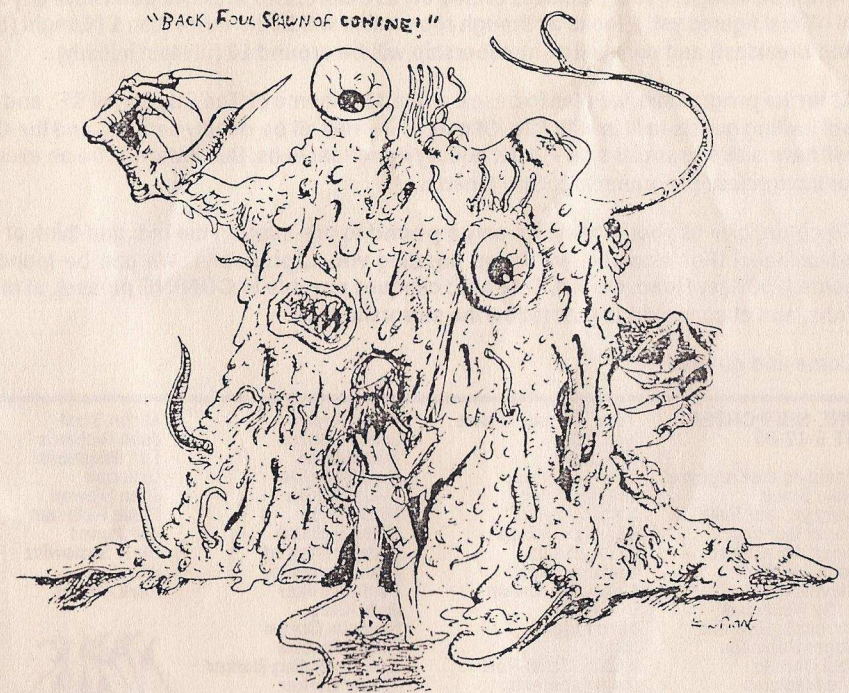


Spawn of
CONINE

A bid for Unicon in 1990
13-15 July at
Oxford Polytechnic



Spawn of
CONINE
 298 Iffley Road, Oxford

CONINE has spawned.

Yes, you thought it couldn't happen, we thought it couldn't happen. but it has happened, and now we appear to be stuck with it.

We're bidding for the Unicon this time: Unicon 11, to be precise. Our bid committee consists of Matt Bishop (OUSFG committee), Adrian Cox (OUSFG librarian), Penny Heal (OUSFG treasurer) and Ivan Towlson (ex-OUSFG president and librarian, CONINE co-chair); we will, of course, be bringing in more people to help actually run the thing. Our intention is to run a convention similar in philosophy to CONINE, stressing participation and involvement; exact details have yet to be thrashed out, but we reckon that we can learn from our mistakes to run a Spawn that will have all the good points of its parent with less (none?) of it's problems.

We will be using the same facilities at the Poly as before, and while we don't have any sort of official figures yet, it looks as though room rates will be no more than £16/night (bed and breakfast) and convention membership will be around £8 (at least initially).

As for the programme, we plan to base it around the theme of 'The Edge(s) of SF', and we will inviting guests to fit in with this. Of course it won't all be deadly serious, and the Con will have a strong social side - that's equally important to us. But that won't be an excuse for thoughtless programming. Stay tuned.....

So go on, give us your money: it's only a pound to pre-support the bid, and think of the advantages! (For example, we'll stop hassling you.... probably). We can be found at home (298 Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 4AE; cheques payable to CONINE please), at most Tuns, and at conventions (just follow the mirrorshades).

Come and go mad!

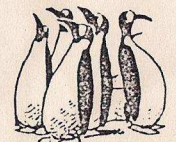
**PRE-SUPPORTERS
 AT 5-12-88**

Pompino the Kregoyne
 Mike Stone
 Larry van der Putte
 Roger Dearnaley
 Fiona Whitehouse
 John Dallman
 Steve Linton
 Kathy Westhead
 Marcus L. Rowland
 Roger Robinson
 Paul Dormer
 The Magician
 Rhodri James
 Marina McDonald
 Jason Stevens
 Alan Sullivan

Tom "Flossie" Fakes
 Ivan Sinha
 Nick Ford
 The Mad Hatter
 Jeff Haughton
 Natasha Sykes
 Penny Davidson
 Charred Jim
 Simon Gardner
 Gary C Stratmann
 Dov Rigal
 Mike Figg
 Nigel
 Jackie (Jaffa) Roe
 Dave Clements
 Tim Irons
 Simon Spero
 Amanda Baker
 Mark Grant

Stuart Raper
 Julian Dobson
 Stuart Aston
 Neal Tringham
 Kyalo Brooks
 Mark Hirst
 Steve Bellamy
 Charles Stewart
 Mike Damesick
 Paul Sherliker
 Judy Klass
 Malcolm Cohen
 Hugh Mascetti
 Zoe Deterding-Barker
 Trevor Barker
 Omega
 Alan Crump
 David Langford
 Phil 'Jason' Rosenblatt

Alison Scott
 John Richards
 Tim Illingworth
 Grandad
 John Stewart
 Steve Rothman
 Wilf James
 Chris Suslowicz
 Wombal
 Mark Adams



Nobody escapes the Oxford ChristmasCon...

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the Ton...

Spawn of Conine Meets Godzilla

Details

DATE The fannish dead-zone of December, specifically 14th-16th December 1990.

PLACE Oxford Polytechnic.

EVENT A small, cuddly convention, combining fluffiness, literary cred and the cyberpunk version of "The Sound of Music", with a 50p special effects budget.

As previous fliers claimed, the participation and involvement philosophy of Conine will continue. In fact, at a convention smaller than a Unicon, this should be even easier (Who? Us? Sour grapes?).

But, for no very good reason, the theme is changed to *SF and Society* or the way in which SF relates to the culture which perpetrates/generates/propagates it. This covers a wide and wild field, from utopias, feminism and contemporary attitudes to science, through to specifics like Vietnam, the moon landings and McCarthyism. Some, all or none of these may be covered, together with anything else that our fevered brains can hit upon (including, of course, the serious items like the cocktail and massage workshops).

Guests will fit in with the general theme in a loose sort of way, and will include Ramsey Campbell. Other guests will be announced in the near future; negotiations are in progress...

The committee is still Matt Bishop (OUSFG secretary (with beard)), Adrian Cox (OUSFG librarian (with beard)), Penny Heal (OUSFG president (without beard)) and Ivan Towilson (ex-OUSFG president, Conine co-chair and spiritual leader (with beard)). We are planning the daring move of putting some men *without* beards on the committee soon.

Find us wherever you hear the *Kwaaaarks* of caffeine crazed penguins (specifically at cons and tons). Alternatively, write to us (Spawn of Conine, c/o Adrian Cox, St. John's College, Oxford, OX1 3JP) or e-mail us (u87apc@uk.ac.ox.ecs). You know it makes sense.

Money

EASY BIT Attending membership is £9, and supporting membership is £5. Room rates are liable to be £15/night (bed & breakfast).

DIFFICULT BIT (UNICON PRESUPPORTS) If you presupported the Spawn of Conine Unicon bid then there are three options. (Yes. 3. No other convention gives you this many ways of spending your money.) If you don't tell us any different, we will keep your £1 and you get a £1 off membership of the December '90 convention.

Otherwise, fill in the form below, and we will send you money *either* back to you *or* to the Cambridge Unicon bid, where it will get you £1 off membership of that con.

The Form

(Make cheques payable to CONINE.)

I want to attend the December Spawn of Conine convention.

I have/have not presupported the Unicon bid and therefore enclose £8 ☐ £9 ☐

I want supporting membership of the December Spawn of Conine convention.

I have/have not presupported the Unicon bid and therefore enclose £4 ☐ £5 ☐

Give me back my money or you'll never see the little penguin again.

Give my £1 presupport to those nice CUSFS people.

Name

Address

**The Real People:
or, Pasting Up Is Hard To Do**

SPAWN OF CONINE MEMBERSHIP LIST (CORRECT AT 27.3.90)

P	Mark Adams	P	Grandad	P	Phil Rosenblatt
P	Stuart Aston	P	Mark Grant	P	Steve Rothman
P	Amanda Baker	P	Susan E. Harding	P	Marcus Rowland
P	Trovor Barker	P	Jeff Haughton	P	Allison Scott
1	C	3	C	5	C
	Steve Bellamy		Penny Heal		Jenni Scott
	Matt Bishop		Mark Hirst	24	S
30	A		Tim Illingworth		Paul Sherliker
666	P		Tim Irons	25	S
	John Bray		Rhodri James		Ivan Sinha
A	Matthew Brock	31	A		Dan Smithers
	Kyalo Brooks		P		Georgina Spary
10	G		Will James	1507	A
	Ramsey Campbell		Helen Jeffries	6	C
P	Charred Jim	4	C		Jason Stevens
P	Dave Clements		Colin Johnson		John Stewart
2	C		Judy Klass	26	S
	Malcolm Cohen		David Langford		Charles Stewart
P	Adrian Cox		Steve Linton		Mike Stone
P	Paul Cray		Hugh Mascetti		Gary Stratmann
23	A		Paul Maskens		Marcus Streets
	John Dallman	28	A		Alan Sullivan
	Mike Damesick	32	A		Christopher John Suslowica
P	Penny Davidson		Simon McLeish		Natasha Sykes
P	Roger Dearnaley		Nigel	7	C
P	Zoe Deterding-Barker		Chris O'Shea		Ivan Towson
P	Julian Dobson		Pompino the Kregoyne	8	C
P	Paul Dormer		Andrew Ramage		Neal Tringham
P	Tom "Flossie" Fakes		Debbie Ramage		Ursula
P	Nic Farey		Stuart Raper		Larry van der Putte
P	Mike Figg		John Richards	27	A
P	Nick Ford		Dov Rigal	29	A
P	Simon Gardener		Roger Robinson		Tom Yates
			Jackie "Jaffa" Roe		

**The Rates:
or, It's A Rich Man's World But Even You Can Afford This**

Our membership rates are:

Attending: £9

Supporting: £5

Conversion: £4

Conversion rates will always be the *current* difference between attending and supporting rates. Those who presupported the original Unicon bid can take £1 off attending or supporting membership. Those who want no part of this whole affair can ask us to transfer their money to the Cambridge Unicon's account.

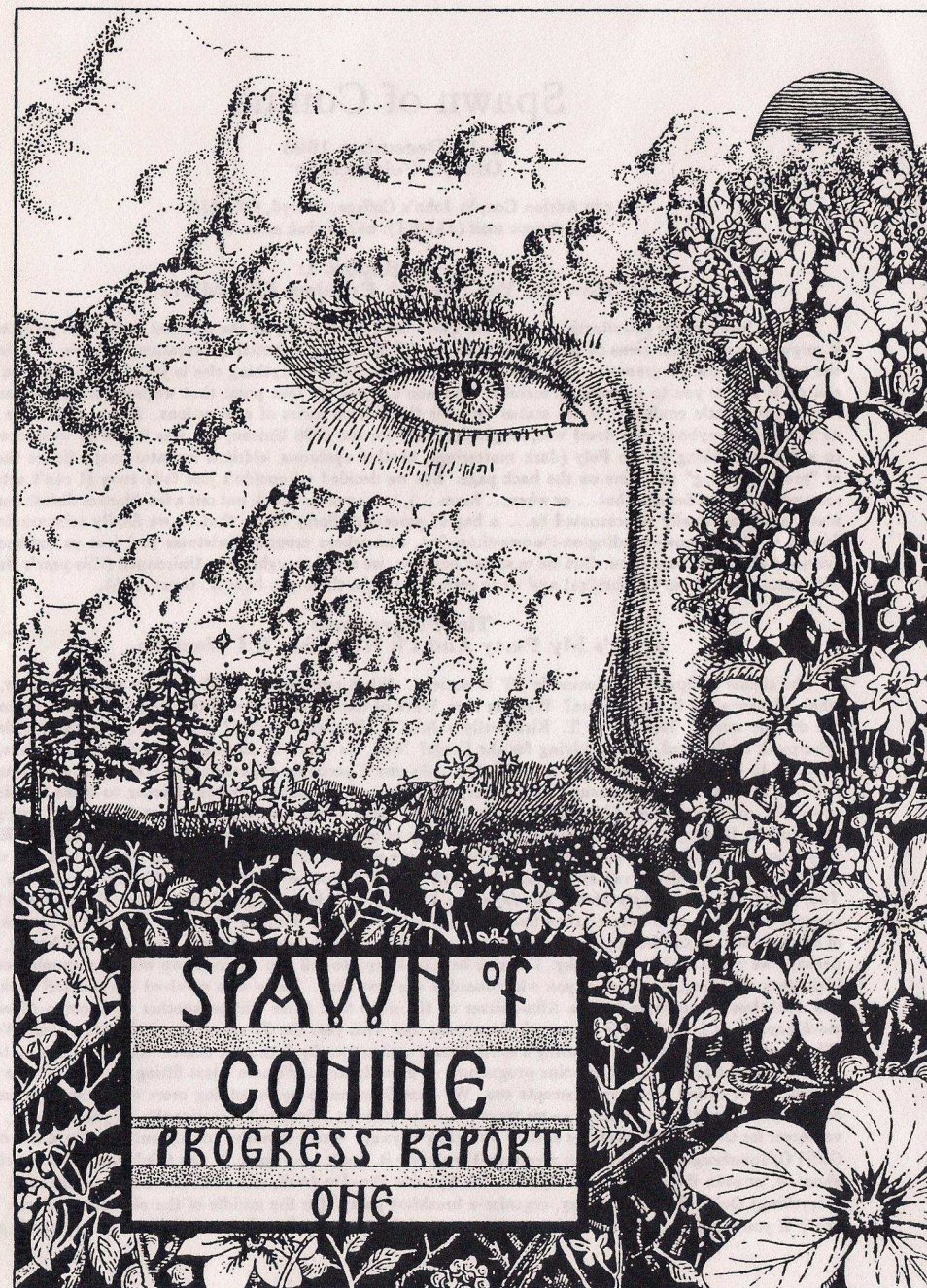
We do not have firm room rates yet, but have been quoted a figure around £15 for bed and breakfast.

Advertising rates for the Programme Book will be published in PR2; if you want to advertise in future PRs please contact us. PR2 will appear at ConFiction, and PR3 shortly before Sponine (probably at Novacon).

**The Postscript:
or, I'm A Lonesome Petunia In A Little Onion Patch**

Written by Ivan except for Jason's bit about the programme (which Ivan mercilessly messed around with anyway, without consulting him). The bit about the site was stolen shamelessly from Famous Maria Hamilton. All typos are the fault of the gremlins, and Adrian is guilty of making the whole thing look nice. Will we ever forgive him? Await the next instalment with bated breath — or smoke a pipe, or ride a bicycle — or indeed do anything else that the local authorities will permit.

Spawn of Conine
c/o Adrian Cox, St John's College, Oxford, OX1 3JP
u87apc@uk.ac.ox.ecs



Spawn of Conine

14-16 December 1990
Oxford Polytechnic

c/o Adrian Cox, St John's College, Oxford, OX1 3JP
electronic mail (JANET): u87apc@uk.ac.ox.ecs

Progress Report 1: or, How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria?

I do so love writing introductions to PRIs. There isn't much to say at the moment, but we're going to say it anyway, just in case some of you want to know. All the really essential information is above, or below (the section on the programme, or at the end on the rates card. Everything else is just temptation, and all I can do is advise you to succumb gracefully. You won't regret it. One point that we hope is fairly clear but may cause a little confusion is our status vis-a-vis the Unicon series of conventions. Spawn of Conine (call us Sponine; everybody else does) was, originally, a bid for the 1990 Unicon, but was forced to withdraw due to a double-booking at the Poly (dark mutterings, beetled eyebrows, eldritch incantations). Hence the list of "pre-supporting" members on the back page. But we decided we couldn't just fade away (I can't actually remember *why* we decided that... or when... hmm...), so we renegotiated, put out a few blanket disinformation statements and finally reincarnated as... a bag of groceries! Sorry about that... we finally reincarnated as Spawn of Conine-now-standing-on-its-own-three-feet, somewhere around Christmas and just as confused as everyone else must have been. But we're sorted out now, we are thoroughly non-Uniconned (this year's Unicon will instead be held in Cambridge) and we're raring to go. So there you have it. Umm, right.

The Programme: or, It's My Party And I'll Have Fun If I Want To

The theme of Spawn Of Conine is 'SF in society'. What relevance does SF have to modern society, and what relevance did it have before? Was the New Wave of the sixties a sign of the times, or just a mirror for the outside world? Was James T. Kirk really a John F. Kennedy symbol? And, coming back to today, is cyberpunk really dead, or just pining for the fjords? Well, we won't be answering all of these questions, but we'll try to make you think about some of them. As you'd probably expect at this stage, our programme is still in a state of flux. We intend to take every advantage of last-minute events in order to make Sponine as culturally up-to-date as possible. Honest. But there are some things that we can be certain of. First, our guest of honour is Ramsey Campbell, who is (in my totally unbiased opinion) Britain's best horror author. He's a very enjoyable speaker and an all-round nice guy (though you wouldn't guess it from his books), and well worth meeting if you can drag Ivan away from him (*pah* —ed.). If you've avoided books like *Incarnate*, *The Face That Must Die*, *The Hungry Moon*, *The Influence*, his "best-of" short story collection *Dark Feasts* and so forth because you 'don't read horror', then find out what you're missing: Ramsey Campbell is a very acute observer of modern Britain and its people, and if he chooses to express what he sees through the medium of horror, then perhaps we ought to be asking why. I'm sure he'd be happy to tell you. Second, we will be rerunning edited highlights of Conine for those of you who missed it the first time. Those who survived the cocktail workshop will doubtless be reaching for the Alka-Seltzer on the news that there will be another at Sponine (*Spocktail workshop?* —ed.). And music fans are in for a treat too! This year the SF classic musical will be Gene Wolfe's 'The Book Of The New Sun', featuring a special guest appearance by Arthur C. Clarke. This brings us on to the most important aspect of the Sponine programme — participation. We aren't just lifting successful items from Conine, we're lifting successful concepts too. We want Sponine to be something more than just a procession of fans from one item to another — we want people to interact. Even talk occasionally. If you can sing, then volunteer for the musical. (*Why be elitist? Volunteer anyway.* —ed.) If you've got a point to make in one of the OUSFG/Jomsborg-style discussion meetings, then make it, don't keep quiet. If you think you know something about sf, or even if you don't, take part in the Sponine Pro-Am (well, more like Am-Am but you can't have everything) Quiz. If you're hungry, organise a breakfast party. (In the middle of the afternoon? Sure. Why not?) If you fancy a drink, then why not buy a round for the committee? Go on, join in. If Sponine is going

to be a success in this respect, then we need people like you to help. So, there you have it. SF in society, participation, and occasional wanton silliness. Sponine — what more could you want for Christmas?

Jason Stevens

The Place: or, All Kinds Of Everything Remind Me Of Oxford Polytechnic

Oxford Poly is on the top of Headington Hill, avoiding the crowding of central Oxford but still convenient (via frequent buses or a half-hour walk) for people who want to play tourist. Headington has its own shops and restaurants as well, which are about ten minutes' walk away: we'll be compiling a list for the programme book of good and/or convenient places to eat. The programme will take place in the conference suite in the Poly's Lloyd Building. Those who were at Conine in August 1988 will know what the place is like: a small suite of comfortable 40-seater rooms connected to a 150-seater lecture theatre (no, we're not expecting to fill it), plus a rather larger but curiously L-shaped room ideal for workshops and social events. The lecture theatre has impressive audio-visual facilities including a rather nice large screen video projector, and we intend to take full advantage of these. The snack bar is situated directly over the conference suite, and this will probably form the drinking bar as well. Being the staff common room, the bar is extremely comfortable, spacious without being overwhelmingly so, and perfectly suited to social relaxation (a euphemism if ever I heard one). With any luck we'll be getting some presentations to go in here as well, for instance about OUSFG and other university SF societies, or even the mooted national student SF group. The accomodation is in Morrell Hall, apparently the last educational accomodation built in the UK. It's roughly five minutes walk away from the main site (and in response to previous criticisms we stress that as far as we are aware the short walk is perfectly safe, but we are still willing to provide gopher escorts if people are nervous). Most of the rooms are single, but there are a very limited number of twin rooms available. They are arranged into flats of 5-6 rooms, each with a communal kitchen and living area (which on previous occasions the Poly have been kind enough to stock with milk, tea and television sets for us). If possible, we would like to use the full self-catering facilities to arrange feeding-parties (pick a mealtime) — all in the name of getting to meet people. Some of the areas will be used for late-night events like filksinging or videos (there will be an option on the booking form to request a quiet area). Lunch and dinner will be on sale at the usual times, or you can use the Morrell Hall facilities, or even eat out if you're feeling extravagant! And then, of course, the Hall is right at the top of the hill, and has some rather nice views of the dreaming spires... assuming you don't get interrupted by the conspiring dreamers a little closer to hand, that is.

The People: or, It's All Right, We Don't Know Who We Are Either

The committee supposedly organising this epic event are a group of Oxford-based loonies from the university's SF group, plus a shattered remnant of the original Conine committee who has since retired to North Wales to mangle innocent undergraduates and fall off cliffs in an effort to eradicate the shame. All of them have had experience running the SF or comic-books society, not that it'll do them much good, of course.

Matt Bishop: secretary with nice handwriting and talker to all and sundry

Adrian Cox: treasurer and T_EXnical wizard (so doesn't need nice handwriting)

Penny Heal: bouncy membership-type person and talker to institutions

Colin Johnson: artist co-opted to stop him escaping

Jenni Scott: unspecified dogsbody and official treasurer-suppressant

Jason Stevens: programming and committee surrealist

Ivan Towlson: publications, publicity, moving, shaking, shuffling

Ursula: chairbeing and token stuffed penguin

The Tragic Death of Sponine of Conine

Well, it had to happen. Everyone was waiting for one of the small cons to fold, and unfortunately, it's Spawn Of Conine that's gone under. Winding up Sponine isn't a decision that we've taken lightly, but thanks to a combination of circumstances we've been left with no alternative.

1) The room rate offered by Oxford Polytechnic was £25 a night full board. We didn't think that a convention a fortnight before Christmas would attract many people at that price.

2) The Polytechnic wanted twenty full board nights for each function room day. Bearing in mind that we had planned to have a participatory programme, involving lots of small groups (and therefore lots of rooms), we didn't feel that we could get enough full board room nights.

3) Sponine currently has about thirty members. Unless we had a huge upsurge in memberships, we would never have been able to meet the Poly's conditions.

When we sat back and looked at the situation, we decided that we were not prepared to take the financial risks involved in running Sponine. Call us cowards if you like, it wouldn't have been you facing the overdraft at the end of it.

It wasn't merely financial considerations that convinced us to fold, though. We had only managed to get something like thirty members joining, which means that if we had decided to go ahead, we would have needed a tremendous sales drive with no guarantee of success. We had planned Sponine to be a small convention, but if it had been too small (and really anything under sixty people attending would have been too small), our plans for the programme wouldn't have worked. The convention would have been a failure for us and a weekend wasted for everyone there. It was this as much as anything else that decided things for us. The risks would have been too large, and the failure too publicly embarrassing, for us to try it.

Attending and supporting members should have received complete refunds with this notice. If you haven't, contact Spawn of Conine, c/o Adrian Cox, St. John's College, Oxford.

So that's it. Sponine's dead, and I never mentioned parrots once.

-The committee