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Portrait of an Artist as a Young Poseur Boston 1974 to 1983

By Doug Holder

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Noted Boston Historian Anthony Sammarco reviews "Portrait of an Artist as a Young Poseur"

In his new book *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Poseur Boston 1974 to 1983* Doug Holder takes us on a literary journey to a not too distant past to lost sections of the city of Boston that includes Newbury Street, the North End, the Combat Zone, Chinatown and my favorite-- Ken's Deli at Copley Square, which I often patronized with my friend Bob Stone.

In each of these fascinating writings, with sixteen entries, Holder takes us back to Boston some forty years ago to its grimy, gritty and decidedly outré world that included the Combat Zone, cinemas, mad houses and joke shops which combined in these poems let us return to a special place and time in the city before the onslaught of urban renewal and gentrification, which would sadly see a thin veneer of respectability overlaid on the richness and often hilarious recountings of these now lost places in time.

In vivid and insightful detail, and in a conspiratorial tone that Holder shares with other Bostonians "of a certain age," he has woven a series of stories that dispel the stereotype of Boston being a staid and proper city. If anything, the memories evoked in Part 7 "Copley Square, Ken's Deli" takes us back to a time when it was the place to be seen at 2:00 AM, waiting in line to finally eat a gargantuan sandwich, with french fries, in a carnival-like atmosphere of bar-weary patrons, leather clad men, college girls trying to act soignée, and at Halloween time the ubiquitous Dorothy from the "Wizard of Oz," replete with her wicker basket. This book by Doug Holder is a keeper, a veritable window into the recent past that allows us to glimpse a Boston that has somewhat changed beyond recognition but which allows us to return to revel in the splendors of Boston.

Anthony Sammarco -- author of "Lost Boston" Anthony Sammarco is a historian and the author of 57 books on the history and development of Boston. He has taught history at the Urban College of Boston since 1996.