When a man is tired of London, said Samuel Johnson in 1750, he is tired of life. The London of Johnson and Boswell, of Henry Fielding and William Hogarth, was bursting with energy, enterprise and risk. It was also deeply mired in one of direst drug epidemics the world has ever seen. Gin: The Much Lamented Death of Madam Geneva is a fascinating chronicle of a time when the social, economic, and political machinery of Britain was kept lubricated by this cheap, plentiful, and often deadly elixir. Brilliantly researched, with far reaching implications for the drug wars of our time, this is a fast-paced chronicle of the making, selling, and regulating of a powerful intoxicant, and of its disastrous effects on ordinary people.