



# The Secret World of the Victorian Lodging House

*Joseph O'Neill*

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## **The Secret World of the Victorian Lodging House** Joseph O'Neill

Criminals, drifters, beggars, the homeless, immigrants, prostitutes, tramping artisans, street entertainers, abandoned children, navvies, and families fallen on hard times – a whole underclass of people on the margins of society passed through Victorian lodging houses. These places were to be found in almost every city and town and they were central to working class life.

The Jack the Ripper murders of 1888 brought lodging houses to the attention of an appalled public and, labeled seedbeds of infectious disease, they were seen as training schools for criminals and conmen of every description. The reality, however, was more complex as lodging houses also provided for those scratching a living, and sheltered those who refused to enter the workhouse.


Joseph O'Neill's fresh research into this lost world of the 'nighttime havens of the wandering tribes' flings open the door to the nineteenth century lodging house, and tells the forgotten stories of those who spent their nights sharing beds with bugs, thieves, and much worse...

O'Neill's previous titles:

'His achievement in applying imagination to the historian's meticulous research produces something rare and true and graceful...recalls The Suspicions of Mr Whicher'

The Irish Post

Joseph O'Neill's conjures up the sights, sounds and smells of a lost age'  
Manchester Evening News

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#### **Michael Short:**

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