

Creating Futures: Potential of Video Empowerment in Postsecondary Education

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Abstract: Social progress benefits from positive future expectations which are often diminished in the disability community and higher education. Considerable potential exists in the use of video and related technologies to create images of positive futures where previously there was none. These potentials stem from proven practices of self modeling and feedforward, methods to teach new skills with carefully planned and edited videos that show future capability of the individual on video. These practices have been applied to a diversity of ages, situations, and human conditions. We extend these practices to video-based futures planning, in which teenagers find meaning in their current educational setting to prepare them for adulthood and to putting individuals with disabilities in control of the video production to assemble television shows illustrating personal advocacy or community environments with positive outcomes for themselves, their families, and their neighbors. The examples show the considerable potential for support in the postsecondary educational environment.

Part of social progress rests on positive future expectations. The lack of such positive expectations may be perpetuated in the disability community with poor outcomes in education, employment, lifestyle and so on. This paper investigates the documented use of strategies to develop positive images and voices among people who have been marginalized for various reasons. A common thread is the use of technology to create positive self-images. The findings have led to the concept of *creating futures* (Dowrick, Skouge, & Galbavy, 1999). It is supported by an interesting proposition by Bandura (1997) that there are three types of environments: those that severely delimit people's operating options, those that offer choices, and *constructed environments* that allow people to become self-determined beyond the apparent limitations of their circumstances.

The percentage of students with a (declared) disability entering universities and community colleges in the US has more than doubled in the last 5 years. However, the increase is entirely due to students with 'learning disabilities' and the enrollment of students with some of the more severe physical and sensory disabilities have declined (NCES, 1999). The numbers of students with disabilities engaging in higher education is still less than half what could be predicted from the general population, and graduation and employment outcomes are even worse (Stodden & Dowrick, 1999). There is sparse research evidence to explain these poor outcomes (Gajar, 1998;

Gartin, Rumrill, & Serebreni, 1996). In this article, we examine the potential for video technology to contribute to better outcomes.

Our searches of PsychLit, ERIC, SocLit, and MedLine revealed no publications directly linking positive video self-images to students with disabilities entering or succeeding in postsecondary education. Therefore we present this position paper argued on the basis of converging findings in the literature and in current practice. Note there are a number of studies in print describing the use of positive self-images on video to support the development of non-disabled students in various skills from counseling to basketball (e.g., Bradley, 1993; Hosford & Johnson, 1983). Examples more related to the topic of this paper are discussed below under Feedforward: Skills Development.

In Hawai`i, we have developed community television as a way *to give voices*, both to youth at risk and to adults with disabilities, in distinctively similar ways. In one program, adolescents are identified as under-performing at school because of emotional, physical, and cognitive disabilities. We help them to identify positive and interesting aspects of their communities, or interesting 'happening' events and people. They form production teams, with specific roles in planning, scripting, interviewing, and videotaping. They are supported by adults in the community, and student assistants and staff of the Center on Disability Studies to learn these roles and to be successful in them. Under an arrangement with a community television station, the resulting programs are broadcast, one per month (Kelly & Skouge, 1997-1998). Nearly 200 of these and similarly empowering videos have been made, with reengagement in school based activities and enabling systems change (e.g., changes in Department of Health procedures) as the main outcomes. We have also enabled people with disabilities to set up their own web pages and express positive learning experiences, and to use the internet to communicate with peers in other part of the US.

In other places, we have developed the use of personal videos to improve specific skills for the present or to enhance beliefs of the future. A program in Alaska - *Video Futures* -teaches educators how to use positive video strategies to help students succeed academically and in other areas of life. In particular, we teach the use of video self modeling and video explorations (Dowrick, 1999). Self modeling includes the creating of images (usually on video) that show people succeeding at challenging tasks. Video explorations enable individuals to examine future alternatives of their environments, work, relationships, and so on.

Vignettes

First we give two vignettes - one (Clem) from Video Futures, and one (Teresa) from community television. Then we seek a theoretical thread to draw these strategies together followed by sample applications providing much more detail than the vignettes. The rest of the paper reviews the empirical background and the potential for applications in higher education.

In our first vignette, a student with learning disabilities has 2 years of high school remaining before he embraces the brave new world of adulthood, but he has no ideas at all about his future adult life. This student, Clem, also has a chronic medical condition that at times preoccupies or depresses him so that he neglects personal hygiene and other ways of taking care of himself.

Clem enters our Video Futures program for developing images and goals for adulthood and transition plans based on those images. He goes to self-determination classes and to meetings with people who know and care about him to develop a personal futures plan - in which college is one of the options. We make a 6 minute video for Clem showing him as a 23 year old at college, coming home to an apartment (driving his own car), engaged in interesting hobbies such as photography, and working in a television station. In the process of making and reviewing the video, Clem gets motivated to take appropriate classes that might enable these futures. Other people around him work in more cohesively to support the goals expressed in the video.

Because of his anxieties around job interviewing, we make a (2 min) self modeling video for Clem. It is staged and edited to show him entering an office and effectively making a few key interactions with a 'potential employer' (role-played). Reviewing this short video several times teaches him some pivotal skills such as making an interview appointment. It also boosts his confidence enough to apply for jobs, deal with set backs, and eventually secure employment. For empirically evaluated studies of these types of interventions, see reviews by Dowrick (1991, 1999) and Meharg and Woltersdorf (1990).

Video explorations can give even more of a voice to individuals with disabilities by putting them behind the camera as well as in front of it. For example, Teresa is part of a youth crew who make videos about their community for local television. At age 9, she was struck by a car - experiencing severe traumatic body and brain injury. After 2 years in a wheelchair, she began to walk and then to ride her bicycle. Now in high school, Teresa continues to feel the aftermath of the accident: speaking very softly, moving somewhat awkwardly, and taking information very literally - sequelae typical of her condition (National Institutes of Health, 1999). Teresa is academically successful (better than B average), she loves the ocean, and would like to study science in her career. She would like to have friends.

Several years ago, Teresa and her family became actively involved in the community television project, mentioned above, in which young people with and without disabilities were taught to produce a monthly community television show. Using a variety show format and filmed in a family garage, the program entitled "Through the Viewfinder" addresses issues of diversity, science, culture and the arts (Rocco, Metzger, Zangerle, & Skouge, in press). Teresa learns to set-up stage, operate floor cameras and mixers, interview guests, and produce mini documentaries of community people and events to be included in the program.

The highlight of Teresa's experience is her opportunity to interview Dr. Richard Radtke, a marine biology professor from the University of Hawai'i. Dr. Radtke is quadriplegic from multiple sclerosis. He has a service dog and travels and works in Norway, Greenland, Antarctica, Alaska and Hawai'i. Teresa introduces Dr. Radtke, listens and engages him in dialogue, invites questions from other participants, and thanks him for being a guest on 'her show.' Then, with Dr. Radtke still on the set, Teresa presents her own work on ocean pollution, complete with graphics and 'studio' (i.e. garage) audience participation.

This television segment has now been broadcast several times on Hawai'i Public Television. Teresa acts as a competent, enthusiastic host and she says she sees herself as a scientist colleague. She expresses determination to go to university and become a marine biologist. She

prepares ecology presentations and maintains her own web site with pictures and text of her activities. Through video she has been empowered to explore career options for herself both through engagement with a significant role model and through the self modeling that comes with watching herself as television host. And Teresa is making friends.

Theoretical Thread

Two key principles are operating in these examples. One is that all creatures learn by observing their successes and humans can learn from successes they have *not yet had* (Dowrick, 1999, p. 36). The second key element is the power of the medium to engage and persuade. These two principles operate at differing levels in different examples of technology-enhanced personal stories. And they interact with each other to produce the potential of creating futures.

All the videos described above build on current or recent personal triumphs to create the image of positive future goals. For Clem, the images are deliberately chosen to represent potential goals, such as taking classes at college, but they are solidly built on present day components not the least of which are Clem's own words and thoughts. Teresa's videos are based more firmly in the present, such as the research she has already done at the beach, but they are edited and promoted in a way that also features her potential as an adult. The impact is heightened by her role behind the camera and as a crew member making the television show possible. Clem's impact is enhanced by his role in developing the themes of scenarios and his opportunity for control in the final cut and presentation of his videos.

Thirty billion person hours a week are spent watching television. Some single events, such as the Pope's Christmas mass or the World Cup final in soccer, are watched by more than 1 billion viewers at the same time. The power of the medium to engage is beyond dispute. People are even more interested in viewing themselves than watching other people (Brockner, Altman, & Chalek, 1982). The medium is also persuasive - why else spend \$1M to produce a 15 sec. advertisement for a \$2 deodorant? It is not only the direct individual impact, it is the context of influence on and by the social milieu. Clem presents his videos to school personnel and family. Teresa's production is seen by peers and community members: Hey, saw you on TV the other night! Because these videos are deliberately developed to show positive images and potential futures, they draw positive responses. These community responses further solidify the impact of viewing oneself in the self modeling paradigm.

Sample Applications

In this section we present two case examples to illustrate different uses of the self model in video empowerment. Copies of related videos are available from the authors.

Halona's Video Self-Advocacy

Halona is an intelligent middle-aged man who was raised in Hawai'i's (recently closed) large institution for people with disabilities. His diminutive body is contracted so that he has difficulty moving his legs, arms and fingers. All that he can dependably control is a slight movement of his head to the right and left. Halona does not speak in the usual sense of a voice. Last year, Halona

moved into a foster home in the community. His greatest wish is to have more control over his life. Although he is not concerned with a university degree, his story is a powerful example of video self-advocacy in which the potential for postsecondary education is compellingly clear.

Several years ago Halona enrolled in a self-advocacy program sponsored by the Hawai'i Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council). Once a month for a year Halona joined other people with disabilities and sometimes their family members for weekend retreats to learn about civil rights and responsibilities and how to advocate for social change. Halona went to the retreats with an attendant who tried her best to communicate for him by using a letter board. The attendant scanned her finger across the rows and columns of letters while Halona nodded or blinked to spell-out his messages. The process was arduous. Most often Halona sat silently and listened. Everyone liked him. He always seemed cheerful. He needed an augmentative communication device, everyone agreed.

Previously, Halona had had an electronic talking device, which he could activate with a head switch. The talker had broken and the Department of Health had not effectively responded to requests to repair or replace it. Halona was without a voice. The story that follows demonstrates the power of a personal video to promote systems change.

Each year the Hawai'i DD Council hosts a legislative breakfast at the State Capitol in which legislators are invited to meet the disability community over breakfast to listen and learn about issues of importance to people with developmental disabilities. In preparation for the event, the DD Council approached our Center on Disability Studies, a community response program (see Dowrick, 1998), to see if a video might be produced to give voice to consumers who otherwise would not be heard.

A decision was made for Halona to be the producer of his own video using a video futures strategy. Because Halona could not speak, and because he no longer had access to augmentative communication equipment, a \$6000 device was borrowed from the Prentche Romich Company and programmed by Halona and his aide. The programmed messages included 50 personal statements in Halona's first person voice presenting to the legislators his interests and loves, hopes and dreams, and needs and concerns. He told them how he enjoys taking his friends to supper and listening to Hawaiian music, his desire to live in his own apartment and manage his own money, the local foods he enjoys, his love of shopping to buy little things for his friends, and, most of all, his need for an augmentative communication device so that he can begin communicating once again with the world.

On the morning of the Legislative Breakfast Halona was in attendance - reclining in his overstuffed wheelchair - unable to sit up straight because of contractures in his legs and back. He was all smiles. The 100 or so invited guests had eaten their breakfasts. The speeches were over, the lights dimmed. Suddenly, larger than life, filling an entire wall of the conference room, Halona took the floor, his voice booming through the amplification system. The politicians saw him voting at the polls. Voting for the opposition party, no less! They saw him clicking his little head switch as his messages scanned on the face of the device. But most of all, they heard a man passionately and honestly speaking for himself. Three times Halona boomed in his electronic voice "I want and need a communication device. I want and need to live on my own. Hear me."

Then the lights went up. The room was silent. Perhaps the people were not sure what they had just seen and heard. "Who was this man?" Then Halona was introduced. "Ladies and gentlemen, please meet Halona. We are honored to have him here this morning with us." The people began to clap. Halona became real to others present. He had been heard. Then the senators and the representatives began a barrage of questions, all directed at Halona. "What is it you need?" "Why don't you already have it?" "What do you mean you've gone 2 years without a talker?" "What are these `talkers' anyway and how much do they cost?" All the questions were answered by Halona's circle of friends. Halona sat silent, smiling and watching. The device he had used in his video had since been returned to the company that lent it. Nonetheless, his communication had been received. The Department of Health was directed to cut through any red tape to get this man a talker as soon as possible.

Within days, Halona had contacted a lawyer with the Protection and Advocacy agency. He had seen enough. He was empowered.

Kerrie's Video-Based Future's Plan

At 17 years of age of course Kerrie had a Transition Plan. It was required by law for all special education students. But it barely met the regulations with vague descriptors of gaining daily living skills and vocational education. It implied, without any clear statement, that she would continue to live with her parents. Then she volunteered for our Video Futures program (Dowrick, Tallman, Mercer, & Donnelly, 1993). Her records showed that most of her school years included special programs for learning disabilities and speech therapy. She was currently in an alternative program for students considered at high risk of dropping out. She was absent 1 day in 5, tardy 2 days in 5, and she had a long list of mild to moderate disciplinary actions.

First, she participated in a Self-Determination class with discussions on goal setting, self-efficacy, etc. (Ben, Wiedle, Andersen, & Dowrick, 1995). Then one of our staff helped her to develop a list of hopes and dreams for the future. In discussions with Kerrie, her family, and others, the list grew to 21 items that could be part of her adulthood. They encompassed the six domains of life for which we considered transition planning to be most important (Dowrick & Wiedle, 1996):

1. Where might you live?
2. What kind of job would you like to have?
3. What will be your relationship with family?
4. What will your social life include?
5. Other recreation?
6. How will you get about (mode of transport)?

Kerrie then met with another of our staff, James, to identify her six to ten most important aspirations. We explained that we would like to make a movie of her future, like science fiction, with her in the starring role. She could also help plan and edit the video. She thought it was a cool (if a bit puzzling) idea. To put the items on video they had to become much more specific and tangible than they were. Live independently became have my own apartment with one roommate. And that had implications for what type of apartment (was it affordable with the type

of job she had identified), would you be making your own meals - can you cook? - and so on. If you are going to be working in child care or as a chef, won't you need some classes at college?

Kerrie and James quickly agreed on eight situations with enough specificity for rough scripts or storyboards. (See Table 1 for script samples.) James made location arrangements, such as a vacant student housing apartment and use of the key, a friend with a car, and the university restaurant kitchen. Each shoot was individually planned for no more than five clips that would each be edited into 30-40 seconds of tape. Sometimes they took a videographer with them, otherwise James did the camera and directed the action.

It took 2 weeks to arrange locations and collect the footage necessary for editing. Kerrie watched James's first cut with him, to approve or make suggestions for changes, and she helped to choose some background music. The final edit of six situations was 6 minutes long, including titles with Alaskan scenery and credits at the end showing Kerrie as the producer and owner of the tape.

Table 1: Kerrie's Video Script Examples^a

Buying a Car (mode of transport choice)

Distance shot of Kerrie and Christine walking around Christine's car. Christine puts down the hood. Kerrie kicks a tire (her humor). They start to walk towards the camera.

Cut to: Kerrie and Christine standing facing each other in foreground. Christine's car, background left.

C: Yes, I'm asking 3000 for it.

[ad lib, short haggle on price]

K: I really think two thousand seven hundred is all my budget can stand.

C: Okay . . . You bought yourself a car!

Christine holds up the keys head height between them. Kerrie takes the keys with a big smile.

As K. walks towards the car, she throws keys in air and catches them [may need separate shot]

Working as a Restaurant Chef

Medium-close shots of Kerrie and The Manager in restaurant kitchen [change angles as necessary to create separate shots within this scene]

Kerrie is stirring a large pot of soup. She reaches for a packet on the shelf.

K: I'll add a touch of this [herb - whatever it is].

M: The soup needs to be ready at 11:30.

K: It'll be just perfect by then.

She tastes the soup.

Voice off-camera: How's the soup, Kerrie?

Fade out on Kerrie's smile.

a. Both these scenes led to Kerrie taking classes. The cooking led to community college, as it implied culinary skills and restaurant management.

Kerrie watched her tape and took it home. She showed it several times to her family, to friends, or just for herself. Then she asked to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting. The video was accepted as the new Transition Plan and her IEP was redrafted with objectives to meet the long term goals illustrated in the video. The short term impact was evident in the engagement and ownership of the education process. Kerrie's schooling took a new lease of life. Her absences and tardies fell to less than 2%. She enrolled in cooking classes and driving school. She participated more in classroom discussion in all her subjects and her grades improved. She smiled more at school.

In the longer term, she fulfilled most of the images on her video created future, generally speaking. At age 20, she did not have a full time job, but she had successfully completed a semester of college, including courses in culinary arts and management, and she worked part time at the University child care center. She had an apartment and a roommate. She had no car but she did have her driver's license. She attended the People First International Conference (as a co-presenter) where she was interviewed on camera about her new hopes and dreams. She said how proud she was of her schooling and wanting to meet the challenge of higher level college classes. And she was hoping for more responsibility and raises in pay at work.

Commentary

Both Halona and Kerrie were empowered by videos featuring themselves. Halona's video was specifically developed to give him a voice he did not otherwise have, to present his situation to legislators and government personnel. It also presented an opportunity for Halona to see and hear himself in images that spoke to his potential future. He saw himself doing things he would like to do more of - he heard himself speaking effectively about his needs, thus his future activities.

Kerrie's video was deliberately produced to show multiple potential futures. It was designed with her as the primary viewer, in contrast to Halona's situation, in which he became a viewer as a natural consequence of being the producer. Kerrie, too, showed her video to others and witnessed their reactions. Both were motivated to behave differently in their immediate circumstances and both took responsibility afresh for shaping their own futures.

Empirical Background

The examples described above vary in two dimensions: the extent to which the featured individual - the self in the self model - is supported or directed through the production and related objectives; and the extent to which the selves or the environments are featured in the

production. A considerable body of data exists on self modeling, as developed over recent decades, for creating futures around highly specific adaptive skills. Therefore, selected outcomes most relevant to postsecondary education are reviewed here. We also summarize outcomes of the Hawai`ian Through the Viewfinder project and the Alaskan Video Futures project.

Feedforward: Skills Development

About 150 applications of self modeling are recorded in print (Dowrick, 1999). At least 80% of them use video although self modeling is not confined to one medium. Images of adaptive behavior for the purposes of self-observation can also be produced on audiotape (e.g., Hosford, 1980), in the imagination (Mulcahy & Schacter, 1982), in snapshot sequences (Krantz, MacDuff, & McClannahan, 1993), in printed stories (Kojian, 1992), through role play (Kelly, 1955), or by selective self-monitoring (Kern, Wacker, Mace, Falk, Dunlap, & Komrey, 1995), although such practices may not always be presented as self modeling.

Video can provide a vivid, moving image. In self modeling, these images usually include skills seldom achieved (positive self-review) or yet to be achieved (feedforward). Feedforward, a term coined to maximize its conceptual contrast with feedback, can be achieved by editing and other cinematic techniques. Positive self-review is the more commonly used approach, being perhaps more accessible both conceptually and in practice.

In an example of self modeling using positive self-review, Starek and McCullagh (1999) taught beginning swimmers by showing them the best samples of their most recent, difficult-to-attain accomplishments in terms of stroke, breathing, etc. These swimmers did significantly better than those in a carefully matched peer modeling condition citing such remarks as, I paid attention and focused on what I needed to do (p. 285). This study was typical for the amount and type of change brought about in skills-focused positive self-review.

However, creating futures needs to go beyond the maximizing of current levels of success. Hence there is potential for feedforward which focuses more firmly on the future than positive self-review. To illustrate, in contrast with the swimming study above, Holman (1991) created more images of skills beyond the individual's repertoire. For example, some of his beginning swimmers used fins to enable textbook stroking and breathing, which were then seen in videos showing only the upper body, not the fins. This example illustrates how an out-of-camera support (use of fins) can produce a more futuristic accomplishment of an athletic skill in the observer's image.

Comparable techniques are often applied to emotional and cognitive learning, of relevance here. Two studies are of interest because of the subject population and target outcome. One is by Dowrick and Jesdale (1990) who used self modeling with college women, ages 18 to 50, to improve mood (anxiety, depression). The women made conversation on camera with an interviewer very adept at drawing out topics that were interesting, positive, and future oriented. We edited the tapes to enhance them further. Within two or three viewings of these 2 minute videos these women experienced significant improvements in mood, whereas a control group did not.

An interesting replication was provided by Kahn, Kehle, Jenson, and Clark (1990) in a school-based study. They carefully selected and screened clinically depressed adolescents, assigning them to three treatment conditions: video self modeling, group cognitive behavior therapy, or relaxation training plus a wait list control condition. They used several repeated measures, including a short follow up. Overall, the adolescents showed statistically and clinically beneficial results from all active treatments. Outcomes were almost as good for self modeling using one 3-minute video as they were for twelve 2-hour sessions of cognitive behavior therapy.

There are two points to note. First, the method of producing the self model videos was somewhat different in the two studies. Kahn coached the students in verbalizations, body posture, etc. to look non-depressed. He also had them dress, and fix their hair and makeup to present an image considered positive by the students. In his pilot study he found self modeling to be even more effective than the other interventions (Kahn, 1987). Throughout both studies there are strong elements of feedforward, as well as some positive self-review. Secondly, the participants were either enrolled at college or of an age to begin considering it. Inevitably, many of the images were related to academic success. One 50 year old college woman said in her self modeling video, I'm going to get my degree if they have to nail it on my casket!

Note there are many studies that examine the reaction of college students to seeing themselves on video. However, most of these studies are negatively confrontational (e.g., McRea, 1983) with mixed results. The focus of the remainder includes examining effects on memory (e.g., Frost, Benton, & Dowrick, 1990) or affective reactions etc. upon seeing oneself on video. For example, Raymond, Dowrick, and Kleinke (1993) found women students to be surprisingly unaffected by seeing themselves *for the first time* on video contrary to predictions from previous literature. However, none of these studies used videos deliberately constructed to show positive self images.

An interesting extension of the self modeling strategies is to prepare people for unknown or threatening environments. This approach has its most substantial foundation in the treatment of selective mutism (Dowrick, 1999, pp. 27-29). In the most usual form of this unusual condition a child will speak freely at home, but be completely mute at school. Video or audio feedforward has recently become the intervention of choice (Blum, Kell, Starr, Lloyds Lender, Bradley-Krug, Osborne, & Dowrick, 1998; Kehle, Madaus, Baratta, & Bray, 1998). Essentially, the approach involves interweaving images of the individual with images of other people in the setting as if in conversation. Whereas selective mutism in its dramatic childhood form has usually been resolved by adulthood, some level of social phobia usually remains. More importantly, what we have learned from the childhood interventions is a powerful intervention for disinhibiting the public display of behavior that people have competent control of in private.

These uses of video have led to more general applications. For example, a girl with autism was prepared for transition to junior high school (Dowrick & Fitzgerald, 1995). Videos were made simply by taking the girl, with a friend, to the school lunchroom and classroom at the end of spring semester. She frequently viewed this videotape over the summer and joined her new school with far less disruptions than were normally expected. In another case (Trachtenberg & Wagner, 1997), a man had been in a children's rehabilitation hospital from age 18 to 28 when he elected to move into an apartment with a supported living arrangement. We made a video of a

visit to the (2nd floor) apartment focusing on him and his attendants successfully coping with a fire emergency. His one real fear was a fire as he depended on his electric wheelchair for mobility and his ventilator for breathing.

The self modeling literature is replete with examples of using positive personal videos to reduce anxiety, improve attitudes, and teach new skills related to unknown or challenging circumstances. Much of its promise appears to derive from the value of learning from images of future behavior characterized by feedforward.

Creating Futures from Behind and in Front of the Camera

Our Through the Viewfinder project has been supported by the Center on Disability Studies, the National Science Foundation, and Olelo Public Television. In partnership, we have developed a community television studio in a rural area of Oahu producing regularly scheduled programming addressing issues of diversity, science, technology, and the arts. We have involved more than 100 youth, parents, teachers, therapists, and community members with a particular emphasis on issues related to the culture of disability. Literally hundreds of shows have been produced and broadcast on community television (Kelly & Skouge, 1997-1998). The project is currently undergoing a transition with the intention of producing a professionally enhanced look using a studio in Honolulu.

As an outgrowth we have initiated *Oceans of Potentiality* (Skouge, Radtke, Klemm, & Zangerle, 2000), a science and technology club. Adults are trained as mentors and role models for youth interacting with them in retreats and camps held throughout the state. Internet clubs are now being established to extend this effort. Youths produce videos of themselves and their mentors exploring their hopes and dreams, especially in terms of career opportunities and challenges.

So far we have involved more than 60 youth and young adults. We include a diverse set of participants including ethnic diversity, disability diversity, and geographic diversity. Our ethnic representation includes Hawaiian, Japanese, Caucasian, Korean, Filipino, and Chinese. Youth and their mentors include individuals with quadriplegia and paraplegia, mental health needs, cerebral palsy and Down Syndrome, Deafness and blindness. We include students using augmentative communication devices. Our participants and activities span Oahu and Hawai'i's neighbor islands (Molokai, Big Island, Maui, Kauai) and soon we will include youth from the Pacific nation of American Samoa and from Alaska.

It is early yet to measure the long term impact of these projects. We can report, however, that during the last 3 years our youth have stayed in school, with several graduating and continuing to college. Shawn, a teenager with cerebral palsy who communicates through an augmentative communication device emphatically declares that he intends to become president of the United States - although we would prefer that he go to college first and explore a career as an astronaut. Teresa, described earlier, recently created her own internet home page in Hawaiian recounting her ambition to become a science major at university.

Iris, a blind participant and host of Through the Viewfinder, graduated last spring from high school. After much mentoring and support she overcame her trepidations concerning community

college and successfully enrolled. As part of our strategy to build role models, we sponsored Iris's mentor, Sharon, who is blind and a graduate of the University of Hawai'i, to work for several weeks with blind children in American Samoa. While in Samoa, Sharon produced a video of her work soon to be broadcast on community television. Stories such as these can inspire youth to take risks and fulfill their potential. Soon we plan for Iris to accompany Sharon to American Samoa to experience, first hand, the importance and value of service.

Creating Futures in Early Adulthood

Twenty teenagers in a special high school program for students at risk took part in the program referred to above as Video Futures. All these students had cognitive disabilities of some type with special education classifications including learning disabilities with attention deficit disorder, mental retardation, and others. Many of the students had other conditions considered to put them at additional risk such as medical conditions (diabetes) or juvenile justice records.

About 40 students in the program were introduced to self-determination in the classroom and they undertook personal futures planning with their families. Along lines similar to those illustrated by Clem and Kerrie, 20 youth, ages 16-19 years, accepted an option to make a video of their personal futures plans (Ben, Weidle, Tallman, & Dowrick, 1996). These videos mostly included five or six vignettes, approximately 1 minute each, to illustrate specific goals also referred to as hopes and dreams. Initially, the intent was to structure the topics to represent six specific domains, as it was for Kerrie, described above. But in response to student preferences and the realities of practical applications most videos did not follow that structure. All goals were chosen within the six domains, but some students chose two of one and none of another.

Thirteen students listed some type of course or class among their goals and virtually half of them chose a second learning goal. Most popular among male and female students was culinary arts and second for girls was early childhood development. These choices may have been influenced by their availability at the high school and 'taking classes' may have been vaguely associated with postsecondary education. Looking at choice of employment in combination with interest in taking classes may provide a better indicator of aspirations for higher education. A number of the culinary arts choices were associated with an interest to work as a chef. In an extreme example, Francis wanted to learn about diving, take acting lessons (at the local university), and work as a veterinarian assistant. The first two explicitly require classes, but the last - categorized as employment - implies an even more extensive course of future study. Parenthetically, it may be added that the same number, 13 youth, identified a place to live (independently of parents) as a goal for their video. These were the two highest categories. Another popular choice was getting a driver's license and/or buying a car, the only option chosen for mode of transport.

Of these 20 students, 5 transferred to other places before the end of high school. Five of the remaining 15 have successfully taken academic courses at local universities. Several others have taken adult classes from rock climbing to welding. Ten participated fully at an International People First Conference where they presented on aspects of the transition and self-determination. They were interviewed (on camera; Ben, Cairns, Connor, & Dowrick, 1999) and all spoke enthusiastically about their new hopes and dreams emphasizing travel, better employment, and families. One was engaged to be married and one had not only lived for 2 years in an apartment

(a video depicted goal), but she had bought her own home with special HUD financing and had been featured in a prior conference for her work reliability and initiative. At high school prior to her video, her parents had never expected her to leave home or to obtain full time work.

The overall outcomes for the students in the video-based futures program were above the expectation for students of their classification in the school system. But the program was not designed to promote postsecondary education. It was not even one of the six specific targeted domains. However, for many it took a natural place alongside work or play. The potential for targeting postsecondary education is evidently an exciting prospect.

Potential Applications

The possibilities are exciting. Not only is there the promise from recent findings, but new technological developments include ways to supplement video with computers and the internet. We also use digital still cameras (e.g., Sony Mavica) to edit pictures plus narration on computer which, in turn, are recorded to video. This strategy permits youth with cognitive and behavioral disabilities to be more actively engaged in the editing process. The portable, multimedia technologies create new opportunities for self-advocacy and creating futures.

Multimedia technology, as described in this article, requires participants to think about their work. They must develop scripts with stories, scenes, titles, credits, and maybe music and narration. Although it requires that people visualize their futures some of that emerges before their eyes as they work on their product. It is great personal development and powerful learning.

Last year, a young man involved in a catastrophic automobile accident (including traumatic brain injury) produced a video in which he was a disk jockey, introducing music and telling stories about his community and family. The video was produced in his bedroom, humble surroundings. It included all the elements to be found in effective storyboards including roll over footage of beautiful scenes of a surfing beach that he had enjoyed before his accident. It took a day to produce the video. Recently, we received a phone call from him, Alonso. "I watch my video every day," he said. "It is who I am." Alonso had been truant and now he goes to school. Alonso's video gave him the chance to recover a sense of "future."

Conclusions

The strategy of putting positive personal images of the future on videotape, in general, has been greatly under used in the 30 years of studying it. Therefore, there is little wonder why this strategy has seldom been applied to the now-blossoming endeavor of postsecondary education for people with disabilities. There is no need to list the usual litany of contributions to the difficulties in research to practice (Hargreaves, 1996; Huberman, 1999). Simply, we think video editing has been under the shadow of inhibiting technology. We have done dozens of workshops for numerous enthusiastic participants. But we consider ourselves fortunate if 5 out of 100 people actually make edited videos (Ben et al., 1996). The same is true when we show people (parents, school teachers) how easy it is to make personal web pages. On the other hand, we know that participants have benefited from learning the technological literacy, the understanding

of what can be done, the appreciation of others' efforts, and from their knowledge of feedforward as a general strategy.

Now that will change. We have said that before, but now it really will change. No, it is not the new millennium. It is the digital revolution. Many computers are now built to accept direct video input and they come loaded with editing software. We have bought and used them. Quality can be excellent and application can be easy. The main hurdle for most videographers is compromising quality for the length of the production. But the videos described in this article are a few minutes long. And they can be put out to CD-ROM (McClesky, 2000) about as easily as to videotape thus making them as readily played on a computer as on a TV/monitor.

We are enthusiastic about the future without even creating electronic images of it! Computers, internet, video, and television give voice to people who never had such possibilities. Portable, powerful, cheap and friendly multimedia technology can make it easy to empower everyone. People with and without disabilities can use technology to create their own images of the future in which they previously had no thought or belief. The images can engage and persuade the originators and others to help enable these futures.

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