

Poor Image For Snakes

When it comes to poor public images, snakes have one of the worst. It's largely a result of a lack of understanding, the snake experts claim.

For example, all snakes suffer in the public eye because 19 of the 116 species found in the U.S. — 8 of 47 in North Carolina — are dangerous. The other 97 are often mistaken for one of their poisonous cousins or suffer from the popular attitude of humans that "a snake is a snake."

The fact is, most non-poisonous snakes are beneficial in that they eat rodents and insects.

Because snakes are so misunderstood, feared and hated, many false beliefs have been connected with them over the years.

For example, snakes aren't actually slimy, but appear so due to the closely-set scales, point out North Carolina State University specialists. They add that snakes have no sweat glands and are dry-bodied animals.

Here are some other points of common misunderstanding:

—The tips of a snake's tongue are not poison "angs" but actually contain taste buds by which it "taste" odors in the air. It also serves as an organ of touch.

—The idea that rattlesnakes will not cross a horseshoe or manila rope is false.

—A snake-feeder or snake doctor, (dragonfly) does not feed or doctor snakes.

—Whiskey is not a cure for poisonous snake bite, and when taken in large doses, is dangerous to one who has been bitten.

Here are some suggestions for guarding against snake bite:

—Watch where you walk. Most snake bites are below the knee, and this is the part of the body most easily protected by wearing heavy boots.

—Don't put your hands where you can't see.

—Where snakes are numerous, campers would be safer sleeping on cots rather than on the ground.

There is no sure-fire way to keep snakes away from the house, barn or other traffic areas. They can be discouraged however by removing their food and cover.

Most snakes like to feed on rats and mice, so it is advisable to kill the rodents and make rooms and buildings rodentproof.

Closely-mowed lawns and fields are less attractive to snakes than areas of tall grass, weeds or brush. Snakes like to hide under boards, flat rocks, trash piles and similar materials. Eliminating such shelter should be effective anti-snake safeguard.

Foam Bubbles Are Materials For Building

RALEIGH — Polyurethane foam, air and fiberglass may take their places alongside wood and brick as important building materials of the future.

In fact, these lesser known materials, already being used in housing, are inspiring new shapes and forms, observe extension housing specialists, North Carolina State University.

For example, there are no corners or sharp angles in a foam house. Spaces flow gently and freely from one to another.

The foam house first begins as a series of inflated plastic balloons. Layers of urethane foam are sprayed over these balloons. Layers of urethane foam are sprayed over these balloons until the foam shell is about two inches thick. Then the balloons are deflated.

The result? Spare, clean-lined living spaces with a pleasant rough texture. To give the house color, owners can add lots of bright-colored pillows and carpeting.

The use of air as a building material is still fairly revolutionary, although giant plastic bubbles are mushrooming across the country in the form of athletic field houses, tennis courts and classrooms.

Such structures are inexpensive and highly mobile because of their lightweight. No beams or supports are needed.

One company, specializing in air structures, has a house that is 25-feet in diameter and takes only 30 minutes to set up.

First the floor is laid on the ground, then the top section is spread over it. Next 450 gallons of water are filled into the hose base to anchor the floor, then the bubble is blow up in eight minutes with an electric blower.

The structure could sell for less than \$2,000.

Fiberglass, used for making boats and some furniture, is also seen as a potential building material.

Lightweight, and easy to mold into various shapes, fiberglass could make an easily portable, almost instant house.

Such a house could be relatively maintenance-free and could be manufactured in a wide range of colors.

More veterans and servicemen trained under the current GI Bill in April than any month in its six year history, according to the Veterans Administration.

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After 60 years of making encyclopedias for adults, Funk & Wagnalls has learned enough to make one for children.

It's called the Young Students Encyclopedia. And it's designed to do something more than just get them through the next homework assignment—to make them want to learn on their own.

Instead of burdening your children with tons of forgettable detail, it appeals to their native curiosity. The article on *Airplanes*, for example, illustrates an experiment children can perform at home showing how things fly. There are hundreds of other drawings, games and puzzles that not only teach but provoke, involve and entertain in the process.

In other words, it's an encyclopedia children will actually use. They'll also use it a long time. It's designed

to be simple enough for children just learning to read and comprehensive enough to serve until they're ready for an adult encyclopedia. They can't outgrow it the way they do shoes.

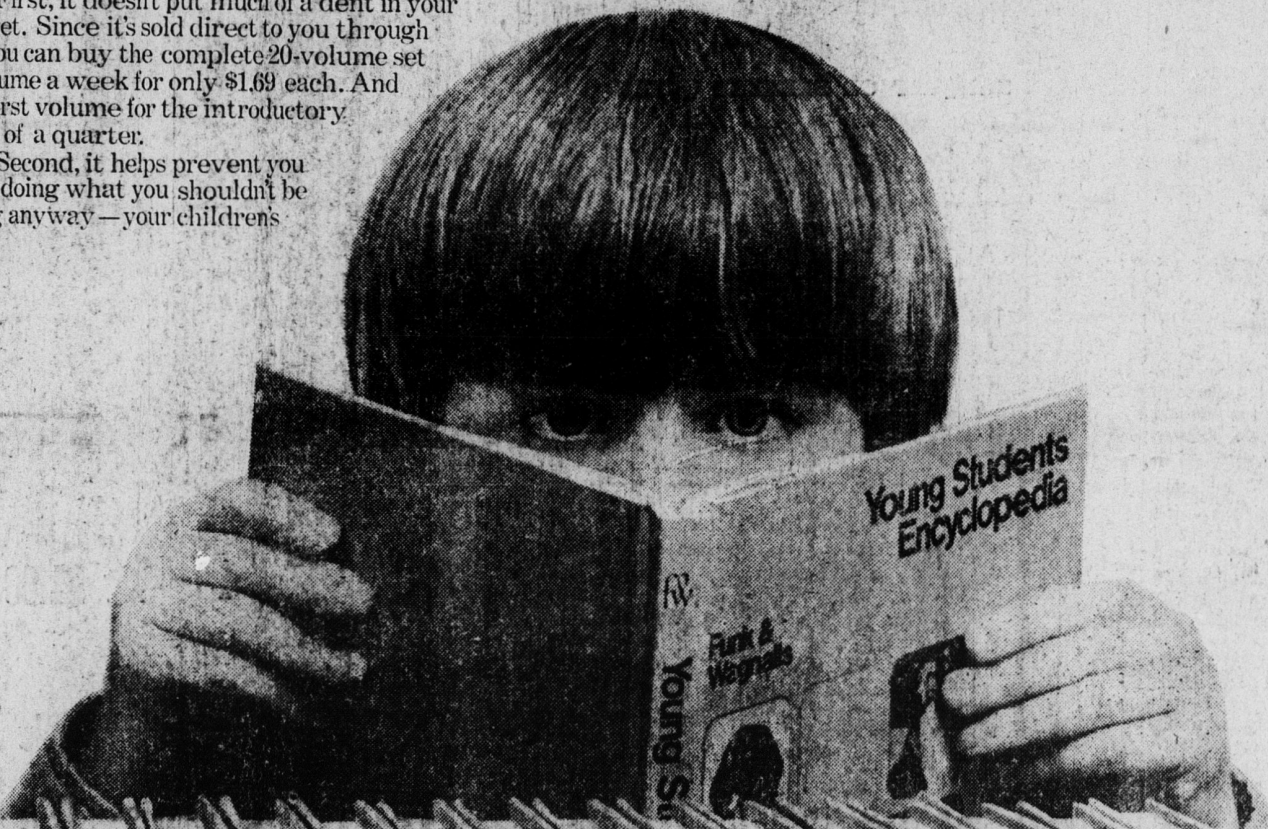
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