



DANIEL KEYES

Author of Flowers for Algernon



Algernon, Charlie, and I: A Writer's Journey

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In *Flowers for Algernon*, Daniel Keyes created an unlikely duo—a laboratory mouse and a man—who captured the hearts of millions of readers around the world. Now, in *Algernon, Charlie, and I*, Keyes reveals his methods of creating fiction as well as the heartbreaks and joys of being published. With admirable insight he shares with readers, writers, teachers, and students the creative life behind his classic novel, included here in its original short-story form.

All those who love stories, storytelling, and the remarkable characters of Charlie and Algernon will delight in accompanying their creator on this inspirational voyage of discovery.

Algernon, Charlie, and I: A Writer's Journey Details

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Author : Daniel Keyes

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From Reader Review *Algernon, Charlie, and I: A Writer's Journey* for online ebook

Nicholas Whyte says

<http://nhw.livejournal.com/998329.html>[return][return]This is a really good, short account by Keyes of the genesis and later history of his classic story, *Flowers for Algernon*. There are quite a lot of insights into the writing process - I was very interested in his depiction of writing as therapy, as a means of distancing yourself from difficulties you have had in the past by putting them in your fiction. It's very interesting to read of the various roots of the story - Charlie himself based on a student in one of Keyes' classes who asked to be made clever, much of the scientific background based on Keyes' own frustrated interactions with psychologists and therapists.[return][return]Keyes was much more connected with the 1950s sf crowd than I had realised, and they gave him good advice - to cut the original story by over a third to get it published, for instance. Originally there was going to be a framing narrative, of Charlie's lover finding his diary at the start and resolving to look for him at the end, but that was cut at quite a late stage too. Keyes is graphic about the pressure he was put under, but (thank God!) successfully resisted, to provide a more upbeat ending, pressure which continued into the TV and movie versions of the story. Nonetheless, he himself feels the ending is ambiguous rather than necessarily tragic; I don't think I agree.[return][return]Keyes wrote several other books and stories, but none has had the critical success of *Flowers for Algernon*. I was slightly surprised that he betrays no resentment at all that his subsequent efforts have not been regarded with the same veneration as his earliest work. But I suppose if I'd written *Flowers for Algernon* myself, I would feel it was success enough for a lifetime.

Brad says

Contains the original short story, "*Flowers for Algernon*," which is why this gets 5 stars. The memoir section that makes up the bulk of the book is two stars and contains this interesting bit: the song "Tomorrow" (known for being in "*Annie*") was almost used in a stage musical version of "*Flowers for Algernon*."

Brian says

For those of you who have read and loved *FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON*, this semi-autobiographical book about how he came to write the short story, and later the novel, is a fantastic read. To Keyes, the story of Charlie and Algernon was more than just another work, but sort of a mystical event that he just had to write. It gives a good insight into his writing process, showing how the story developed from a simple idea, and how unrelated events in his life worked their way into the final versions of the story. There is one passage when Keyes is considering the advice of his publisher to "change the ending of *FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON*, because people do not like unhappy endings. When Keyes told a friend about this advice, the friend told him that if he changed one single word of the ending, he would personally come over to Keyes house and beat him with a baseball bat, telling him the ending was perfect and fit the story. Keyes took the advice of his friend, not because of the threat of violence, but because he knew in his heart it was the right thing to do. The down ending to the book perfectly captures the mood of the whole story. The whole background story of the writing of *FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON* is interesting and can only serve to increase your love for one of the greatest novels ever written. If you have not read the original *FLOWERS*

FOR ALGERNON, you can still enjoy and appreciate this look into a writers mind. The original version of the shorty novelette FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON is included in the book. I could not put it down, and I suggest you get yourself a copy and read it today!

Eric says

Charlie is a thirty-two year old man who is mentally disabled. He goes to a special school for the disabled and meets Alice. Charlie was really eager to learn so Alice puts him up for an experiment that will make him smarter. After the experiment, he meets his "best friend", a mouse named Algernon. Algernon also took the test. Charlie gets a job as a delivery boy. His co-workers tease him but Charlie doesn't understand the mockery. Later Charlie gets more smarter and experiences love for the first time. What happens to his mouse and his relationship? To find out more read the book!!!

This book is one of my favorites because it really got me thinking. I kind of started to like my life more. I also felt really touched and i felt really bad for Charlie. After you read this book, you will learn to understand the disable more and treat them better. The ending was really sad and it haunted me forever.

Susan says

Very interesting book by the author of "Flowers for Algernon," detailing his writing process of the short story and novel, plus movie & plays based on it. Had no idea that song "Tomorrow" from "Annie" was originally written for Algernon musical! (Own)

Gavin says

When I recently read of the death of Daniel Keyes, author of the popular novel "Flowers For Algernon", I did the usual internet search on his life and times. I found that he had written a book on his writing life and was especially interested to learn how he transitioned "Algernon" from a short story to a longer novel. This is what this book is largely about. Mr. Keyes writes of growing up in NYC and his motivation to be a writer. He parallels the development of "Algernon" and his own story, and adds interesting details regarding the early teleplay version, popular movie which won Cliff Robertson an Oscar, and the later TV Movie (Lawsuits included). Not a lot of advice for struggling writers here, but you come to appreciate his tenacity and talent. I would recommend this book as very readable. The short story version of "Algernon" is included.

Jack says

You know it's a great book if you want to read a memoir about how it came to be written. I'm speaking about *Flowers for Algernon* of course. This memoir delivers on that level and also serves as a fascinating insight into Keyes' writing process.

Science fiction and comic book historians will be interested in the behind-the-scenes stories of Keyes' time as an editor for Martin Goodman.

Fair warning to Kindle readers: The Kindle edition is full of typos, especially toward the end. It looks like the text was scanned in and never proofed.

Morgan says

This was lovely, providing fascinating background on Flowers for Algernon. It was interesting to learn about where the original idea came from, how the story developed over time in multiple formats, and some of Daniel Keyes' writing techniques. Then, of course reading the original novelette version made me tear up once again.

William Koon says

Some things are exactly what they are, and this is one of them. It's Keyes' journey with his story, novella, and novel Flower for Algernon. It was of a time. It was very good. The movie was very good. Here the story is told very pedestrianly. Some personal anecdotes are precious --William Goldman wrote the first unused script. And it does include the genesis of it all, the ms. for Flowers.... Very slight. Very slight.

Jennifer says

The author of this book wrote Flowers for Algernon, and this book is his account of how he pulled that rabbit out of the hat. It's an interesting account. I was most interested in the parts where he talked about how his mind worked in forming the connections and ideas that led to the original (many times revised) novella, and then to the gradually layered novel -- it's fascinating to see how this writer's mind worked. And having the context of what was going on in his life during the writing process was neat.

Tuija says

Loved it! It was so exiting to find out how a writer works with ideas, how he collects them, files them and finally creates an amazing story!! I still find it almost unbelievable that the whole story came from one mans imagination. No wonder it became a book used for educating people in several ways. Now I have to get all his other books as well, and asap!

Julie Collin says

Depuis le moment où j'ai lu Des fleurs pour Algernon, je me suis questionnée sur le processus de création de ce roman. Comment l'auteur en est-il arrivé à avoir l'idée globale? Pourquoi a-t-il utilisé le journal de Charlie pour structurer le roman? Était-il conscient du risque de rédiger le journal de Charlie en fonction de

son QI? A-t-il fait des compromis déchirants pour réussir à publier ce roman? Bref, ça fait des années que je me dis que je pourrais avoir bien du plaisir à prendre un café avec Daniel Keyes!

La suite ici : <http://bit.ly/1TtRfrP>

Liberfaë says

A treasure for humanity.

Danielle DuPuis says

I picked this up at a bookstore several years ago and stuck it on my bookshelf. I loved reading *Flowers for Algernon* and figured it would be worth a read. I'm sorry I didn't read this book sooner. I savored every story Keyes told about how ideas for Charlie came about. Little stories and snippets from his own life that then shaped Charlie's character and memories. I wish every author wrote a book like this. To me, reading about the thought process is just as wonderful as reading the completed product. I'm holding on to this book to read again for inspiration.

Fridha Rasjid says

Keyes kedua, kado dari tinifa.

Sangat mengesankan, krn tinifa berupaya keras untuk memahami minat bundanya.

Kisah yang mengharukan, seorang Charlie yang menjadi cerdas, namun justru kecerdasan tersebut menghantarkannya menuju penderitaan yang berbeda.

Pada akhirnya, hidup memang tidak bisa ditebak selain mengikuti alurnya saja.

Charlie, si jenius dungu, digambarkan dengan indah oleh Keyes

Janine says

An interesting and enjoyable biography!

Mitch says

I remember being knocked out by the novelette 'Flowers for Algernon' and it's been forever since I read it. I was thinking about it for some reason and wondering about it being a metaphor for the human life cycle...you start off naive and ignorant, increase in wisdom and stature, then lose it all to old age eventually...just like Algernon and Charlie, right?

Not right. Daniel thought up a good story (this book chronicles how it came together) and that interpretation was never in his mind at all. So much for that.

The book goes further and talks about the various incarnations that story took on. Daniel has written several other books as well, none of which I'd ever heard of. 'Flowers for Algernon' remains his overwhelming success. None of his other stuff sounds interesting, for some reason.

It must be a bit strange to hit the big time once and then try to crawl out from under its shadow for the rest of your life.

Well, good to have achieved such a memorable story at any rate...

Michelle Szetela says

Flowers for Algernon is one of my favorite novels - and I review that separately - but I read Keyes' "Journey" recently because I was teaching Flowers for Algernon for a class and I was considering using excerpts for the class. I chose not to - there was simply no time - as an English teacher and grad student (getting her MA in English with a concentration in the teaching of writing) but it was interesting to hear about another writer's writing process and struggle to establish himself.

Stephen Gallup says

I read "Flowers for Algernon" as a teenager and saw the movie version, *Charly*, as a young adult -- and never imagined a similar story would ever play out in my own life. And although I remembered both quite clearly, I didn't make the connection until last year. Looking up the old story, I found that, in his old age, the author had written this memoir describing both how he became a writer and the creative process that led to his character Charlie Gordon.

This book explains superficial details, such as where he got the name Algernon, as well as the germ of the basic idea: "My first year at NYU was nearing an end, and I thought: *My education is driving a wedge between me and the people I love.* And then I wondered: *What would happen if it were possible to increase a person's intelligence?*" *I would compare it with similar works I've read by other writers, such as Eudora Welty and James Michener.*

Kaitlyn Hosking says

I loved this book flowing by the movie the awakening and I told my father about this and he watched it and also said that this is a really good movie and then he also knew about the illness awhile ago and he said that it kinda ringed a bell in his mind. And I think this movie was more touching and heart braking and medical realizing then the book was but I guess everne has diff opinions than I d o I guess. And then
