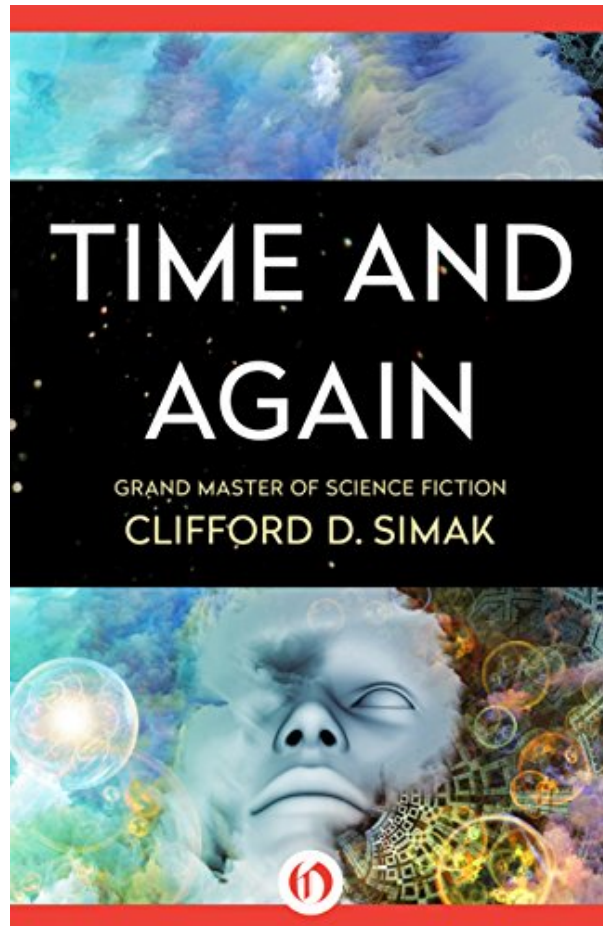
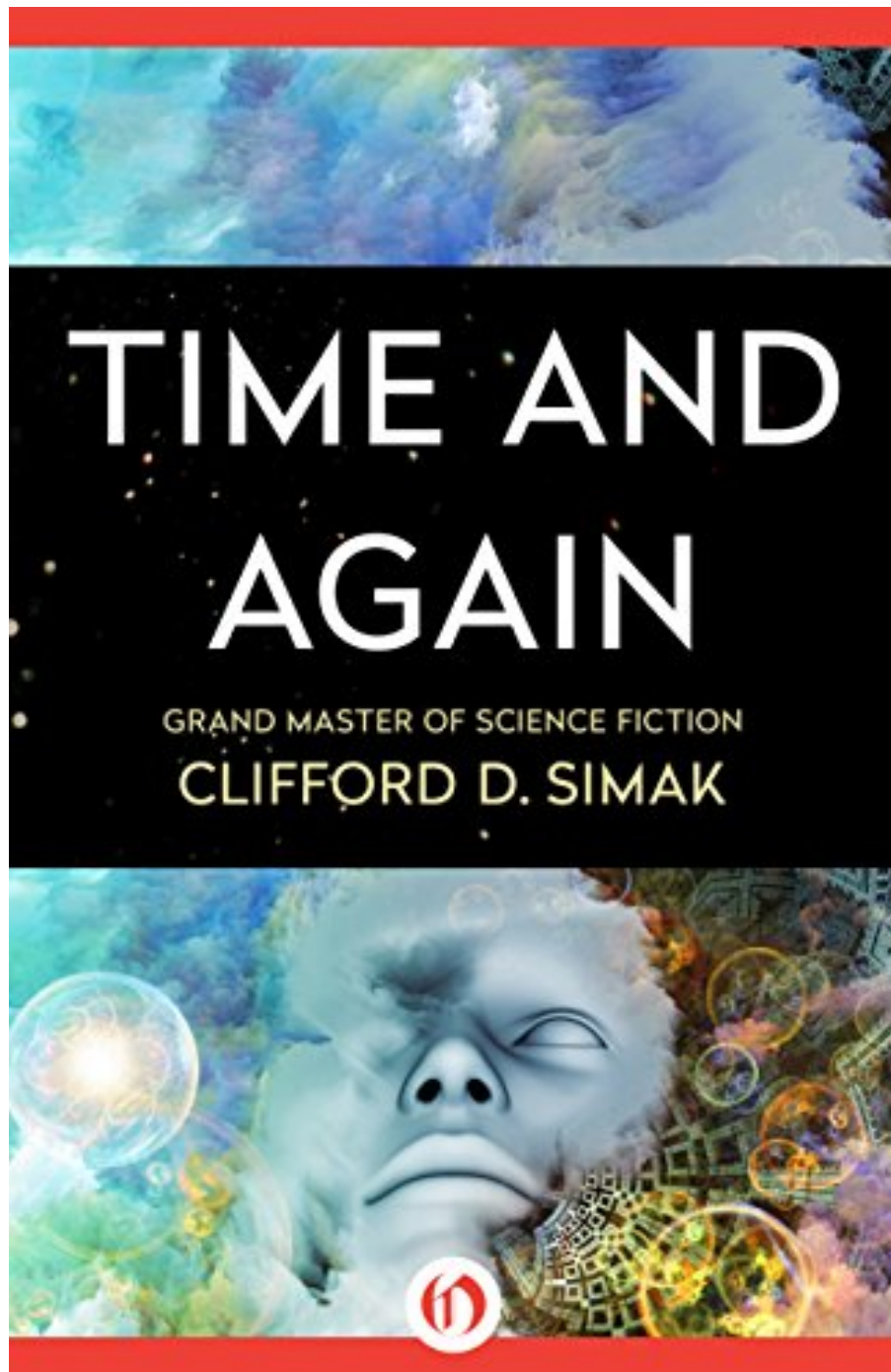


TIME AND AGAIN BY CLIFFORD D. SIMAK



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Review

“One of those complex and enormously inventive stories . . . based on some real, honest, practical ethical thinking. It is an idea book.” —Galaxy Science Fiction

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TIME AND AGAIN BY CLIFFORD D. SIMAK PDF

After twenty years, a vanished space voyager returns to Earth bearing a dangerous truth that will alter the universe in this powerful, thought-provoking science fiction classic from one of the Golden Age greats

Twenty years ago, Asher Sutton vanished somewhere in the star system 61 Cygni, an inaccessible corner of the universe that humankind has thus far been unable to explore. Now Asher has returned to Earth, having impossibly survived catastrophic damage to his spacecraft. But the star-traveler is not the same man he was when he began his journey two decades earlier. He is, in fact, no longer completely human. And he isn't alone. But he has a message to convey that could have reality-altering consequences for the human galaxy-conquerors who consider themselves almost gods, and for the nearly human androids they create, enslave, and oppress. It is Asher's destiny to change everything. His mission has made him a hero to some, a pariah to others—and a target for determined time-traveling assassins from the future whose mission it is to silence him at all costs before everything they cherish is obliterated.

A true science fiction visionary, SFWA Grand Master Clifford D. Simak infused thrilling stories of time travel, space exploration, artificial intelligence, and alien contact with powerful, thought-provoking ideas. An enthralling masterwork of speculative fiction that astonishes while exploring humanity in all its disparate aspects, *Time and Again* can be counted among the prolific, multiple Hugo and Nebula Award-winning author's most brilliantly imagined and successfully realized creations.

- Sales Rank: #91453 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-12-01
- Released on: 2015-12-01
- Format: Kindle eBook

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29 of 29 people found the following review helpful.

A Gem That You Won't Forget

By stigmata

It is the future and Mankind has spread to the stars like seeds before the wind. One star system, though, shrouded in mystery, has defied Man's every attempt to visit it. Every expedition to 61 Cygni has found its path inexplicably deflected and has been forced to return home in frustration. In desperation, special agent Asher Sutton was sent on a solo mission, but unlike the others he did not return and 61 Cygni was quietly forgotten.

As the book begins, twenty years have passed and, against all odds, Asher Sutton has returned. The mystery only deepens when it is discovered that Asher's ship was damaged many years ago in a crash that left it completely disabled and ought to have killed its sole passenger. The conclusion becomes inescapable; Asher Sutton died but now he's back. As the story develops, we discover Asher is not alone and it's not clear that he's even entirely human. But most importantly, Asher returns bearing an idea that will shake Mankind's beliefs to their foundations.

In *Time and Again*, Mankind is spread thin across the stars and to help hold the frontier he has created biological androids. Created in the lab by chemical means, androids are sterile and cannot reproduce but in all other respects are as human as their creators. None the less, androids are treated as property and bear a mark on their foreheads to distinguish them from "true" humans.

Androids dream of one day being acknowledged and treated as the equals of the "humans" and Asher's idea is the key for which they have been searching. Asher soon becomes the center of a struggle between three groups; humans of the present who fear any new idea that might loosen Mankind's tenuous grip on the stars, humans of the future who, via time travel, are waging a quiet war to alter the past to maintain the current status quo, and the androids of the future who struggle to let Asher's idea be born.

Simak weaves these disparate elements into a delicious story. Hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

22 of 22 people found the following review helpful.

A true sci-fi classic winner!

By Paul Weiss

Time and Again opens in a distant future on earth that includes androids, robots, interactive television, weather control, mentophones - an ingenious device that allows instantaneous interstellar communication, dramatically extended life spans, travel to distant star systems and a humanity that has conquered the galaxy and spread its seed far and wide. After a 20 year absence, Asher Sutton returns to earth from an expedition to 61 Cygni, a system that until now has defeated every attempt at landing and exploration. In the attempt, Sutton has miraculously survived a crash that left his ship disabled and, by all odds, should have killed him. His ship has somehow managed to return to earth apparently without the actual ability to do so and Sutton, through some extraordinary feat of bio-medical engineering, appears to have been modified into something that is considerably less than completely human. He is mentally linked to someone he refers to as "Johnny". The administration on earth wonder what all of this can possibly mean.

On the surface, *Time and Again* is a thrilling story of time travel. Sutton is carrying a book which he has not yet actually written - a summary of his philosophies that, in a not too distant future, will result in the achievement of the dreams of the Android Equality League, their right to be recognized as sentient beings and a release from their treatment as mere property. But, before the book can even be actually written, Sutton must survive assassination attempts by revisionists - humans from the future who are using time travel as the

means to prevent its publication.

Simak's personal credo that reflects his quiet midwest upbringing, his pastoral approach to the science fiction genre and his concerns about humanity and its use of technology as a means to violent conflict are never very far from the surface. Indeed, they rather shine through the writing like a beacon. But, make no mistake - Simak never falls into the trap of preaching. The clear social commentary is never intrusive and never detracts for even an instant from an exciting story line.

In *Time and Again*, Simak was openly critical of humanity's impression of its own importance in the universe - "Not by strength did he hold his starry outposts, but by something else ... by depth of human character, by his colossal conceit, by his ferocious conviction that Man was the greatest living thing the galaxy had ever spawned. All this in spite of much evidence that he was not ... evidence that he took and evaluated and cast aside, scornful of any greatness that was not ruthless and aggressive".

He also used comedy as a vehicle to make a dark statement against weapons. He jests about "the code" having been changed to require everyone under age 100 to bear arms as a way of passing comment on his feelings against the US's unique constitutional amendment regarding the "right" to bear arms. His philosophical argument against Sutton's attempted use of the Christian commandment "Thou shalt not kill" as an exemption from the code is perhaps a little blunt but does serve to point out some of the ironies involved in, for example, a right wing Bible Belt fundamentalist Christian packin' an iron.

Finally, his creation of the Android Equality League represents an ingenious platform from which Simak can express his concerns about the ethical issues related to the problems of advanced artificial intelligence and voice his courageous, clear condemnation of the white's treatment of black people in the 1960s US and his support of the civil rights movement.

In *Time and Again*, Simak has created a story that many have suggested is his finest work. I was excited with the turn of every page and found I couldn't disagree with them!

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

An incredibly good read - out "Heinleins" Heinlein!

By A Customer

This book is really about religion and time. About the power of religion and about the cost one can pay for the knowing the truth. The book deals with the personal sacrifice, loneliness and betrayal that important historical figures, past, present and future, often endure. Asher Sutton is the ultimate imperfect, reluctant hero.

Those of you who love Heinlein will undoubtedly enjoy this book - I couldn't recommend it any more thoroughly. I read *City* (Simak's most acclaimed book) and thought that "*Time and Again*" was easily a superior work

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