



Introduction to “Procrastination, Clutter, & Hoarding”

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It has been said, *procrastination* is like a sore throat = it has many causes and consequences (see Ferrari 2010). But contrary to common belief, procrastination is different from delay, pausing, waiting, pondering, or prioritizing. It is a tendency to delay the start or completion of a desired task to the point of experiencing discomfort (Ferrari and Tibbett 2017). Since the first major scholarly text in the field by Ferrari et al. (1995), the scientific study of procrastination grew slowly, yet currently international scholars are investigating the causes, consequences, and in some cases the “cures” of chronic procrastination.

I have been blessed to focus much of my scholarly attention on the study of procrastination since the late 1980s, and worked with wonderful international scholars. Collectively, we found that 20% of adult women and men are *chronic procrastinators* – persons who use this maladaptive lifestyle at home, work, in relationships, in daily living. That rate is higher than many DSM listed disorders, and have been reported in countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Peru, Venezuela, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Austria, Japan, S. Korea, Turkey, Israel, and Saudi Arabia (to name a few nations.)

In 1997, at York University in Toronto, Canada, a small number of researchers and clinical therapists (around a dozen) gathered to discuss the impact of procrastination in our lives. We decided to meet again (in two years) outside of North America and began our international meetings on the study of procrastination. In July 2017, we held the *10th Biennial International Meeting on the Study of Procrastination* at DePaul University, Chicago, IL, USA, with over 65 international scholars, only the second time this meeting was held in

the USA. During those 20 years the number and breath of scholarly publications and presentations on procrastination grew and we were invited to pull together this themed issue of *CP* for interested readers.

In the present issue of *Current Psychology*, researchers focused on *procrastination*, *clutter*, and *hoarding* – for what we may call “*decisive disposal delay*.” Papers explored both *decisional procrastination* (i.e., indecision) and *behavioral, general procrastination*. Understanding *clutter* is a recent topic for psychologist concerned with over extensive possessions. *Hoarding* has a richer more established line of study. But, we believe the intersections between these three human frailties is important to understand, and this Themed Issue is the first attempt to bring together varied assessments.

Ashworth and McCown assessed behavioral procrastination and hoarding in terms of attention issues specifically related to AD-HD. Burgess, Frost, Marani, and Gabrielson focused on decisional procrastination vs. indecision and hoarding behaviors/cognitions. Ferrari, Roster, Crum, and Pardo explored an ecological assessment (i.e., context as well as character aspects) to behavioral procrastination and clutter, while Ferrari, Crum, and Pardo examined decisional procrastination with character and context variables. Ferrari and Roster continued these assessments looking at students and community samples on procrastination and clutter. Prohaska, Celestino, Dangleben, Sanchez, and Sandoval focused on procrastination and clutter with Hispanic participants, and Stolcis and McCown explored procrastination and hoarding with older than age 65 adults. Taken together, these papers reflect a good foundation toward understanding forms of procrastination with clutter and hoarding – three common excessive behaviors affecting many individuals.

Readers of this Themed Issue of *CP* have Dr. Ferraro, Editor, to thank for having the foresight to invite me to address procrastination in new contexts. We now together invite our colleagues and psychology students to consider investigating procrastination in new and varied contexts, and to meet us in 2019, 2021, 2023, etc. at future international meetings.

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