

# Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes

*ANNA DUDNIK*

# Daniel Keyes

- ▶ Daniel Keyes (August 9, 1927 – June 15, 2014) was an American writer best known for his Hugo award-winning short story and Nebula award-winning novel *Flowers for Algernon*. Keyes was given the Author Emeritus honor by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America in 2000.



# Awards

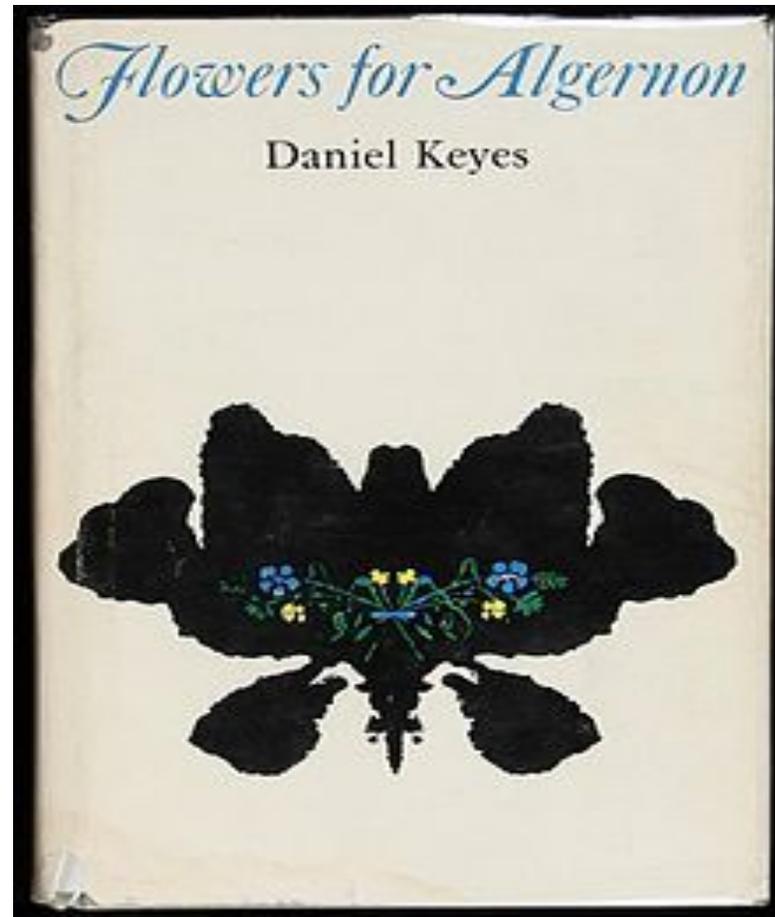
Won:

- ▶ 1960: Hugo Award for the short story "Flowers for Algernon"
- ▶ 1966: Nebula Award for the novel Flowers for Algernon
- ▶ 1986: Kurd Lasswitz Award for The Minds of Billy Milligan
- ▶ 1993: Seiun Award (Non-Fiction of the Year) for The Minds of Billy Milligan
- ▶ 2000: Author Emeritus Award from Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America

# Works

- ▶ Flowers for Algernon (short story) (1959)
- ▶ Flowers for Algernon (novel) (1966) (adapted for cinema as Charly, 1968)
- ▶ The Touch (1968; vt The Contaminated Man 1977)
- ▶ The Fifth Sally (1980)
- ▶ The Minds of Billy Milligan (1981) (film adaptation unproduced as of August 2014)
- ▶ Unveiling Claudia (1986)
- ▶ Daniel Keyes Collected Stories (Japan, 1993)
- ▶ The Milligan Wars: A True-Story Sequel (Japan, 1994)
- ▶ Until Death (1998)
- ▶ Algernon, Charlie, and I: A Writer's Journey (2000)
- ▶ The Asylum Prophecies (2009)

# First edition cover



# Book Summery

Flowers for Algernon is a character study of one man, Charlie Gordon. Charlie is a 32-year-old developmentally disabled man who has the opportunity to undergo a surgical procedure that will dramatically increase his mental capabilities. This procedure had already been performed on a laboratory mouse, Algernon, with remarkable results. Charlie will be the first human subject.

In a series of progress reports, Charlie documents everything that happens to him. As Charlie's intelligence increases to a genius level, the reader not only reads about the changes from Charlie's viewpoint, but also sees the change evidenced in Charlie's writing ability. This jump in intelligence is not necessarily a good thing, however. Charlie is now able to recall past events that shaped his life and analyze past friendships for what they were, or weren't. He also has difficulty making new friendships and establishing new relationships due to a lack of social intelligence that the surgery could neither correct nor anticipate. And, finally, because of his increased intelligence, Charlie is able to discover the experiment's "fatal flaw" and is reduced to watching the end for both Algernon and himself, hoping to salvage something for the future from his brief bout with genius.

