

'Gifting' for the holidays

By Amber Vance
Staff Writer

With the holidays quickly approaching, it's easy to get carried away scrambling to find gifts. But should gifts be so important?

It seems in today's capitalist society that the holiday season is a time for people to buy expensive gifts. Those who cannot afford many gifts feel awful because they feel like the only way for them to express their love is through buying material items.

My parents did not always have enough money to give my brother and me many gifts for Christmas. In elementary school, I can still

remember coming back from Christmas break and everyone would be bragging about what all they had gotten for Christmas. I felt left out because my parents could not afford much. Now, I see that there is more to the season than receiving gifts. It's about sharing your time with those that matter.

During the holiday season, commercials for different businesses are claiming to have "the perfect gift" and this reinforces the idea that a person has to find gifts for the holidays. There is really no such thing as "the perfect gift," no wrong or right answers. Christmas is meant to be a peaceful, joyful holiday not for people worrying over buying the perfect gifts or being

disappointed when they did not get what they wanted.

Christmas should be seen as a season of giving but for people to give a bit of themselves to those they care about by spending time with them. Time is a great gift that you can give someone you love. Any material item you might give them will eventually wear out but the memories you give them in time spent together will stay with them.

So this holiday season, keep in mind that it should not just be about giving and receiving gifts. It's about spending time with those close to you and making memories. Happy Holidays and have a Happy New Year!

Who doesn't like a space western?

What to expect in 'The Mandalorian' and Episode IX

By Margaret Correll
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Disney has done it again! They have crafted an interesting and layered story that I and many other people have become obsessed with in the past few days.

"The Mandalorian" captures what everyone loves about the "Star Wars" franchise: interesting characters and plot points, suspense and cute creatures that are able to sell tons of merchandise. The series airs on Disney + and has a total of five available episodes with more on the way.

Episode one introduces us to the character Mando, played by Pedro Pascal, who is a Mandalorian and a bounty hunter working for an organization called "The Guild." He is a loner and does his job with no questions asked, mixing a stoic attitude with an aura that can only be described as "Clint Eastwood-like."

Mando is tasked with a job by Empire loyalists, showing the audience that there are still supporters after the battle of Endor and the

fall of the Emperor and Darth Vader. He is sent off to find a "target" and that there should be no questions asked.

He finds the target after a difficult journey, realizing that it is a child. He is informed that it is 50 years old and that many bounty hunters are searching for it, making it of high value. The appearance of the child is shocking to many loyal "Star Wars" fans because it is the same species as Yoda, former Jedi master whose species is unknown.

Mando has a change of heart when handing over the child to collect his payment and he takes him away, but not without some fighting and gunslinging. Episodes four and five see Mando and the child on a journey to evade bounty hunters and encountering many interesting and sometimes dangerous characters along the way.

"The Mandalorian," in my opinion, is a nicely crafted spinoff of the franchise. I think that it is refreshing to see characters that we do not know much about, like Mando and the child. It adds many more questions to the long list that fans have about the series and it will open many more doors for the franchise to continue.

I would give this series a 4 out 5 stars so far. "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" will be the gigantic end to another successful saga. I am

very fond of "The Force Awakens" and "The Last Jedi," the first two movies in the current trilogy, and I am very interested in seeing how they finish this journey.

I am also very excited to see how they incorporate "The Mandalorian" into the last installment of this saga.

