

Other means were available, not used or practical in a commercial sense, but nonetheless perfect for limited use. In the early 1990s I published several substantial books in batches, small, but not limited, editions. These used an electric typewriter, with black carbon and white correction ribbons, the content printed directly and individually onto coloured stock; and similarly a series of handwritten pamphlets made with a black rapidograph pen. The activity of physically typing and writing seemed historically linked to the repetitive practices of the mechanical and clerical office, and the monastic scriptorium, the process had gone somewhat out of its time.

Means changed, new processes arrived while others remained constant; the hand-printing of short letterpress texts in a book from the early 2000s as it had been twenty years earlier. While pages printed with a domestic inkjet machine only began around that time, the coloured content composed

and designed on-screen, compressing the process of editing and production.

I can't recall now if there was an interim period between when a job was supplied to a printer in artwork form, to physically make a litho plate, via process camera and repro film, and now, when data is sent as a high-resolution pdf, and content arrives digitally on paper seemingly without further process. The direct interplay between writing, editing and constructing pages on-screen marked the most significant change in the physical making of books. The process of gathering text and manipulating the fit and extent within one device was key to the compression of what were separate activities into a new autonomy: the publisher could be writer, editor, designer, typesetter, and printer, all from the same desk.

The first part of an essay included in *Code-X: Paper, Ink, Pixel and Screen*; bookRoom, Farnham, 2015. Further extracts are on p.148 and p.152.

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Although the photograph* appears on the first printed page, it should be considered as both an introduction and as an index, conventionally placed at the beginning and at the end. With this in mind, the non-sequential page structure and system of reading are both reflexive and asymmetric.

* A classroom at Strathmore Avenue Infants' School, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, 1949.

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Previous pages

[no title] p.10-11 (shown greyscale) / p.2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 / p.12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18-19
20pp, 320 x 240, coloured sugar paper, sewn pamphlet; single example, 1990.

12pp, 202 x 152, letterpress, photocopy on matt-coated cartridge, paperback; Coracle, London, 1984.