

Let me tell you a tale...

On Thursday I went to Gestetner to have some electrostencils done, and while I was there I bought a ream of A4 paper, so I could run off the stencils Jan Finder sent me. I also bought a ream of A4 offset paper, for another job. On Friday, just before I left to pick up the electrostencils, it struck me that the two reams I had bought were of pretty much the same thickness, so I rang Gestetner and asked whether 416-C (or whatever it was) was suitable for stencil duplicating. It was not. So I took it back and changed it for this ream of certified standard Gestetner 201 tinted duplicating paper. And today I ran off Jan's Parole dalla Posterior.

Jan, it took me nearly two hours.

During that time, as the pretty pink sheets wafted about the room or stuck so fast to the drum that I just about needed a crowbar to get them off, as the air in my little fanzine factory turned blue with my quotations from favourite classical authors, and as my arms, face, hair and clothing turned black with Roneo ink, I reached a high and resolute resolve.

I decided that from now on I will be making no charge at all for running off people's fanzines.

No, not because I enjoy it so much that I feel guilty about taking money for it, but because from now on I will not be running off other people's fanzines.

The offer is withdrawn, terminated, finito, kaput.

I will repeat that, in case it was too amusing or subtle for the slow learners in the audience, in large letters:

MY OFFER TO RUN OFF OTHER PEOPLE'S STENCILS IS
HEREBY WITHDRAWN.

Hey! that felt good! I could really get to enjoy typing apazines with 10-pitch spacing, 1½-line-spacing and big margins! You get through a stencil in no time! Hey wow!

One of the things Bill Rotsler and I talked about last weekend is the way that neo-authors almost invariably type their manuscripts single-space, with quarter-inch margins (if any). Now I'll bet that those same neo-authors — if they are not in fact the same people — have cousins who type stencils double-space, with two-inch margins all round.

Jan, I'm sorry in a way to do this, because I know you rely on having your stuff duplicated in Australia, but really, two nasty experiences with your stencils is enough. As it happens, you type a very good stencil: you choose a good kind of stencil to type on, and you type neatly. But you start right at the top, which is a no-no, because the paper has less chance that way of clearing the drum, and you type almost without margins, which means that the strippers leave vertical smears on the page. I finished up running your stuff off by hand, one sheet at a time, after I'd done everything I could think of to stop the sheets sticking to the drum.

'John,' says Jan, 'is it possible that it is the machine?!'
Jan (says John), I think not. But just for the hell of it, I am deliberately typing this stencil to run off, automatically, on that pink A4.

John Foyster: I'm sorry I didn't see your note about corflu before I ran off your stencils (which gave me no bother at all).

Kitty Vigo: Your stuff turned out better than I expected.