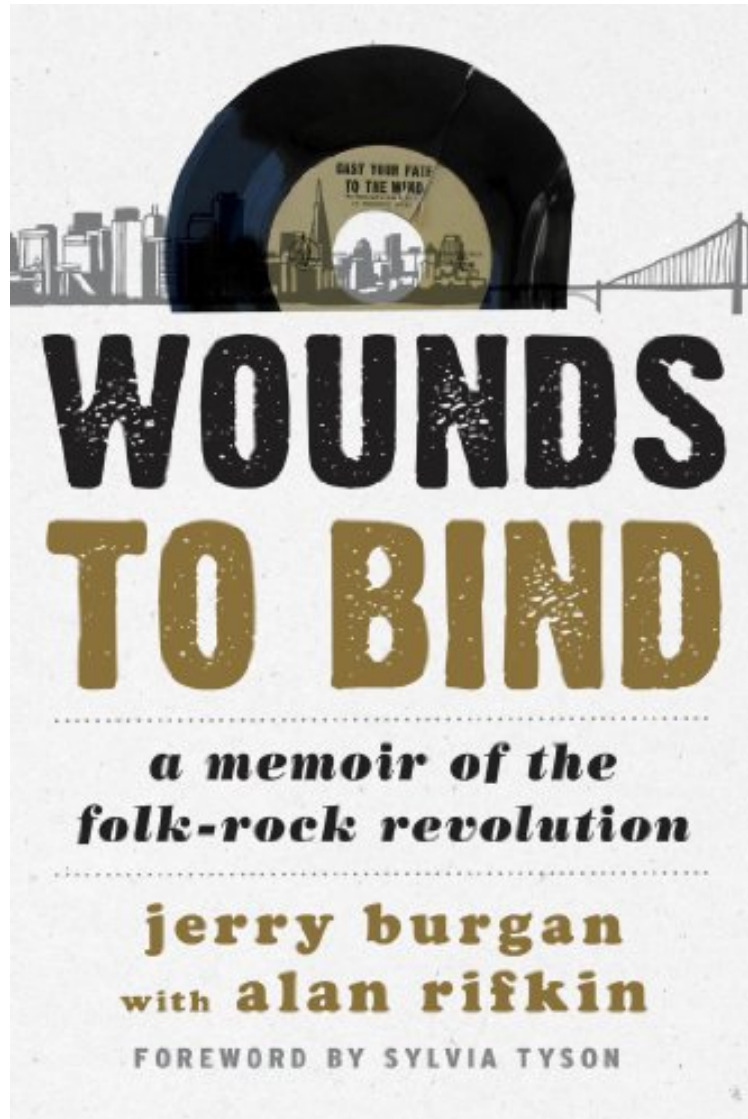


## Wounds to Bind: A Memoir of the Folk-Rock Revolution

*Jerry Burgan*

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**Jerry Burgan : Wounds to Bind: A Memoir of the Folk-Rock Revolution** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wounds to Bind: A Memoir of the Folk-Rock Revolution:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable and interesting book if you're into the history of folk rock and We Five  
By recordmaven Well-written, interesting book about We Five and the folk-rock scene of the mid-60's. Jerry Burgan covers the story, from the perspective of his experience and his many interviewees', thoroughly and entertainingly, but minimizes the gossip. The scope of the story stretches from the very beginnings of folk rock, through the progression to hard rock and beyond. The book describes, but doesn't dwell too much on, the various rifts that developed in the pressure cooker of fame and the rapid, manic progress from folk music to rock music on the

West Coast from 1965-1967. If you're interested in the music of We Five and "You Were On My Mind" in particular, there are lots of good details about the group and the song, and I'd highly recommend this book to you. There's also a good synopsis of what happened over the years to all the various figures in the story. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Success and Innocence By Save the Elephants Burgan and Rifkin layer Jerry's personal experience with the meteoric rise fall of We Five against the backdrop of the folk-rock explosion. I'd always wondered what happened to Bev and why the band had dissolved before the second album was even in the stores. The book makes me realize how young the five (plus Chambers, the drummer, the sixth) were and how well intended, if misguided, their manager's vision for them was. It tells the story with style and many meaningful, entertaining vignettes that, in the hands of another team of writers, might be blandly reportorial. For fans of the era, if not of the band, the book revisits a California and America in transition from bland, safe, but racist 50s to JFK idealism and assassinations of inspirational leaders. Within these shifts, we see the individual's hunger for creative freedom. Some readers may not identify with the race class of the group members; nonetheless, they can learn much about art, creativity, family, and how life's unpredictable changes take people in directions even they can't make sense of. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I was thoroughly moved throughout. By Gregory E. Sanchez One of the most interesting, entertaining, and well-written books on the music scene I have ever read. Provides the fascinating back story to one of my three favorite bands from the 1960's, We Five (The Association and The Byrds, also mentioned therein, are the other two). If you were a teenager in that decade, the book surely will resonate.

The dawn of folk rock comes to life in Jerry Burgan's unforgettable memoir of the pre-psychedelic 1960s and the summer that changed everything. As a naive folksinger from Pomona, California, Burgan was thrust to the forefront of the counterculture and its aftermath. The Byrds, the Rolling Stones, the Mamas and Papas, Barry McGuire, Bo Diddley and many others make appearances in this 50th Anniversary reminiscence by the surviving cofounder of WE FIVE, the San Francisco electro-folk ensemble whose million-seller, "You Were On My Mind," entered the world two months before Bob Dylan plugged in an electric guitar at the Newport Folk Festival. Vying with the Byrds to record the first folk-rock hit, Burgan and his lifelong friend Mike Stewart embarked on a road they thought well paved by the latter's older brother, Kingston Trio member John Stewart. Little did they realize that they would join the largest-ever American generation in an ecstatic, sometimes tortured, journey of invention and disillusion. Wounds to Bind bears witness to a lost and hopeful convergence in American history—that missing link between the folk and rock eras—when Bob Dylan and Sammy Davis Jr. were played on the same radio station in the same hour. A survivor of the human realignments, tragedies and triumphs that followed, Burgan tracks down the demons that drove the genius of We Five cofounder Mike Stewart and sheds light on the 40-year enigma of what became of the band's reclusive lead singer, Beverly Bivens, a forerunner of Grace Slick, Linda Ronstadt, and Stevie Nicks.

Folksinger Burgan, with assistance from Rifkin, recounts his life as a founding member of the San Francisco electro-folk band We Five ('You Were on My Mind'). This memoir brings together his experiences at a time, the 1960s and 1970s, when the folk and rock music cultures were undeniably going through a transformation. Regardless of your prior knowledge of music or desire to read explicitly about We Five, this book tactfully delves much deeper than band history. It integrates stories of growth and maturity of a group of musicians from teens through adulthood with tales of drugs, religion, relationships, love, and discrimination as seen through Burgan's eyes. The final chapters include recent updates on the band and its members; for several it was the final days of life among longtime friends. VERDICT This excellent, well-written chronicle of the folk-rock revolution from an active band member of that time will be enjoyed by general readers and fans of music memoirs. (Library Journal) An intimate portrait of a boyhood friendship ripening into rivalry and then redemption. . . The vivid profile of cultural maven [Frank] Werber may alone be justification for the book. . . Burgan treats each [of his bandmates] with unfailing tenderness and perception. (San Francisco Examiner) Over these beautifully written pages, we track the history of We Five as the group converged on the 1960s California folk-rock scene, burst to national prominence with its first hit (the phrase 'wounds to bind' comes from 'Mind's' lyrics) and then disintegrated rapidly as inexperience, trends and haphazard management took their toll. . . We Five, in [Jerry Burgan's] estimation, was once 'in a leading position to redraw the rules of both folk and rock,' and critics may debate whether that's truth or just ecstatic hype. But then, why not be ecstatic about it? Here in the suit-yourself 2010s, when Facebook has trumped balladeering as a tool of social change and the very notion of a song becoming an anthem feels quaint, it's intoxicating to imagine a time when a single's debut would gather spellbound listeners around a radio. Burgan, and others of his generation, emerged from the 1960s with plenty of wounds. Maybe time doesn't always heal them. But sometimes, an up-tempo tune can make them smart a little less. (Daily Pilot) Written with insight and wit, Burgan's empathy chiming perfectly with those heady times. (Shindig! Magazine) Burgan tells the story, and it's a good one, of the way success doesn't last and how difficult it is to adapt when it's gone. It is also the story of two fascinating individuals: Mike Stewart and Frank Werber. Stewart was the tormented fire in We Five, Werber a San Francisco giant, the 1950s hipster who discovered the Kingston Trio and

managed them to a long run as the most popular folk-pop group in the world. When the Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead began creating the very San Francisco sound he was after, he didn't recognize it for what it was. *Wounds to Bind* is the story of these people, those times and that music, all of which Jerry Burgan acknowledges he was lucky to be associated with. As readers, we are lucky, too, because he has given us a fine book about it all. (Rambles.NET) [B]rilliant detail, with much shade, light and color. . . . Burgan is at his rhapsodic best when writing about the arrangement and recording of "You Were on My Mind"; . . . Mike Stewart and company created lyrical emphases that didn't exist in the original, and added instrumental flourishes that made the song a timeless, transcendent piece of earnest folk-pop-rock. Burgan's recounting of his time on the road in Dick Clark's traveling revue is also a richly rewarding read [that] rightly highlights the significance of having drummer John Chambers in the band in a time when mixed-race groups were highly unusual (to say the least). And his stories about We Five (by then on the downhill side of success) performing in front of ultraconservative audiences in Texas and Utah are well-told and (rare within the context of the book) simply hilarious. The fact of the matter remains that We Five never capitalized on the success of their lone hit single. . . . Verdict: a qualified recommendation. Parts One and Two are well-written, essential reading, and those who get that far will want to read the rest. (Musoscribe) Burgan tells the story of the band's coming together through the drive and vision he shared with co-founder Michael Stewart; the band's success that ran parallel to the surge of folk-rock, the departure of original lead singer Beverly Bivens after their second album in 1966 and the collapse of the original band by 1970. The most intriguing and pleasing thing about this story is that it isn't filled with regret or bitterness. Burgan delivers the narrative as matter-of-fact and quite humorous. . . . While . . . We Five have kept going throughout the decades, it's for [their] 1965 hit single they will always be remembered. This book . . . [is] . . . a nice and worthy companion piece. (Popdose) [A] fascinating tale of a band that paddled to the crest of a huge new wave in popular music and then got wiped out by it. . . . The excitement of a first recording session is captured as brilliantly as the chagrin of having to gig at a conservative university in Texas, where the group's long hair and black drummer put them way beyond the pale. . . . [T]here's more than enough to make this a recommended read. (Record Collector) I'm not sure I have enjoyed a personal memoir more than *Wounds to Bind: A Memoir of the Folk-Rock Revolution*. This is Jerry Burgan's account (written with help from writer Alan Rifkin) of his time as songwriter/singer/guitar player and co-founder of We Five, a San Francisco "electro-folk" group that scored the hit "You Were On My Mind." Smack dab in the 60's changes of music and culture as Burgan was, his account couldn't be more thrilling. What Burgan manages here is what makes for the best mix with these type of books (but not something accomplished all that often); he weaves his personal story of his life in the band and beyond by writing rich descriptions of the days passed by and his feelings about it all. There is so much heart in this account that I really can't even pick my favorite sections, of which there are many. But if you were alive at that time or ever wondered about it—a time when everything was "changing" for sure—this book is a must. (Short and Sweet NYC) It might seem a stretch for a member of a one-hit wonder (We Five, who did "You Were On My Mind") to carry a 200-page autobiography—especially when Mike Stewart, brother of the Kingston Trio's John Stewart, was the group's visionary, not the author. But. . . Burgan's observations regarding the birth of folkrock are illuminating. (Vintage Guitar) For those of us who grew up with the magical music of the 60s, this book is riveting and revelatory. It's a rare opportunity to really get inside the experience of being in a million-selling band. Jerry Burgan co-founded We Five and he tells the group's story in fascinating detail - all of the exhilaration, all of the pain. Burgan left Southern California an innocent and launched the band in the Bay Area, where he had to grow up fast. It was the era of drugs, racial unrest and the Vietnam War. And then there was the murky maze of the music business. Burgan was teamed with the group's tortured, creative genius, Mike Stewart, who was trying to climb out of the shadow of his brother John Stewart, a member of the legendary Kingston Trio. The musically adventurous We Five was managed by the Trio's overseer, Frank Werber, a larger-than-life figure on the local music scene, a man who wanted desperately to be at the forefront of the pop revolution, but was mired in promotional ideas of the past. We Five was among the first to meld the earnestness of folk with the excitement of rock. With the versatile, vivacious vocals of charismatic Beverly Bivens in the spotlight, the group garnered attention. Bivens paved the way for the female rockers who came after her, such as Grace Slick and Linda Ronstadt. Burgan recounts We Five's interactions with contemporaries like The Byrds, Mark Lindsay and The Rolling Stones. We Five captured lightning in a bottle with the pioneering, genre-crossing folk-rock masterpiece "You Were On My Mind," a brilliant reworking of a Sylvia Tyson tune. But matching that commercial success again proved to be an impossible task. That makes for a major test of perseverance and dedication to the craft. When fame and fortune are fleeting, does music remain the focal point of these artists' lives? We Five's original clean-cut image was supplanted by something more experimental, even psychedelic, but not everyone on the outside was accepting. Stewart and Bivens, if there were any justice, would be viewed as music icons today. Instead, they're footnotes in pop history. Burgan had to cope with the band's mind-blowing, warp speed takeoff, followed by a perplexing fade. And maybe it's only love and marriage that saved him from becoming a rock casualty. He tells We Five's tale in a touching, thought-provoking, very personal style. He starts his narrative in the 60s, but Burgan

soon takes us into timeless territory. (Pop Culture Classics)About the AuthorWhen not performing with We Five, the 1960s folk-rock group that bridged the gulf between Peter, Paul Mary and The Jefferson Airplane, Jerry Burgan and his wife, Debbie, appear in *Folk Songs Stories*, a show built on the Americana that shaped him, blended with anecdotes about how the music of the past evolved into the forms we know today. His first solo CD, *Jerry Burgan: Reflections, Songs Stories*, on the Global Recording Artists label, is based on material from his show. Alan Rifkin is a former contributing editor to *Details* and *L.A. Weekly* and has written for *The Los Angeles Times*, *Premiere*, *The San Francisco Bay Guardian* and *Black Clock*. His short-story collection, *Signal Hill (City Lights)*, was a finalist for the Southern California Booksellers Award in Fiction. He teaches creative writing at California State University, Long Beach.