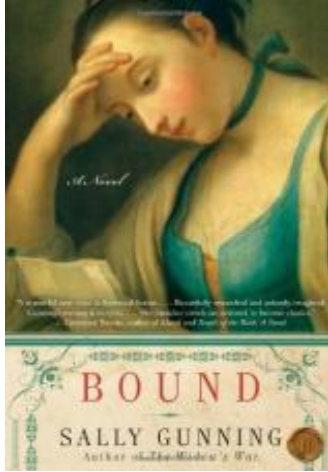


# Bound

by Sally Gunning

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## About the Book

Alice Cole spent her first seven years living in two smoky, crowded rooms in London with her family. But a new home and a better life waited in the colonies, or so her father promised --- a bright dream that turned to ashes when her brothers and mother took ill and died during the arduous voyage. Arriving in New England unable to meet the added expenses incurred by their misfortunes at sea, her father bound Alice into servitude to pay his debts.

By the age of fifteen, Alice can barely remember the time when she was not a servant to John Morton and his daughter, Nabby. Though work fills her days, life with the Mortons is pleasant; Mr. Morton calls Alice his "sweet, good girl," and Nabby, only three years older, is her friend, companion, and now newly married, her mistress.

But Nabby's marriage is not happy, and soon Alice is caught up in its storm; seeing nothing ahead but her own destruction, she defies her new master and the law and runs away to Boston. There she meets a sympathetic widow named Lyddie Berry and her lawyer companion, Eben Freeman. Frightened and alone, Alice impulsively stows away on their ship to Satucket on Cape Cod, where the Widow Berry offers Alice a bed and a job making cloth in support of the new boycott of British wool and linen.

At Widow Berry's, Alice believes her old secret is safe, until it becomes threatened by a new one. As the days pass, the political and the personal stakes rise and intertwine, ultimately setting off a chain of events that will force Alice to question all she thought she knew. Bound by law, society, and her own heart, Alice soon discovers that freedom --- as well as gratitude, friendship, trust, and love --- has a price far higher than any she ever imagined.

Library Journal hailed Sally Gunning's previous novel, **The Widow's War**, as "historical fiction at its best." With **Bound**, this wonderfully talented writer returns to pre-Revolutionary New England and evokes a long-ago time filled with uncertainty, hardship, and promise.

## Discussion Guide

1. **Bound** explores the different kinds of ties that bind one person to another. Of the various bonds explored in this novel, which ones do you feel should have been preserved? Which broken?
2. Alice is a person both old and young for her age. In what ways do you feel she mature and in what ways immature?
3. How would you describe Alice's expectations of life? How do you see these changing through in the course of the book?
4. Do you think Alice feels sorry for herself? Why or why not?
5. Alice refers several times to the idea that a man's eyes are on her. Do you think all men's eyes really are on Alice, or does she just perceive it to be so?
6. In the beginning of the book Nate greatly admires Freeman. Toward the end he appears to become disillusioned. What do you think causes this change? How do you think he feels about Freeman at the end?
7. Do you feel Mr. Morton deserves Alice's prayers?
8. Do agree with Nate's opinion that Freeman would have surely ended up touching Alice? Do you think Nate really believes this? If he doesn't, why does he say it?
9. Discuss what Alice wants/needs from Freeman and whether it would be possible to achieve.
10. Do you think Nate really planned to go to Pownalborough?
11. Can you think of reasons Alice hasn't considered that Lyddie might consider as she debates whether to give up her dower right and marry Freeman?
12. Do you see Lyddie Berry's and Eben Freeman's feelings toward Alice changing through the course of the novel? If so, how and why?

## Author Bio

Sally Gunning lives with her husband in Brewster on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where her roots go back over three centuries. She came to writing at a young age, driven to it in desperation one rainy day when she ran out of books. Today Gunning focuses on digging out the back story to the history that we thought we knew but didn't, and giving it a human face. She is the author of three historical novels set in New England during the tempestuous years that led up to the American Revolution: *The Widow's War*, *Bound*, and her latest - *The Rebellion of Jane Clarke*.

## Critical Praise

?**Bound** is an insightful look back at the horrors of the late colonial period's indentured servant system . . . Sally Gunning provides a well written thought provoking mid-eighteenth century thriller.?

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