



## I Am Regina

*Sally M. Keehn*

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The cabin door crashes open-and in a few minutes Regina's life changes forever. Allegheny Indians murder her father and brother, burn their Pennsylvania home to the ground, and take Regina captive. Only her mother, who is away from home, is safe. Torn from her family, Regina longs for the past, but she must begin a new life. She becomes Tskinnak, who learns to catch fish, dance the Indian dance, and speak the Indian tongue. As the years go by, her new people become her family . . . but she never stops wondering about her mother. Will they ever meet again?

"A first-person narrative based on the true story of a young woman held by Indians from 1755-1763, related with all the impact of a hard-hitting documentary . . . Wonderful reading." (*School Library Journal*)

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## **I Am Regina Details**

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Author : Sally M. Keehn

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## From Reader Review I Am Regina for online ebook

### Chloe says

This was a great read. I picked this book up because I thought it looked interesting, and felt the itch to read something new. I started this book and could not put it down! The author writes in a way that makes you want to read a book from start to finish with no interruptions, so I did just that. One of the best things about this book is the fact that the author does not take sides. It is not the "white man's" fault nor is it the native's fault for the things that occur. The author depicts both sides of the story and it is impossible to take a side. You feel the emotion and frustration of both the natives and the English, and Regina's story is one that will warm your heart. The only thing I did not really like about this book was the ending. As other readers have stated it was hard to tell if it was a happy conclusion or not. Other than that, this was a nice story and it is heartbreaking that it was an actual story not only for Regina, but also for everyone who faced the same difficulties of that era.

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### Angela says

I stumbled upon this book a while ago on goodreads, and was really excited because I had read a book called "Alone Yet Not Alone," which tells Barbara's point of view of the story of hers and Regina's Indian captivity. It was my favorite book for a while. So, of course, I was thrilled when I learned there was a book with Regina's side of the story. Then, I found out that a friend had this book, and she was kind enough to lend it to me :).

So, the book was rather melancholy, but it was very good. It was really interesting to "watch" as Regina started out thinking in an "English" way, and then in an "Indian" way. It is the story of a young girl who was captured by Indians during the French and Indian war. And although captured by Indians and immersed in their ways, she keeps God's Word and her mother's favorite hymn hidden in her heart. The ending was very touching. I will admit that I cried a few times while reading this book :D.

Now, "I Am Regina" and "Alone Yet Not Alone" differ in a few things, such as the sister's ages and what happened when they were captured. They aren't really huge differences, though.

The one thing I was disappointed about in this book was that it viewed Barbara as rather self-centered and foolish.

One bit of warning - there is one scene when an Indian brave sort of on purpose is alone with Regina in his tent. He forces her down on the bed... I'm guessing you've got the picture. \*small spoiler alert\* she does get rescued, though, \*end of small spoiler\* and it's all done tastefully.

Oh, and I would whole-heartedly recommend the book "Alone Yet Not Alone" to anyone interested.

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### Mikayla says

I was very excited about getting this after reading Alone Yet Not Alone.

Honestly, I wasn't as impressed with this book. Regina didn't have the spunk Barbara did. She took her capture submissively enough, and just threw pity party's. Not that I could blame her.

I think the thing that bugged me most was the fact that Regina didn't seem to care about her faith. She talked about God a couple times, but it was always just a nice story to tell. It never seemed to affect her.

Also it was written in present tense, which I find incredibly grating.

The only thing I really liked was Regina's relationship with Sarah. That sisterly relationship was amazing. Overall, I didn't really enjoy this, I would rather just read *Along Yet Not Alone*.

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### **Rachel says**

Based on a true story, this book did one of the best jobs I can remember imparting to my younger self the emotional reality behind history. With Regina, the Indians start off as enemies. They kill her father and brother in their own home, they separate her and her sister, and with her new family she is forced to keep looking at her father's shrunken scalp. But as time goes on Regina turns into Tskinnak, befriended by kindly Nonschetto (whom she then loses) and learning that her new community is both as worthy as the "white men" and persecuted by them. There's also a subplot dealing with alcoholism and violence against women, which sadly has not receded into history. The end is so bittersweet--like the beginning, Tskinnak loses her adopted mother, but she gains back her birth mother (and brother) who "Regina" remembers for her songs. Very moving, thought-provoking read.

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### **Regina O. says**

"I am Regina" tells the tragic, touching, and shocking story of a young girl – Regina – who lives in the mountains of the late 18th Century Pennsylvania. Her family is ambushed and scalped by Native Americans, and Regina is kidnapped and taken to their village. She is forced to live among them, experiencing her pre-teen years by coping with a new culture, strange new customs, and struggling to remember who she is and where she comes from despite being assimilated into the Native American world.

This story is beautiful. There's plenty of real, raw emotions, coupled with an excellently told story. Keehn is a great writer – I enjoyed her storytelling as an adult, and I know it would easily impact a child. This book is a GREAT piece of youth literature, and parents seeking to encourage young readers should have this book on the shelf! The story is interesting, the vocabulary is expansive (for its 4.5 reading level), and young readers will be able to relate to the title character, who is 10 at the beginning of the book.

I will certainly keep this book on the shelves, and pass it on to my girls when they reach an age where they are looking for something good to read. In the world of video games and the Internet, children need encouragement to read, and *I am Regina* is a great book to help fuel the love for literature. I really enjoyed this book!

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### **LadyCalico says**

This is a pretty engrossing story that caught my attention since it is a true story that took place in the area where I used to live. It is a YA book written a direct, simple manner that reads true as if a young girl is telling the story, which also makes it a speedy read. I can call it a good book but not a good YA book because I would not consider the level of violence, death, the rape attempt, and sexual innuendo as entertaining or desirable reading for the younger end of that spectrum.

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### **Christina V. says**

I AM REGINA is about a girl named Regina who gets captured by Native Americans and is adopted by an Indian family. Throughout the book, Regina (now named Tskinnak) struggles with her loyalty to the "white man" and to her alliance with the Indian tribe that has become her new family and her friends.

This book was really interesting read! The action starts off right away and the author is able to keep readers interested as the plot continues. At first I was a little wary of the book because I thought that the author was portraying Native Americans very negatively, but there are definitely moments in the book when that is not true. The book is in 3rd person and is narrated by Regina/Tskinnak, so the readers learn along with her that the Indians are fighting the "white men" for a reason. So, although the beginning of the book may show the Indians as heartless, savage killers, by the end of the book, readers come to sympathize with them and understand their plight.

The one thing that made me a little uncomfortable about the book was the ending, though. I wasn't quite sure (and I'm still not sure) how I feel about it. I don't want to give it away here, but basically, I wasn't sure whether it was supposed to be positive or negative. Other than that, though, I thought it was a good read. It definitely helps you understand the suffering and tribulations of the Native American tribes and really makes you think about the nation's history.

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### **Natalya says**

When I first started I Am Regina, I was almost positive that it would be a boring read, and that I would have to struggle through it for my summer reading. However, as soon as I opened the book, the first page caught my attention. It starts in the mid-eighteenth century, where Regina, the main character, and her sister, Barbara, are out working on the farm. As I kept reading, Regina and Barbara are captured by Indians, separated, and it follows the nine years that Regina lives with the Indians. Though an emotional read, I realized how much I actually enjoyed the genre of Historical Fiction. Well-written and a good read, I would recommend this book to any body who enjoys Historical Fiction, older books like Across Five Aprils, or Keehn. Five stars to this one.

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### **Yarden says**

I am Regina is a historical fiction book about a girl named Regina who lived on the Pennsylvania colonies. She got kidnapped by Allegheny Indians at age 10 along with her father and brother killed and her home burned to ashes. As the years go by Regina learns how to catch wild fish, and to speak the Indian tongue, but her mom is still way and she never forgets the songs they sing. Will they ever meet again?

This book was very interesting to be because I like learning about the Natives ways and I like the type of books when kids get raised in the native ways. One thing the book was missing was show not tell. The author also did not express the action good so there was not much action in the book so it was really boring to read the first half of the book. I would compare this book to another historic fiction book I read was called Blood

In The River. Blood in the River is a lot like I am Regina because it is about an orphan boy who went on the expedition to establish the first English colony and realized that the English ways did not work there. He stayed with the Indians and learned their ways.

Overall this book was really good besides not having a lot of action about how Regina lives her new life with the natives.

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### **Chris says**

The cabin door crashes open-and in a few minutes Regina's life changes forever. Allegheny Indians murder her father and brother, burn their Pennsylvania home to the ground, and take Regina captive. Only her mother, who is away from home, is safe. Torn from her family, Regina longs for the past, but she must begin a new life. She becomes Tskinnak, who learns to catch fish, dance the Indian dance, and speak the Indian tongue. As the years go by, her new people become her family . . . but she never stops wondering about her mother. Will they ever meet again?

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#### **My Comments:**

This is really a very exciting and somewhat brutal book (at least in the beginning). Regina's father and brother are killed by the Indians who also take her father's scalp. She and her sister are captured, and when her sister tries to escape, the Indians recapture her and almost burn her at the stake. What I didn't like too much is the depiction of some Indians as savages, especially her captor, Tiger Claw, who later in the book tries to force himself on her sexually. Regina is a captive for almost 12 years during which time she almost forgets how to speak English. When she is finally "rescued" she has no idea how she will find her mother again because she has few memories of her mother, but she starts singing a song she knew from childhood and her mother recognizes her from the song. A very appropriate ending and a particularly likeable book because it is based on a true story.

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### **Janiel Fonseca says**

Janiel Fonseca  
Period 3

"Rumors say Indians have been attacking settlements to the north of us. Will they attack here?" (Keehn 9). I Am Regina is about a young girl that is taken from her home in the Allegheny Mountains. Her family immigrated from Germany to America, and passed on their values to Regina. Regina is happy, until the fateful day when Indians kill Regina's father and brother, and she is taken captive. She is separated from the rest of her family, and is forced to merge into a new life as an Indian. Regina is born again as Tskinnak, with

a new family, a new life, and new traditions. Her life is transformed into that of an Indian, and she sees the world from their perspective. Regina goes through continual struggle in the Indian village, and learns what it is to feel loss, and how to be strong and carry on.

The setting of the novel takes place in the Allegheny Mountains, near present day Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. The Allegheny's are part of the Appalachian Mountain Range that run through Pennsylvania. The book takes place in 1755, right around the time of the French and Indian Seven Years War. Regina is right in the middle of the conflict between the French and English, with the Indians intervening on the side of the French. The Allegheny's themselves are not an easy land, being thickly wooded, and with the mountain being jagged from particular sides. However, the Indian village that Regina is taken to is in the Ohio region. Galsko described it as being "...gentle and rolling; rich with game and broad green meadows," (Keehn 56).

The novel itself is relatively short in length. But it packs a lot in its pages. "We are all but feathers," (Keehn 150). The quote is very accurate. The symbolism in the feathers being blown every which way, and with its course being able to change in an instant. Everything seems to happen quickly, from the introduction to characters, to being captured, to the events of being an Indian. Sally Keehn did a good job with keeping the story to a point where it isn't too brief, but also where it isn't running on. The book is good to read in the sense that something is always going on with the story line. It flows well from chapter to chapter, and Keehn does a great job with keeping suspense throughout.

Overall, I think I would give I Am Regina 4 stars out of 5.

The conflict is enticing, and this is a book that makes you want to cry alongside the main character.

"Tskinnak. Hold me Please," (Keehn 150). The book is written vividly, in a way that is almost harsh. I Am Regina really shows how the perspective of a white man can change to that of an Indian. In each of their eyes, the other is a monster, that pillages and kills as they please. Regina's discovery of the Indian life and perspective teaches her to see things in a new way. Overall, I would say that it is an interesting book, and I Am Regina is a book that I could recommend for anyone that wants a book filled with emotion and a key idea of fortitude.

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### **Alicia says**

I Am Regina brings a lot of emotions to the forefront of your mind. It entices you from the very beginning and leads you through a young girl's struggles of finding who she is in a world unknown to most of us. In the story she is forced to decide who she will become and what her new life will make of her.

Regina's horror starts one day when she is kidnapped from her family farm near the Allegheny mountains. She is forced to go live with her new "family"- a tribe of Indians - where the Indian culture is forced onto her. Regina then decides how she must live if she wants to fit into her new world. Her decision was to bring these two worlds together. She learns to fish, hunt and goes through things that she could not have imagined back on her family farm but all the while she still holds on to her family's strong belief in God. For her it was the one thing that she could count on throughout her life. These things gave her a feeling of importance she even said after catching the fish, " And at that moment... I feel a strange sense of self- importance." ( Kheen 107)

The United States went through a very similar problem when they first became emancipated from Britain. The U.S. was given a new identity when they were freed from the British reign and they did not know exactly how to shape it so they tried by setting their two worlds apart. One way that they did this was by making sure that they would not have to go through the same problems as they had to before with the king.

To do this they had to create a government that would benefit everyone. However the first constitution did not represent their ideas well so they decided to remake it entirely. The founding fathers attended the Constitutional Convention to better our country. Today there is even a live copy of their arrangement- our constitution- to show what America believes in. ( The Delegates to the Constitution 1)

Regina may not be able to control what happens to her but what she can control is how she deals with it because no one can take that right away. Through the story a lot of things happen to Regina however the eloquently written story truly shows how she evolves from the beginning to the end. Sally M. Keehn definitely represents her characters well even if the story is only two hundred and forty pages long. I would definitely recommend the book.

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### **Megan says**

Picked this book up from the library on a whim, thinking I probably wouldn't like it (when you have a library as small as mine, you do some weird things). It surprised me, not just with how much I liked it, but with how fast-paced the writing was. There is a lot of emotional depth here, but it never feels dense. What I liked most about this book is how real it feels and how fair it is to both sides. There's no whitewashing here, and no political correctness. Both the white settlers and the Native Americans are allowed to do terrible things, and to have both wonderful and horrible people within their ranks. I especially liked Regina's conflicted relationship with her "adoptive" tribe and the parallel struggle for her identity. While Keehn allows Regina to come to love and deeply care for many of the people of her tribe, even her adoptive mother, she never absolves them of kidnapping Regina and murdering her family. Very nicely complex.

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### **Michael Loder says**

By putting the reader into the mind of Regina Leininger in present tense, Keehn is able to create a dramatic tension that holds the reader. Based on the actual Indian captivity of a 10-year-old girl during the French-and-Indian War, I AM REGINA follows Regina from the Indian raid that tears her family apart through to the final, emotional, climatic reunion with her mother and brother nine years later.

Although Keehn based her story on resources that were available at the time she wrote this book, she still made a lot of assumptions. Often her descriptions of Native American actions and events are based on traditional tellings that are either unproven or known to be untrue. In addition, Keehn uses many traditional "Pioneer" motifs and details that do not fit either the time period or the region of the story.

Still, this is a good, fast-paced read that should and does appeal to many middle grade and early YA readers interested in a true story about the American frontier.

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## **Kristi says**

I liked this book. My daughter is named Regina and this book has a character about the same age who is captured by Indians during the pre-revolution time period. She is ordered to carry a 2 year old girl all the way back to the Indian's camp. My own Regina carries my 2 year old, Maggie, everywhere, so this book was easy to picture in that respect. Regina was captured from Pennsylvania in the Allegheny Mts - very, very near to the place where Dave's ancestors settled in the very same time period. It really made me think about how they survived that time!

Warning - there is one part of the story where Regina's much older adopted Indian brother gets drunk on "white man's fire water" and attempts to have his way with her in the middle of the night. Nothing is described, only insinuated - like he laid on top of her and she could smell his breath - she screamed, the mother came to the rescue and the brother was scorned by the family. Nothing happened like that again. If you are reading this aloud to the kids, you might want to skip that part. Thankfully I was only reading this to myself, and I didn't pass it on to the kids because I found a better read for that same time period: Calico Captive.

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