



Damon Runyon's
Pueblo



A Britannica Film/Video

Damon Runyon's Pueblo (40 minutes)

"...It's the oldest established permanent floating crap game in New York!" (Sung by Nathan Detroit and chorus in the Broadway musical "Guys and Dolls.")

When "Guys and Dolls" played to an opening night audience at Manhattan's 46th Street Theater in November of 1950, it was pronounced an instant hit. Unfortunately, there was no curtain call for the gifted craftsman whose keenly tuned ear and fluent pen had so deftly translated the patois of Broadway into a lyrical fable of Time Square's hard boiled crapshooters and soft hearted gangsters. Damon Runyon, the product of another and less celebrated Manhattan—Manhattan, Kansas—had died four years before the curtain lifted on the whimsical underworld of Nathan Detroit, Sky Masterson, Harry the Horse, and Nicely-Nicely Johnson.

Damon Runyon's Pueblo affords viewers an eye-opening glimpse into the little-known artistic roots of the man who was once the world's most famous and highest paid writer. The semi-documentary dramatization reveals the author as a street-wise school drop-out growing up in the alleys, brothels and bars of turn-of-the-century Pueblo, Colorado. Having moved with his family from Kansas to Pueblo in his seventh year, Runyon's formal education was sketchy; nevertheless, his native curiosity and passion for storytelling propelled him toward enriching adventures and a self-made career in journalism which began with his internship on the staff of the *Pueblo Chieftain*.

It is widely known that Runyon's tales and syndicated newspaper column provided the basis for such highly successful movies and stage productions as "Guys and Dolls," "Pocketful of Miracles" and "Little Miss Marker." But few of his admirers know that many characters and incidents in Runyon's stories were suggested by Pueblo people and experiences. This film is, perhaps, the most complete study to date of the writer's early life. Shot on location at the actual sites of Runyon's boyhood haunts, *Damon Runyon's Pueblo* depicts a number of structures frequented by the writer which still stand today—the elegant homes, thoroughfares, train depots, and newspaper establishments of a community which was undergoing a transformation from rough-and-tumble frontier outpost to bustling industrial center rich in Victorian charm and opulence.

The documentary includes dramatizations of two Runyon works—"Doc Brackett," a short story about the kindly town physician whose death was distinguished by a whimsical grave marker which captured the essence of the good man's lifelong dedication; and "The Funeral of Madam Chase," a poem celebrating both the hypocrisy and the honesty of people who had known Pueblo's most notorious prostitute.



SPECIAL INTEREST AUDIENCES

- Students of literature, drama, journalism
- Theater enthusiasts
- U. S. Western folklore and history buffs
- Travel clubs
- Film study groups

Special Events

Sponsor a screening of *Damon Runyon's Pueblo*, followed by a panel discussion: "Damon Runyon—Small Town Boy Who Made It Big." Panelists might be drawn from local college departments of literature, journalism, and drama, as well as from publishing firms or theatrical groups whose members might offer interesting insights into Runyon's influence on the entertainment arts.

Publicity

To publicize your film program, send copies of this flyer to local newspaper editors covering the arts and entertainment. Schools, colleges, and theatrical groups might also be supplied with flyers for their bulletin boards. Britannica will provide additional copies on request. Be sure to include information on location, dates and viewing times.

Information Services • References

Colorado Historical Society
1300 Broadway
Denver, Colorado 80203

Pueblo Library District
100 E. Abriendo Avenue
Pueblo, Colorado 81004

Kansas Historical Society
120 West 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612

The Pueblo Chieftain
825 W. 6th Street
Pueblo, Colorado 81002

Replacement Footage

To order replacement footage for damaged portions of this film, refer to the numbers that appear on the perforated edge of the film. Example of footage order: **Damon Runyon's Pueblo**. Send footage starting with number 0125 through 0186, a total of 61 feet.

About Videocassettes

Videocassettes are available for all EBE 16mm films in the following formats: ¾" U-Matic, ½" Beta II, ½" VHS—all in NTSC standard. EBE policies for 16mm films (preview/rental, trade-in replacement of damaged print) also apply to videocassettes.

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FILM DATA

DAMON RUNYON'S PUEBLO

16mm, Color No. 3739

40 minutes

Produced with the support
of the Colorado Humanities
Program, a grantee of the
National Endowment for
the Humanities.
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