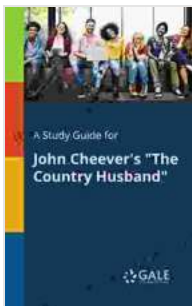


# A Comprehensive Study Guide to John Cheever's "The Country Husband" for Students

John Cheever's "The Country Husband" is a short story that explores the themes of identity, marriage, and the American Dream. The story follows Francis Weed, a suburban commuter who struggles to find meaning in his life. Francis is a successful businessman, but he is deeply unhappy in his marriage and his job. He longs for a more authentic life, but he is afraid to leave the comfort and stability of his suburban existence.

This study guide will provide you with a comprehensive overview of "The Country Husband." We will discuss the story's plot, characters, themes, and literary devices. We will also provide you with some discussion questions to help you think more deeply about the story.



## A Study Guide for John Cheever's "The Country Husband" (Short Stories for Students) by Santiago Casas

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 632 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 20 pages



## Plot Summary

The story begins with Francis Weed getting ready for work. He is a successful businessman, but he is deeply unhappy in his marriage and his job. He longs for a more authentic life, but he is afraid to leave the comfort and stability of his suburban existence.

One day, Francis meets a young woman named Erica at a party. Erica is beautiful and intelligent, and Francis is immediately drawn to her. They begin an affair, and Francis soon finds himself falling in love with her. However, he knows that his affair is wrong, and he eventually ends it.

After the affair ends, Francis is more unhappy than ever. He realizes that he cannot go back to his old life, but he is also afraid to start a new one. He is stuck in a rut, and he does not know how to get out.

## Characters

- **Francis Weed:** The protagonist of the story. Francis is a successful businessman, but he is deeply unhappy in his marriage and his job. He longs for a more authentic life, but he is afraid to leave the comfort and stability of his suburban existence.
- **Erica:** A young woman who Francis meets at a party. Erica is beautiful and intelligent, and Francis is immediately drawn to her. They begin an affair, and Francis soon finds himself falling in love with her.
- **Julia Weed:** Francis's wife. Julia is a stay-at-home mom who is devoted to her husband and children. She is unaware of Francis's affair.
- **The children:** Francis and Julia have two children, a son and a daughter. The children are not named in the story.

## Themes

- **Identity:** Francis Weed is a man who is struggling to find his identity. He is successful in his career, but he is deeply unhappy in his marriage and his job. He longs for a more authentic life, but he is afraid to leave the comfort and stability of his suburban existence.
- **Marriage:** Francis's marriage to Julia is a source of great unhappiness for him. He feels trapped in a loveless relationship, and he longs for a more passionate and fulfilling connection.
- **The American Dream:** Francis Weed is a product of the American Dream. He has a successful career, a beautiful wife, and two lovely children. However, he is not happy. He realizes that the American Dream is not all that it is cracked up to be.

## Literary Devices

- **Foreshadowing:** The story is full of foreshadowing that hints at the tragic events that will eventually occur. For example, Francis's affair with Erica is foreshadowed by his dream of a beautiful woman in a red dress.
- **Symbolism:** The story uses a number of symbols to represent the themes of identity, marriage, and the American Dream. For example, the red dress that Erica wears is a symbol of passion and danger.
- **Imagery:** The story uses vivid imagery to create a sense of place and atmosphere. For example, the description of the Weed's house is so detailed that the reader can easily imagine what it looks like.

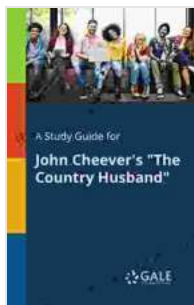
## Discussion Questions

- What do you think is the main theme of "The Country Husband"?

- How does Francis Weed's character change throughout the story?
- What is the significance of the affair between Francis and Erica?
- How does the story explore the American Dream?
- What do you think is the ending of the story?

"The Country Husband" is a complex and moving story that explores the themes of identity, marriage, and the American Dream. Francis Weed is a man who is struggling to find his place in the world. He is successful in his career, but he is deeply unhappy in his marriage and his job. He longs for a more authentic life, but he is afraid to leave the comfort and stability of his suburban existence.

The story is a cautionary tale about the dangers of complacency and the importance of living a life that is true to oneself.



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