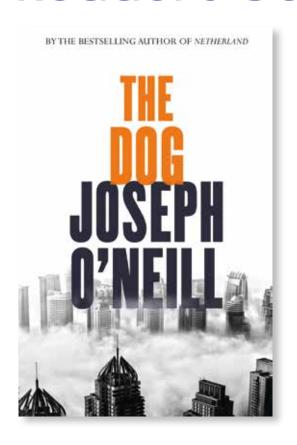


## Reader's Guide



Other novels by Joseph O'Neill This Is the Life (1991) The Breezes (1996) Netherland (2008)

# The Dog Joseph O'Neill

Fourth Estate

www.themanbookerprize.com





#### About the author

Joseph O'Neill was born 1964 in Cork, and is a lawyer, novelist, memoirist and critic.

O'Neill's novel *Netherland* was awarded the 2009 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction and was longlisted for the 2008 Man Booker Prize.

O'Neill also writes literary and cultural criticism, most regularly for the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Since 1998 he has lived in New York City.

### The Dog

In 2007, a New York attorney bumps into an old college buddy – and accepts his friend's offer of a job in Dubai, as the overseer of an enormous family fortune. Haunted by the collapse of his relationship and hoping for a fresh start, our strange hero begins to suspect that he has exchanged one inferno for another.

The Dog is led by a brilliantly entertaining anti-hero. Imprisoned by his endless powers of reasoning, hemmed in by the ethical demands of globalised life, he is fatefully drawn towards the only logical response to our confounding epoch.

### Discussion points

The narrator of *The Dog* describes Dubai as a city of contradictions: hypermodern in some respects, but antiquated in others. How does this tension between modernity and tradition manifest throughout the novel?

Names are symbolic throughout *The Dog*. What connections can be made between names and power? Why is the narrator reluctant to reveal his name?

The Dog explores the line between morality and immorality. How does the narrator define morality? Would you consider him to be a moral person?

Throughout *The Dog*, the narrator's reveals his feelings of guilt and shame. Do you consider him a likable character? Do your feelings toward him change throughout the novel?

The protagonist was a New York attorney. How does legalistic thinking and interpretation of events come into play throughout *The Dog?* 

### Themed reading

Don DeLillo Cosmopolis Jason Porter Why Are You So Sad? George Saunders The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil Gary Shteyngart Absurdistan

#### **Useful links**

www.themanbookerprize.com www.4thestate.co.uk/2014/07/the-dog-will-have-its-day-sooner-than-expected www.randomhouse.com/book/123726/the-dog-by-joseph-oneill