Martin McDonagh is considered one of the current star playwrights of Irish drama. This study sheds light on how Martin McDonagh's drama presents the social, religious, and political culture of the Irish West by focusing on five selected plays: The Beauty Queen of Leenane, The Lonesome West, A Skull in Connemara, The Cripple of Inishmaan and The Lieutenant of Inishmore.

The first chapter, "Martin McDonagh: The West of Ireland" explains how the West came to be highly romanticized, discusses how McDonagh's plays can be seen as a reaction to this, and examines specific influences on McDonagh's work. The second chapter, "The Social Dimension," examines how the three plays of McDonagh's Leenane Trilogy use universal themes of drama. The third chapter, "The Religious Climate," turns to an in-depth look at how McDonagh portrays the Catholic Church through the character of Father Welsh. The fourth chapter, "Political Violence," is dedicated to a study of McDonagh's The Lieutenant of Inishmore.

To sum up, McDonagh's portrayal of the West, socially, religiously, and politically, is quite bleak, tearing down the myth of the idyllic pastoral. This setting serves as a fitting backdrop for McDonagh’s explorations of larger societal problems, in Ireland and beyond.