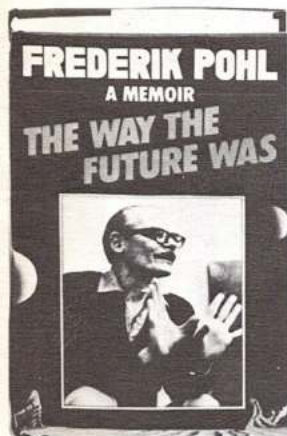


# THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS A MEMOIR



## FREDERIK POHL

Any writer gives you chapters of his autobiography in everything he writes. It isn't possible to make everything up. When it's a work of fiction the author's on pretty safe ground, because the reader probably cannot tell for sure which parts are invented and which are real. That makes it comfortable for the author.

A lot less comfortable is writing a factual memoir like *The Way The Future Was*. Apart from the obvious arrogance involved in believing that anyone is really going to care about your life story, it's a kind of public exhibitionism, like putting on a dirty raincoat over nothing at all and flashing yourself at casual passers-by. The risks are high.

'There was a magic world once that no one knew but us. Fred Pohl recreates it now for everyone to see.' — Isaac Asimov

'Anyone who has read science fiction knows that Frederik Pohl is brilliant.' — Ben Bova

'Frederik Pohl proves once more that he is a great raconteur...' — Frank Herbert

'Anyone with any interest in science fiction will find this book fascinating.' — Clifford D Simak

In 1930 a 10-year-old boy named Frederik Pohl came across a magazine named *Science Wonder Stories Quarterly*. It had a scaly green monster on the cover. He opened it up — and he was incurably hooked.

Almost half a century later, award-winning writer, whiz-kid editor, wide-eyed fan, pioneering anthologist and demon literary agent, Frederik Pohl has been all over the science fiction field, including a stretch as President of the Science Fiction Writers of America.

*The Way The Future Was* is Pohl's own story of how he got to all those places and what it was like getting there. It is a

fascinating story of the man who helped organise the fabled Futurians (whose members included Isaac Asimov, Damon Knight and C M Kornbluth); created the market for hardcover sf; shaped the field of sf for almost a decade as editor of *Galaxy* and *If*; pioneered the concept of original anthologies with *Star Science Fiction*; and produced some of the most outstanding work of sf, including *The Space Merchants* (with Cyril Kornbluth) and, most recently *Man Plus* (SFBC 95p, REF 5125) and *Gateway*.

SFBC £4.85

Gollancz £6.50

REF 6388

For one thing, you might get arrested. For another, what do you do when the victim looks you over appraisingly and shrugs and says, 'What's so special?' And then there is the possibility of causing pain where you least expect it. (I sent Isaac Asimov a copy of the bound galleys, and he wailed by return mail, 'I didn't know your first wife couldn't stand me!')

Nevertheless, I would be a liar if I said I didn't enjoy writing *The Way The Future Was*. It gave me a chance to relive some experiences that I enjoyed a lot: Discovering science fiction. Growing up with Isaac and Damon Knight and Cyril Kornbluth and Don Wollheim. Working with (and often conflicting with) John Campbell and Harlan Ellison and Larry Niven

and several hundred other quite exceptional human beings. Editing *Galaxy* and the *Star* series and various other projects. Collaborating with Cyril, and with Jack Williamson and Lester del Rey; interacting, in one way or another, with a lot of writers, editors, scientists, artists, publishers, all of them quite different from each other but almost all of them in some way worth remembering.

I am quite sure that remembering all this and writing about it was, at least in some ways, more fun than living it — the miserable bits do blur in recollection, and the joy survives nearly intact. But it was fun to write, and I can only hope that it may give you a fraction as much pleasure to read.

© Frederik Pohl

## NEWS BULLETIN

### • LOOKING AHEAD: Some really good sf is lined up for the coming months.

Next month sees a collection of stories by Christopher Priest, one of the finest writers in the field, which includes his Hugo nominated novella 'The Watched'.

A collectors item will be the SFBC edition of *The Faded Sun: Kesrith* by C J Cherryh. Our edition is the first — and so far, only — UK edition. *The Faded Sun: Kesrith* is a Hugo nominee and was just pipped at the post by *Dreamsnake* in the Nebulas earlier this year.

Also look out for *Aries I*. There are too few anthologies these days, which is sad because anthologies give us the chance to sample new writers; writers new to the field, to writing and to our experience. *Aries I* goes some way towards rectifying this situation and includes stories by Bob Shaw, Chris Priest, Garry Kilworth, Robert Holdstock, and the first sf short story by Colin Wilson, plus a number of other writers.

Looking even further into the future, we have a new novel by Bob Shaw, a collection of stories by Theodore Sturgeon, and the much acclaimed *A Different Light* by Elizabeth A Lynne.

All this and more!

• **LETTERS:** I would like to thank everyone who has written with their opinions of the SFBC. I am anxious to hear from members because feedback is the only way I can find out whether we are doing everything right. So if you have an opinion, please write to: Paul Begg, SFBC, Brunel House, Forde Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2DW.

• **FILMS:** As *Battlestar Galactica* does the cinema rounds in the UK, the news comes from America that ABC have cancelled the tv series! The time slot in America formerly occupied by *Galactica* will be filled by that excellent series *Mork and Mindy*.

Two of the most acclaimed novels by Michael G Coney

## Syzygy

The recently colonised planet of Arcadia has six moons. Once every fifty-two years they come together and create havoc on the planet's surface, strangely affecting the inhabitants of Arcadia. But how are they affected? Few can remember exactly what happened fifty-two years before; and those who are old enough to remember are curiously reticent to talk. 167pp

SFBC £2.15

Severn House £3.90

REF 6429

Also available

*The Ultimate Jungle*  
SFBC £3.40

Millington £4.50

REF 8956

*Winter's Children*  
SFBC 85p

Gollancz £2.30

REF 5104

## The Girl with a Symphony in her Fingers

The 'society' uses its criminals for the benefit of others, putting them to work as slaves or keeping them as living banks of limbs and organs for transplants. Few people realise the horrors and abuses, least of all Joe Sagar, but when he meets 'the girl with a symphony in her fingers' he confronts the system and determines to bring about its exposure and downfall. 199pp

SFBC £2.50

Severn House £4.50

REF 6428

*Hello Summer, Goodbye*  
SFBC 85p

Gollancz £3.20

REF 5113

*Winter's Children and Hello*

*Summer, Goodbye*  
SFBC £1.50 for both

REF 8905

