



**NANCY:** This book will transport you into a strange world of espionage as you experience life from the perspective of a lonely secret agent who crosses borders and attempts a risky project. Through dialogue and drama, the author sketches the portrait of a troubled man, who reflects the emptiness and absurdity of the world of spies. A bestseller in 1963, it continues to offer a window into the Cold War and the difficult, dangerous life of spies.



**MOLLY:** This book provided a character study on an aging spy and I felt for the guy, sort of, although he's not a very likable person. I think this book reveals the underside our of our political system. Like slavery, war, and discrimination, there are many evil things that happen. I guess it's important to read this to realize what's going on, but not much fun.



**KATHARINE:** Well, not my favorite book, but I can see some value here for history students, studying the Cold War. I think this book raises many ethical questions. You've heard that quote: "All is fair in love and war." But is it really? Do the ends justify the means? Maybe good for classes on ethics, as well. Was there anything ethical about Leamus and his work?



**SALLIE:** This book was not my cup of tea. I'm sorry, but this spy Leamus is such a pathetic character. Why do you think the author wrote this book? Obviously, it was a best seller, so some people really like to read this stuff. What kind of a person grows up to be a spy? Do they think it's going to be exciting? Do they like the danger? Can you imagine being the child of a spy?



**PRISCILLA:** Well, I know our government needs spies, but it is a pretty shady business. I agree with the rest of you on that. I don't know if a Christian could be a spy. All that killing and deception. It's not a very good way to live. It's one of those things I prefer just not to know about. Ladies, let's get back to our fun novels, okay?



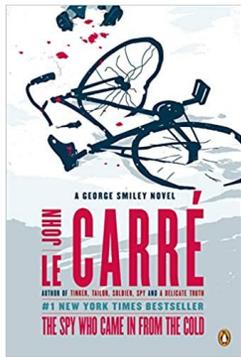
**ABIGAIL:** This book just made me feel very sad. I felt so sorry for the characters, the spies and the people who loved them. Did any of them really have good lives? Leamus was such a tormented man. As a Quaker, I believe war is wrong, and this tale of espionage reveals the dark underbelly of it all.



**JANE:** This book was confusing and scary to me. I kept wondering who is the good guy. I mean, I think usually the USA has all the good guys, right? But in this story was it the Brits? I wasn't so sure. And the women seemed to really get the raw end of the deal. Not my favorite book, either.



# Discussion Guide



## About the Book

Title: The Spy Who Came in from the Cold

Author: John Le Carre

Published: Victor, Gollancz and Pan, 1963

Website: <https://johnlecarre.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/johnlecarreofficial>

## Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. What does it mean to “come in from the cold”? Did Leamus actually do this? Why do you think this was chosen for the title?
3. This book was first published in 1963, in the midst of the Cold War. How did you see the Cold War and its mindset evident in this novel?
4. What did you think of the character of Leamus? Does he make you want to be a spy? Why or why not?
5. Have you read other spy novels? If so how does this compare and contrast?
6. Did you believe there are “good guys” and “bad guys” in the spy world? Do the tactics vary much on either side?
7. What role do women play in this story? Do you think that is an accurate portrayal of the role of women in espionage at the time? Why or why not?
8. The author did work in the field of espionage, but he was allowed to publish this book because it is fiction and didn't reflect the actual spy rings. What do you think was his intent in writing this?
9. Read over the MAMs comments on this book. With whom do you agree/disagree and why?
10. Will this book change your life or perspective in any way? Explain.

**Listen to John Le Carre on YouTube at:**

**John Le Carré's Final Interview on British TV (15:24)**

**In Conversation with John le Carre (6:41)**

**John le Carré on "The Spy Who Came in From the Cold (1965)" (39:00)**