

Christmas consumerism overshadows Thanksgiving holiday

The snow has already fallen, Christmas sales have already started, radio stations and TV stations have begun their Christmas marathons, and Christmas decorations already line the main streets of Winfield. But guess what? Thanksgiving just passed less than a week ago. Those decorations were up long before anybody was even thinking about Thanksgiving. Walmart's Christmas displays were up before people even started worrying about Thanksgiving plans.

This is one of the many things that I don't understand about our culture. We get so caught up in the Christmas holiday and the consumerism that accompanies it that we completely skip over Thanksgiving.

Go to Walmart at any point after Halloween, they have maybe one or two aisles for Thanksgiving and the rest of the store is like Christmas galore.

Because of the over-glamorization of the holiday, we lose

the real reason we celebrate both holidays. We lose the giving thanks aspect of Thanksgiving and we lose the gathering and the real reason for the season of Christmas. Christmas has become so consumer-centered that all we ever focus on is getting the sales, spending money, and stressing over the fine details.

Sure, there's not much you can do for Thanksgiving besides eat to your heart's content, put out some turkey decorations, and maybe spread some fall leaves, real or fake, whatever works. But the least we can do is wait until after Thanksgiving to actually put out Christmas decorations.

It's like Thanksgiving is the middle child, between Halloween and Christmas, and Thanksgiving always gets the short end of the stick.

I recently saw a poster online that says, "At Nordstrom, we won't be decking our halls until Friday. Why? Well, we just like the idea of celebrating one holi-

day at a time. From our family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving." I respect things like this. First, why would you want to worry about more than one holiday at a



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time anyway? Second, who wants to deck their halls for that long? Don't get me wrong, the Christmas holiday is great, we do get a whole month off of school, but do we really need almost two months of Christmas carols and inflatable Santas?

Thanksgiving is one of the most American holidays, besides July

4th. All it requires is sitting, eating, watching football and the parade, and hoping you can get through the annual family get-together without having to answer the same question over and over again.

At Towne West Mall in Wichita, Santa began making appearances on Nov. 15, 41 days before Christmas. Christmas light displays are already up and running, including the Isle of Lights at Island Park. The ugly sweaters have already taken over. Radio stations began playing Christmas music as soon as Halloween ended. Christmas decorations began going up as fast as the ghosts and spider webs came down.

Our holidays are basically being Christmas-ized. Christmas has engulfed the entire season of Thanksgiving and before we know it, even Halloween will be overtaken by Christmas decorations and music.

As said by Mary-Jayne McKay in her CBS segment "Christmas

Before Thanksgiving," "I like Christmas presents, Christmas music, Christmas trees, Christmas cards. I like the Christmas spirit. What I don't like is the way people whose only interest in Christmas is money have moved in on a nice, non-commercial holiday [such] as Thanksgiving."

Wouldn't it be nice to just sit and relax and enjoy a holiday without worrying about where the money is going or who can get the best deal or the best present?

Next year, challenge yourself to hold off on Christmas decorations until December 1st. Focus on the turkey, focus on family, maybe go shopping on Black Friday if that's what you like to do. But give the Thanksgiving holiday a chance to shine. Everybody deserves their 15 minutes of fame, right?

I guess now all I can say is, Merry Christmas!

Kylie Stamper is a sophomore majoring in communication. You can email her at kylie.stamper@sckans.edu

Coat selection expands winter wardrobe

I collect coats like the crazy cat lady collects cats. I just horde and collect coats whenever I can get my hands on them.

I'm talking about a borderline obsession with coats. The first thing I look for in a clothing store is whether or not they have beautiful, cool or well-crafted coats.

I love all types of coats from the cape to a good leather jacket to the princess style to even a parka. In fact, if you were to go to my Pinterest account and took a look at my fashion board you could see all my pins of drool worthy coats that I want to be in my closet.

I like them even more, because as an orderly person, I appreciate the fact that coats can be separated into seasonal items as well. (It makes it easier to organize my closet.)

I like it when cold weather starts setting in. It's a sign from the universe that I can break out my winter coats.

Now I understand that not everyone has the love affair with coats that I have. I know that there are people out there who be-

grudgingly wear coats during the winter just so they won't get cold.

To those people I say, "You simply haven't found the right coat yet." There is a winter coat out there for everyone. All it takes to find the one, is a little self-evaluation.

First let's talk about the basics: length, fabric type, color, fit and price.

If you are thinking of getting a longer coat, get one that elongates your frame. This will make you look taller and leaner.

You should also do your research on the type of fabric you want your coat made of. You can base this decision on weather or on your own personal favorite fabric types. Just beware that some fabrics will make a coat more costly.

For color there are two basic things to know. One is try to find a coat in your favorite color so that you will be more likely to wear it.

The second thing to realize is not every coat design will look good in every color. This may

mean you will have to get a coat in a color you wouldn't normally wear.

The most important of all the basics though is fit. You want the fit to accentuate and flatter your body. If you can get a coat to do



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these two things it will benefit you in the long haul.

As for price go with a range that won't break the bank. If you want to go pricier, save up and make it a statement piece.

Figure out what body shape and skin tone you have. Knowing these couple of extra things will help speed up finding the perfect

jacket for you.

There are always people who simply refuse to wear coats in any type of weather. These people genuinely confuse me. Why would anyone want to be cold or wet or buffeted by wind?

Coats serve two purposes. Amp up an outfit and protect the body from harsh weather. So it makes sense that everyone would want to wear a coat when it's snowing, raining or windy out.

If you won't wear a coat to make yourself comfortable during inclement weather why, do you go out in it? Do you like being miserable? There is no logical reason to not wear a coat in bad weather.

There is a very simple fix for this dislike toward coats and jackets.

Live a little. Try on more jackets and coats. Wear coats in the more unpredictable seasons. You might just find one that you like.

It doesn't have to stop at winter coats though.

You could always add style and flair to any outfit, while keeping

warm by purchasing gloves and scarves.

Cute scarves and good gloves are a great way to help complete an outfit or round an outfit out.

The key to these two items is to make sure they don't irritate your skin. When looking for scarves to buy always check the softness of the fabric they are made with.

If the fabric isn't soft to the touch it's probably not worth buying. There is always the off chance that washing it in fabric softener will make it softer, but rough fabric tends to stay rough no matter how many washes it goes through.

Next up are gloves. I like my gloves to be hard working.

That means I want them soft, warm and reliable. I would think most people would like the same out of their gloves.

I'd even wager that most people would want all of their winter clothes soft, warm and reliable.

Maggie Dunning is a junior majoring in communication. You may email her at margaret.dunning@sckans.edu