

Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*
Wesley Advocates

14 March 2021

Picture the inside of Flaherty's shebeen—what do we see? How does Synge manage this space so all the action occurs here? What happens offstage that we hear or hear reported? What is it a shebeen rather than a legitimate, licensed pub?

Describe Pegeen Mike. What is she well known for? How does she describe her life here on the coast of County Mayo? What does Pegeen Mike order in the beginning? Why is the order significant later in the play? How does she feel about Michael James, about Shawn? Why is she immediately attracted to Christy?

Describe Shawn Keogh. What is he like? What does he value? Whom does he fear? Why does he dislike Christy? Why does Michael James think him good husband material for Pegeen Mike? How does Shawn seek to undermine Christy? Why does he fail?

How do Shawn and Christy serve as foils to each other? How do Widow Quin and Pegeen Mike serve as foils to each other?

How does Synge prepare us for Christy's entrance? Why is he on the run from the peelers. Of what horrible crimes do Philly, Michael James, and Jimmy inquire before Christy tells his story? What exactly is Christy's story? What has he done? When? Why? How? What is a loy?

What exactly is a playboy as Synge uses the term?

What is ironic about the way characters use the term *orphan* in the play? What is a pot-boy? Why is Christy happy to accept this job?

How does the Act 2 scene of the girls' entrance (Susan, Nelly, Honor, Sara) parallel that in Act 1 of the men's entrance (Michael James, Philly, Jimmy)? Why have the girls come? How do Christy, Widow Quin, and Pegeen Mike respond to these girls?

Whom did Old Mahon plan for Christy to marry? Describe her.

When does Old Mahon appear? How does that affect opinion of Christy? Why?

In both Acts 2 and 3, Christy woos Pegeen Mike. How does he do so in Act 2? To what effects? How does he do so in Act 3? Examine closely Christy's language and its effects on Pegeen Mike.

What happens to Christy when he competes in the sports and races? (Even with the spavindy donkey?)

How many times does Christy slay his father? How many times is Old Mahon resurrected? How do they resolve their quarrel finally?

Why do the citizens of Mayo particularly admire and praise Christy? Why do they turn against him?

What does Pegeen Mike mean at the end of Act 3? Why is she bereft?