

# Getting Christmas in perspective

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**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**BASIC** rules for Christmas Day: Do not talk about those who were alive, dead, drunk or committed suicide last Christmas.

Laugh brightly at all the old Christmas jokes and stories.

When exchanging gifts restrain all comments based on violent and gender specific toys, politically unsound items such as French perfume and sexist presents such as a teatowel for her and a pen for him.

Get Christmas into perspective with **Season's Greetings** a teleplay by the master of the acute observation, Alan Ayckbourn. After watching this wonderfully wry and witty play you'll be the full bottle on what not to do on the big day.

Between the lines of the leading characters, Bernard, played by Geoffrey Palmer, and Neville and Belinda Bunker, played by Nicky Henson and Barbara

**Seasons Greetings: ABC, 8.45pm**

**Roanoak: SBS, 8 pm**

*Times and programs may vary*

Flynn, the real messages come through showing what happens when one thinks or says the word "idiot" on Christmas Day and the tragic but painfully funny consequences of having a best selling novelist house guest over the holidays.

Ayckbourn's clever plot shows how getting awed, drunk, infatuated or offering plots to this person is definitely out. He exposes what lies beneath the bright baubles, cellophane wraps and party hats of Christmas Day and reveals the traps that lie in wait for the unwary and indiscreet at the foot of the Christmas tree, particularly around midnight.

In the first episode of **Roanoak**, a finely

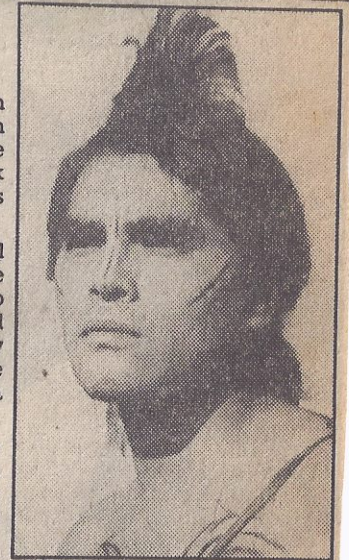
produced three-part series in English/Algonquian, the first Englishmen arrive on American soil and there are many echoes of the scenario which took place on these shores two hundred years later.

The Indians' extraordinary personal struggle to uphold their ideals and nurture a friendship with the newcomers leads to an inevitable clash of cultures, initiated with the first exchange of beads, a penny whistle and other tokens which the newcomers offer in exchange for a continent.

The story unfolds through the experiences of John White, who believes in the peaceful meeting of cultures. Starring Victor Garber, Joseph Runningfox and Will Sampson.

Season's Greetings also from . . .

— BERWYN LEWIS



**Roanoak . . . a clash of cultures**