wage, entry-level jobs – would utilize the system.

Scholarship within the domain of employment and social policy has focused primarily around evaluation, namely whether programs are cost-effective in achieving the objective of promoting increased earnings on the part of participants. Within the policy analysis field, job training programs have served as model for both experimental and non-experimental modes of evaluation, in the latter case attempting to control statistically for non-random factors associated with program participation (Heckman, Ichimura, and Todd 1997; Heckman et al. 1999; Heckman and Smith 2004). As mentioned earlier, experimental studies of JTPA found largely disappointing results, although more recent state-level studies of WIA programs have found somewhat better, albeit still modest, results (Hollenbeck et al. 2005; Stoll et al. 2003; Holzer 2008; Decker and Berk 2011; Chrisinger 2013).

To a somewhat lesser extent, workforce development scholarship within this domain has focused on institutional innovations and shifts both at the federal and local levels. These include the changing role of business organizations (McCormick, Hawley, and Melendez 2008) and community-based organizations (Melendez 2004) in system governance and service delivery of federally-funded workforce programs, and connections to economic development programs and institutions (Harper-Anderson 2008; Schrock 2013). For this reason, the employment and social policy domain has the strongest connections to planning scholarship of the three domains.

Career and Technical Education. Given the importance of skill formation to workforce development, it is not surprising that *career and technical education* (CTE) would represent one of the core domains. In comparison with employment and social policy, CTE is more concerned with providing individuals with the necessary skills – either remediation of basic skills or learning of new occupational skills – to obtain employment and advance within a career path. Historically, the "vocational education" system focused on young persons who were unlikely to pursue higher education, encouraging them to orient themselves toward applied skills from the industrial and construction trades to clerical skills. Increasingly, however, workforce development within the education domain means providing adults with opportunities to learn new skills and access new careers, often in the face of job dislocation that renders their existing skills and experience obsolete. Workforce development scholarship within the CTE domain has focused on documenting the new institutional models and practices of service delivery that have emerged in response to these changing labor market needs.

The primary loci of the CTE domain are community and technical colleges, which have broadly embraced the workforce development mission through a combination of degree- and certificate-oriented programs, non-credit continuing and community education, and increasingly, contract-based training with employers (Jacobs and Dougherty 2006). Although most community colleges remain heavily committed to their role as access points to four-year higher education institutions, there is a recent movement toward the "new vocationalism," which Bragg (2001) defines primarily in terms of "career clusters or pathways that extend from the entry level to the professional level in career fields integral to the new economy" (p. 7). This view holds that an increasing number of jobs will be in "middle-skill" technical fields where some postsecondary education is needed, but not necessarily a four-year bachelor's degree (Grubb 1996a; Holzer and Lerman 2007); but that many of those jobs connect to positions requiring a college degree. In this sense, the new vocationalism emphasizes the preparation of students for further education within a field, and not simply training for a specific (terminal) occupation (Jacobs and Dougherty 2006, 58). For this reason, community colleges have been the most enthusiastic adopters of the "career pathway" paradigm, which attempts to streamline and organize educational programs in ways that actively support progressive skill development and career progression (Alssid et al. 2002; Jenkins 2006).

At the same time, career and technical education remains an important, if undervalued, element of primary and secondary (i.e., K-12) education in the United States, especially in comparison with countries like Germany that have a well-established and respected vocational element in their educational system. Since 1990 there have been a variety of efforts to revitalize the CTE function in U.S. schools in ways that reflect their changing labor market context (Bragg 2001). These include "tech prep" programs that entail greater articulation between high schools and community and technical colleges; school-to-work and other formalized work-based learning programs; and "career academies," which are high schools organized around an occupational or industrial focus, such as finance, information technology, construction and building trades, or hospitality (Lerman 2008, 46–47).

As with the employment services domain, the federal government plays a major role in funding career and technical education within community and technical colleges and local school systems, currently through the federal Perkins Act. However, community and technology college systems are state-level creatures, and are thus highly variable in their scope and size across states. Some states like North Carolina and California have large and well-established systems, while other states have more fragmentary systems.

In recent years there have been efforts to bring the domains of CTE and Employment policy into closer alignment. As of 2008, over 10 percent of One Stop centers were operated solely or primarily by community colleges and over one-third had community college staff collocated at the One Stop (U.S. Government Accounting Office 2008). Some, like Grubb (1996b), have argued that re-integration of employment and job training programs with institutions like community colleges is critical to move workforce development away from "one shot" training programs that offer poor pedagogy and little connection to educational credentials. But for educational institutions, closer engagement with employers on one hand, and with community-based organizations on the other, have helped them to better align their efforts with the changing labor market needs on one hand, but also to the needs of low-income and disadvantaged populations on the other (Jacobs and Dougherty 2006). This is especially important given that most CTE programs, in direct comparison to Employment Services programs, are funded primarily based upon "inputs," e.g., their student enrollments, rather than outcomes, especially employment outcomes.

Organizations and Human Resource Management. The third domain of workforce development scholarship and practice relates to organizations and their changing strategies and practices for human resource management. Scholars in this field work mostly within the areas of industrial organization and sociology, and human resource management, with their primary unit of analysis being the firm or organization.

What does workforce development mean for organizational scholars? To them, workforce development is primarily about the practices that organizations engage in related to training and skills development. But increasingly they have focused on the role of public policy in responding to those changing practices, and the implications for firms, workers and communities. Economists have estimated that in the U.S., private sector investments in job training dwarf those made by the public sector by a ratio of roughly ten to one (Mikelson and Nightingale 2004). Private-sector training investments are targeted disproportionately toward higher-skilled workers (Knoke 1997).

Two specific areas of workforce development policy and practice are situated within this domain. The first are policies to support labor-management partnerships for job training, most notably around apprenticeships, which are structured systems of work- and school-based training that certify workers for a particular occupation (Lerman 2008, 37). The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship oversees "registered" apprenticeship programs by certifying that their application procedures are open and fair, that they maintain a structured regimen for work and training, and a progressively increasing scale of wages based on skill attainment (Lerman 2010). Registered apprenticeships are well-established in the building and construction trades, but in recent years, business, labor and public officials have sought to extend the apprenticeship system into growing fields like health care and information technology and "green-collar" fields like energy efficiency as a way of demonstrating its relevance as a skill formation and governance system (Lerman 2008; White 2012). However, one of the persistent challenges for apprenticeship programs is closer integration with the two domains mentioned above – the federally-funded system for employment and training, and the community and technical college system (Lerman 2009). The persistent failure of apprenticeship programs to connect with disadvantaged populations, and communities of color in particular, has motivated the creation of "pre-apprenticeship" programs that help provide foundational skills to level the playing field in preparing to enter apprenticeships (Helmer, Blair, and Gerber 2012).

The second area of workforce development practice related to firms has been the rise of Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs, which provide subsidies to firms for training-related activities, usually in partnership with local community and technical colleges or other educational institutions. In contrast to federal workforce development programs that target disadvantaged and dislocated workers, incumbent worker training programs are mostly state-funded, often connected to state economic development programs for business recruitment and retention, and oriented toward goals of firm, industry and regional competitiveness (Osterman and Batt 1993; Duchsa and

Graves 1999). Although the productivity benefits of IWT programs accrue mostly to firms, Hollenbeck (2008) argues that IWT subsidies can be justified in terms of averting social costs of unemployment, and correcting for market failures and inequities in the provision of workplace training (p. 3). Under WIA, states were given greater flexibility to use their discretionary allocations for firm-based training initiatives, with a majority of states doing so (p. 6).

Correspondence between Domains and Concerns. As the preceding discussion demonstrates, each of the three workforce development domains connects up to the field's three core concerns – skills, networks, careers – in different ways and to varying degrees. The employment and social policy domain had historically focused on both skills and networks (i.e., connecting people to jobs), but federal workforce policy began to de-emphasize skills training in the 1990s in favor of "work first" approaches. Although this is still the case to a large extent, broad concern about the lack of upward mobility from entry-level jobs has pushed local workforce officials to think more carefully and critically about job quality and career advancement. Similarly, the career and technical education domain has attempted to branch out from its heavy focus on skills formation, toward partnerships with community-based organizations and employers that allow them build more effective networks into disadvantaged communities, and promote workplace learning and career advancement. Finally, within the organizational domain, competing imperatives for flexibility and high performance have compelled employers toward sector-level partnerships around skill formation in areas like health care and manufacturing where long-term disinvestment and organizational change has eroded internal skills and career development infrastructure. And in occupations like the building trades where exclusionary hiring networks have prevailed, greater attention is being paid to the opening of networks to historically underrepresented segments of the labor force. The important conclusion to be drawn here is a relatively simple one – namely, that a comprehensive approach to workforce development tackles all three of the core concerns of the field, and that many of the innovations within the field in recent years are a result of efforts by actors and organizations within those domains to address issues that it had historically not addressed as well, if at all.

In some cases, efforts to address workforce development goals have cut across multiple domains. One example is industrial policy, which entails the effort to catalyze job growth, retention and competitiveness within particular firms and industries at the federal, state or local level. Such efforts have involved engagement with the employment and social policy domain, through initiatives to merge local economic and workforce development agencies, expand business services within federally-funded One Stops, and target WIA funds toward key industry sectors; in other places they have involved programs to reform career and technical education infrastructure, such as career academies and community college programs; and in others, it has meant working within individual businesses to promote workplace-based training. The point here is that in most cases, economic development officials have been forced to work *within* the established policy and institutional framework of that domain, whether it is the federal Workforce Investment Act, state community colleges, or local labor-management partnerships.

Two final points can be drawn from this review of the three "domains" of workforce development. One is that the workforce development field is highly decentralized, both at the levels of scholarship and practice, with each domain drawing upon its own particular understanding of workforce development field and its challenges, and its own institutions and policy tools for addressing those challenges. This poses a significant challenge for scholarship and initiatives across the domains, especially coming from fields like planning where interest in workforce development is growing. The second is that space and place-based concerns are, at most, implicit to these policy approaches. To a greater extent, the scholars and practitioners in these domains focus on individuals as workers and students, and on firms and organizations. It is this issue – how planning scholarship connects workforce development toward space and place – to which I turn in the next section.

IV. Connecting People and Place: Workforce Development in Planning Scholarship

In recent years, planning scholars have begun to engage with the workforce development field, helping to shift the field from a narrow focus on the skills, networks and careers of workers (and the organizations where they work) toward a broader focus on place-based prosperity, equity and opportunity. Yet to date the dimensions of this interface between workforce development and planning scholarship have not been delineated. In this section I identify three areas of planning scholarship where workforce development programs and institutions are – or have potential to be – an important object of study. Within each area, I identify the key research questions that planning scholars have asked about workforce development, as well as an emergent research agenda for planning scholarship within that area. I conclude this article with a call for broader engagement among planning scholars with workforce development, recognizing the vital perspective that they can bring to this emergent field.

Spatial versus institutional dynamics of opportunity in urban regions. In many U.S. metropolitan regions, the 20th century paradigm of central cities with concentrated poverty and segregated minority populations surrounded by mostly White suburbs with low poverty and copious good jobs has given way to a more complex – and in some ways more challenging – dynamic. Researchers' and practitioners' concerns about "spatial mismatch," which once emphasized the inability of inner-city workers to access jobs on the suburban fringe, must now contend with a peripheralization of the urban poor into filtered-down inner-ring suburbs as central city neighborhoods gentrify and outer suburbs fight to maintain their exclusivity (Kneebone and Berube 2013).

Much of planning scholarship around this topic[2] has emphasized the need to overcome these spatial impediments by enhancing the mobility of low-wage workers through transportation

[2] See Fan (2012) for a more extensive review of the planning literature on spatial mismatch.

systems (Blumenberg 2004; Blumenberg and Manville 2004), improving the accessibility of jobs through community economic development, transit-oriented development and "jobs/housing balance" (Immergluck 1998; Levine 1998), and dispersing the poor from areas of concentrated poverty and breaking down barriers to affordable housing provision in "high opportunity" communities (Briggs and Wilson 2005; Briggs 2010). By contrast, workforce development scholars focus instead on the institutional mechanisms – and barriers – for connecting workers to jobs. Arguing that planners generally fail to understand how labor markets work, Chapple (2006b) suggests that they need to focus less on physical proximity to jobs and more on the lack of "bridging" networks to employers on the part of low-wage workers. By maintaining "institutional density" at the regional scale through an array of workforce intermediaries operating at a variety of scales – communities, cities, urban regions – planners and policy makers can help to overcome the fragmentation and segmentation that exists within urban labor markets.

While promising, there has been little research on the impact of institutional density – and unevenness thereof – on labor market outcomes at the community or the regional scale. Ongoing cuts to publicly-funded workforce development programs have resulted in a continuous process of consolidation of service delivery, which have arguably moved in two competing directions. On one hand, they have resulted in efforts to streamline services between geographies (e.g., through consolidations of workforce investment boards between cities and suburbs) and between bureaucracies (e.g., between state employment departments, local workforce boards, and entities such as local public housing authorities), removing institutional density of a perhaps detrimental character. But the cuts have often come at the expense of community-based organizations with strong-tie networks into communities – either geographical or racial/ethnic in nature – and weak-tie networks to employers; the results of cuts have likely been asymmetric within urban regions. Although there is a growing body of working examining the institutional responses to suburban poverty (Allard and Roth 2010; Reckhow and Weir 2012; Kneebone and Berube 2013, chap. 6), including the role of foundations and other non-governmental entities, there is relatively little work that has been done on how workforce intermediaries themselves are adapting to the changing spatial dynamics between communities of need and employment growth.

Regional labor market restructuring and economic development. Ongoing restructuring on the part of corporations and industries render regional labor markets unstable and tumultuous. This is hardly a new phenomenon for planners; beginning in the late 1970s, planners, economists and geographers began to theorize how macro-scale shifts in national economic governance and capital mobility, micro-level shifts in corporate governance and meso-level dynamics of industry competition and technological change were manifesting themselves in restructuring activities of firms and entire industries, and a broader scale "deindustrialization" of the economy (Massey and Meegan 1978; Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Markusen 1986; Storper and Walker 1989). Since that time, the restructuring of regional economies and labor markets has come to be viewed not as an event, but as an ongoing process that challenges the capacity of place-based actors and institutions to secure good jobs and economic prosperity (Doussard, Peck, and Theodore 2009; Christopherson and Clark 2007). As industries have restructured spatially, this has placed growing emphasis on the functional capacities and capabilities of regional economies, as evidenced by their occupational structure. In recent years, planning scholars have argued that economic developers need to focus on analysis of regional occupational structure in addition to industrial structure (Feser 2003), and complement their focus on firms and industries with a focus on workers and occupations (Markusen 2004).

From a research standpoint, the question is how workforce development institutions mediate – either positively or negatively – processes of firm and industry restructuring. To what extent do they open up new possibilities for firms to reorganize themselves to better address the competing imperatives to reduce costs, increase quality and flexibility?

Recent planning research on labor market intermediaries (LMI) has suggested that they can have both positive and negative effects on restructuring outcomes for businesses, workers and communities. Benner's research on Silicon Valley found that LMIs were instrumental in providing high-technology firms – and the local economy generally – with the flexibility to respond to rapid changes in technology and market conditions (Benner 2002; 2003). Yet the benefits of this flexibility accrue largely to employers, allowing them to tap into a local skill base that has accrued over time without the need to reinvest in it, and often driving down wages and job security for workers (Christopherson and Clark 2007). From this perspective, workforce development institutions are implicated as a source of regressive labor market restructuring, by making new labor market practices possible, ones that empower capital at the expense of labor and community.

But other research has shown that workforce development initiatives, under the right circumstances, can also play a more progressive role in local labor markets, by supporting "high road" employer practices that resist the imperative to drive down wages in favor of alternatives that support high wages, skill formation and career advancement. In practice, the most compelling examples of these alternatives have been in places where unions have been able to bring management – generally on a region- and industry-wide basis – to the table to develop skills training programs that support high productivity and, consequently, high wages (Dresser and Rogers 1998). Such examples include the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership in manufacturing (Parker and Rogers 1999; Bernhardt, Dresser, and Rogers 2004), Nevada Partners/Culinary Institute of Las Vegas in hospitality (Bernhardt, Dresser, and Hatton 2003), and the Philadelphia's 1099C Upgrading Fund in health care (Fitzgerald 2006, chap. 6). Less common are cases where publicly-sponsored workforce development programs have made firm and industry upgrading a core priority. Examples like Chicago's ManufacturingWorks initiative (Schrock 2013) and the North Carolina BioWork program (Lowe 2007) suggest that efforts to induce employers toward progressive alternatives are possible, but likely only where labor market conditions create favorable incentives for such engagement, and where workforce intermediaries are critical of employer tendencies toward myopic and regressive practices, but credible enough with employers to prescribe more progressive alternatives. As Osterman (2008) notes, improving job quality in low-wage labor markets may ultimately require a complementary set of regulatory strategies on one hand, such as living wage laws and union organizing policies, and workforce policies on the other hand, to support and sustain high-wage, high-skill employment systems within firms and industries.

Equity planning and equitable development policies. Equity planning emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s as a response to a range of injustices in the urban realm, from ghettoization of racial minorities in declining, disinvested inner-city neighborhoods, urban renewal policies that displaced those same populations on a disproportionate basis in favor of the landed interests of the "growth machine," and planning processes that either explicitly failed to involve poor and minority communities – or worse, involved them in disingenuous ways. The project of equity planning, quite simply, was to use the instruments of urban planning – both the planning process, and the articulation of goals and objectives – to redistribute power and resources in urban communities to those with the least power and the fewest resources (Krumholz and Forester 1990; Metzger 1996).

Throughout this time, planning scholars eagerly documented localized coalitions of planners, elected officials and poor and minority communities to push back against the "city limits" (Peterson 1981) in pursuit of an equity agenda. Notable example included the landmark 1975 Cleveland Policy Plan (Krumholz 1982), "progressive city" mayors in Santa Barbara, Hartford, Boston and other cities (Clavel 1986; 2010), and in particular, the administration of Mayor Harold Washington in Chicago in the mid-1980s (Clavel and Wiewel 1991; Alexander 2007; Clavel 2010).

"Equitable development" was an important element of the equity planning agenda, and "linkage policies" were a key component of them. Linkage policies, in broad terms, sought to connect local approval for growth-oriented projects to conditions and policies that either mitigated the negative effect of growth on vulnerable populations, or channeled the benefits toward disadvantaged populations (Goetz 1990). One specific form of linkage policy was "first source hiring," which required employers receiving public funding for public works projects, public contracts, or economic development incentives to utilize publicly-funded employment and job training programs on a preferential basis for recruitment and hiring of new workers. In 1978, Portland, Oregon became the first U.S. city to adopt First Source Hiring as local policy, and a number of cities followed over the course of the next decade (Schrock 2014). However, most cities retreated from linkage policies in the 1990s in the face of legal challenges from business (and often, labor) interests, and more broadly from a wave of "entrepreneurialist" mayors concerned about the negative impacts of linkage and equity policies on the urban business climate.

In recent years, however, there has been a renewed interest in promoting equitable development (Blackwell 2000), most notably through the "community benefits" movement (Parks and Warren 2010; Wolf-Powers 2010). Community benefits agreements provide for negotiated agreements between developers and communities to target the benefits of new development – such as job creation – to disadvantaged populations while providing for affordable housing, parks and other public goods. The Great Recession and emergence of the "green-collar job" movement have helped to bring employment linkage policies back into fashion, with a number of cities passing "local hire" ordinances that set goals and targets not just for local residents, but often for racial minorities and economically disadvantaged populations. Evaluating the efficacy of equitable development policies and their impacts on communities and local economic development outcomes represents an important front for planning scholarship around workforce development and equity planning.

V. Conclusion: People Prosperity in Place

The workforce development field has much to offer the broader field of urban planning. In particular, workforce development represents a bridge between the planning field's typical focus on places and their development, and the ultimate concern that planners share with affecting material improvements in the lives of the people who live in those places, especially the poor and marginalized. By focusing on the skills, networks and careers of workers in the labor market, workforce development programs and practitioners play a direct role in shaping the landscape of opportunity within communities. For planning scholars of all stripes and specializations, workforce development can help to promote a progressive vision of communities and regions that reconcile growth with equity (Clark and Christopherson 2009).

At the same time, though, planners have an important contribution to make to the emergent field of workforce development. As Robert Giloth observed early on, workforce development is about more than just helping individuals find good jobs – it is also about "deep community connections" and affecting structural change. For planners, this implies a variety of different roles for workforce development, including: helping disadvantaged communities and populations build economic assets and power; shaping and responding to the impacts of private (dis)investment on communities and regions; and influencing to the distributional outcomes of public investments and regulations on places and communities of need. Simply put, planners understand how places change and why. What they bring to workforce development is a form of "stereo vision" about people *and* place. In this sense, planning can help to foster a more robust approach to workforce development that recognizes that publicly-led investments in skills, networks and careers need to be undertaken with an explicit recognition of how the urban and regional landscape is changing – and ought to be changed, via planning – in ways that will either promote, or instead confound, people prosperity in place.

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