

# Co-authoring a book originally written by another

Many successful textbooks and profession books go out of print, or become at risk for doing so, because their authors do not continue to revise them. There are several reasons why a successful book may not continue to be revised.

One is that its author is no longer interested in doing so and doesn't take on a co-author. This is most likely to occur at some point after he or she retires.

A second reason is that its author is unable to continue to revise the book or take on someone to do so because he or she is deceased.

When academics consider undertaking a book project, the only option they are likely to consider is authoring a book for which they develop the proposal.

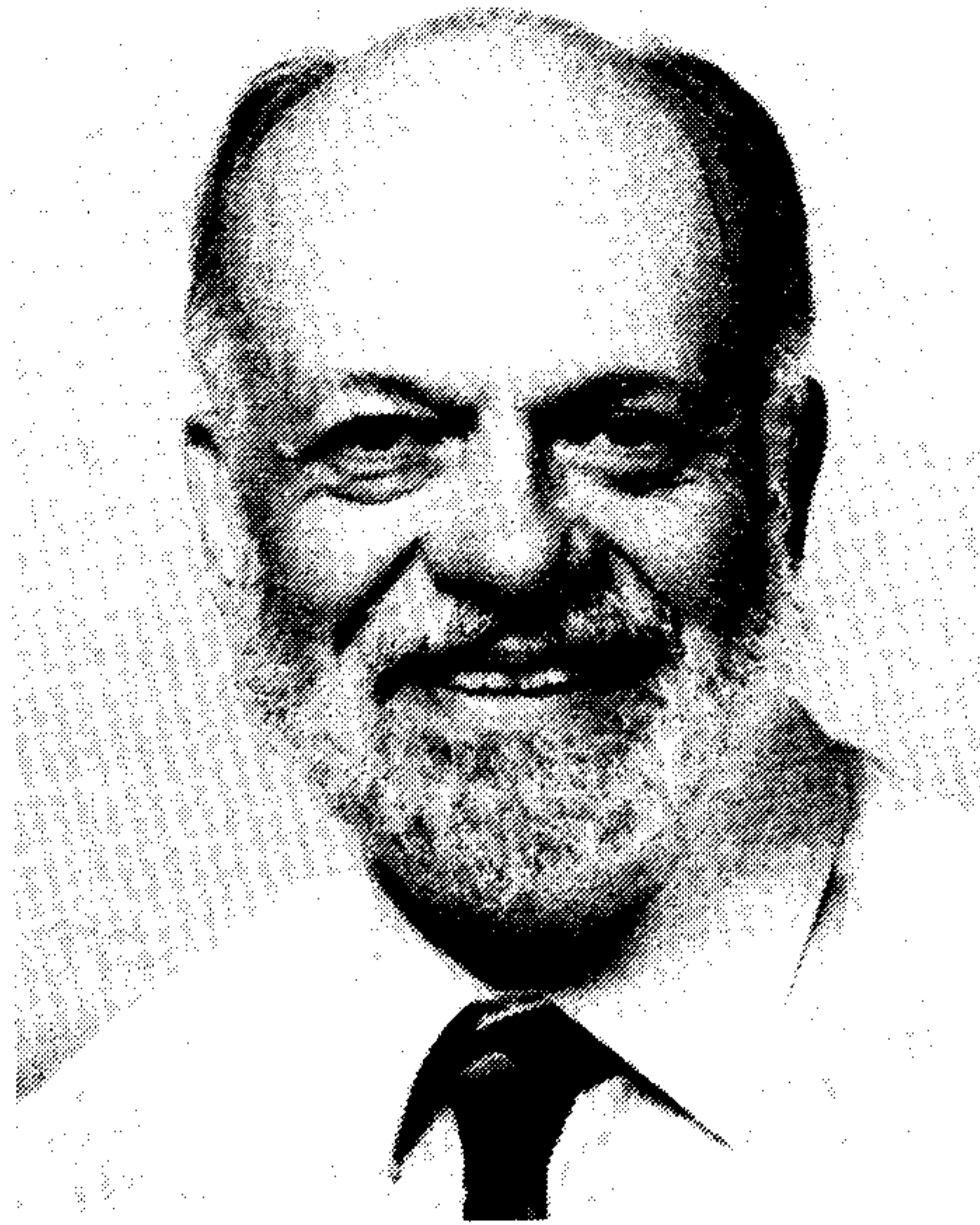
There is another option that they may want to consider: becoming a co-author of a revision of a successful book that either has recently gone out of print or appears to be at risk for doing so.

Such an arrangement is likely to appeal to its author (or to his or her heirs) because it would enable them to continue receiving royalty income.

Your first task, if you decide to consider this option, is to locate a successful book in your field that is unlikely to be revised without the addition of a new co-author.

Look for one that has an author who is

## PROFIT WHERE YOU MAY NOT EXPECT



**Look for a book that has an author who is retired, close to retirement or, well, deceased.**

*Frank Silverman teaches speech pathology at Marquette University and the Medical College of Wisconsin. He is widely known for his authoring workshops around the country. His book, *Authoring a Textbook or Professional Book*, is available from TAA at a member's discount.*

## BY FRANK SILVERMAN

contact the author or copyright owner and ask whether he or she would have any interest in exploring the possibility of your co-authoring a new edition.

Of course, you may get a "no" for an

existing author or co-authors, and how authorship will be indicated on the title page and how royalties will be divided both for the current edition and future editions.

Your royalty percentages for future editions that are specified in the contract should almost always be larger than the first because your contribution to future editions is likely to be greater than it will be to the first.

The royalty percentage that you are most likely to receive for the first edition you co-author is 50 percent.

What I am suggesting here is an option - one that may or may not be advantageous for you to pursue. If you don't consider it, however, you'll never know!

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### Is my knowledge base adequate to co-author a new edition of this book and is it likely that I could document this to the book's author or copyright owner?

retired, close to retirement, or, well, deceased.

If there is such a book, answer the following question as honestly as you can: Is my knowledge base adequate to co-author a new edition of this book and is it likely that I could document this to the book's author or copyright owner?

If your answer to this question is yes,

answer; however, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

If you decide to undertake such a project, the negotiating process should result in a written contract between yourself and the author and/or copyright owner.

This contract should specify in detail your responsibilities, the responsibilities of the

## Michael Lennie honored with 1996 M.L. Keedy Service Award

### Story By Tom Bayles

Attorney Michael Lennie has been awarded the 1996 M.L. Keedy Service Award.

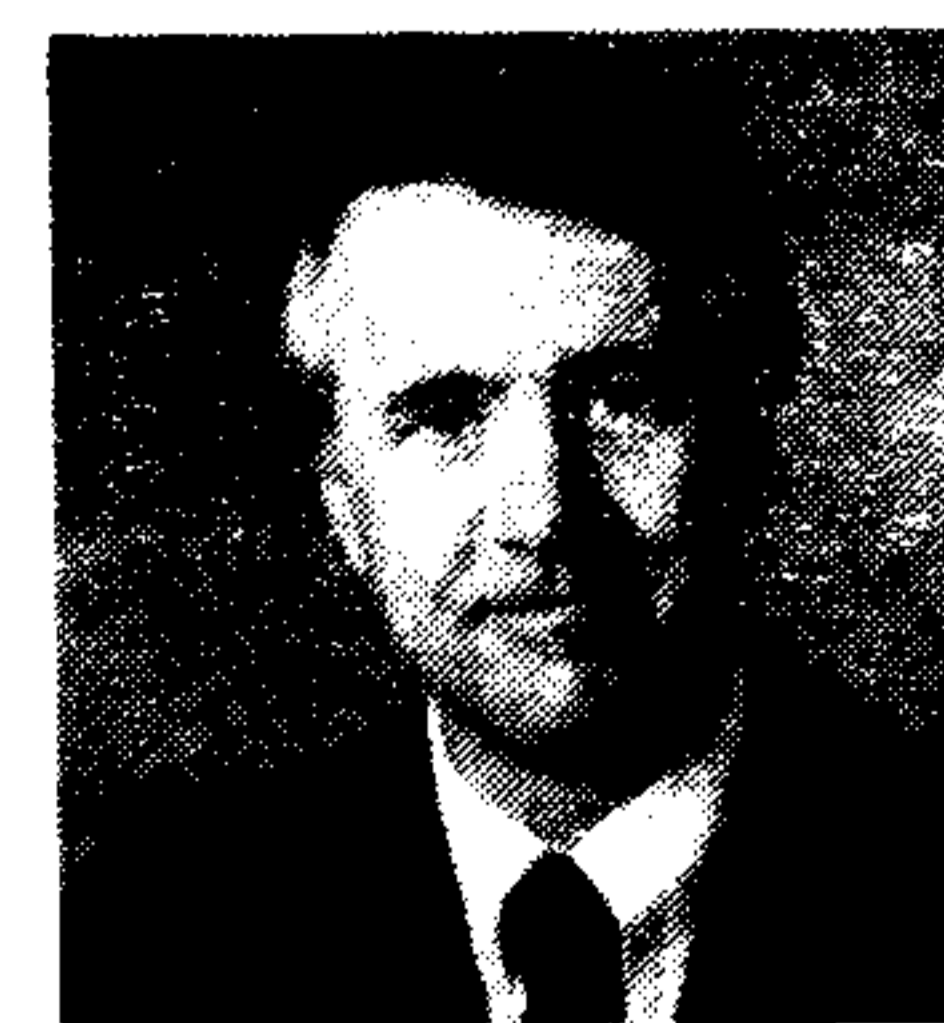
The San Diego, Calif., lawyer has emerged as one of the nation's leading representatives for text and academic authors, winning a \$3.2 million settlement in the *Merrill Math* case last year.

Lennie comments about the award modestly:

"There would be no TAA if there was not a Mike Keedy," he said. "So anything I receive named after him is a big honor."

Lennie was key in TAA's two-year struggle to recapture repatriated reprography revenue from the Copyright Clearance Center.

The 1996 M.L. Keedy award will be presented to Lennie at TAA's annual convention in Chicago on June 20-22.



**Michael Lennie says anything that he receives with Keedy's name on it is an honor**