



Ice: Great Moments in the History of Hard, Cold Water

Karal Ann Marling

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"Put your mittens on; you'll freeze to death!" admonish the world's grandmothers as the temperature plummets. No doubt the Arctic explorers--today in their GORE-TEX, historically in their woolens--needed no such instruction. Icy climes bring with them the dangers of frostbite, but also the poetic beauty of glaciers and ice shelves, of ice palaces and aurora borealis. Karal Ann Marling explores these topics and more as she considers the history of "hard, cold water."

What better place to start than with dessert? The pleasure of ice cream on a hot day has been known since the sixteenth century, although it wasn't until a few hundred years later that reliable refrigeration made the treat readily available. Marling expands her icy explorations to the realm of fiction--the ice crossing in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the frozen wasteland of *Frankenstein*--and to the movies and Broadway. Cities vie for tourists by building shimmering ice palaces to celebrate winter; explorers compete to reach the poles, and not all live to tell the story. The study of ice by a true aficionado yields fascinating insights and may just inspire readers to embrace winter--or to make their way to the nearest ice cream shop.

Karal Ann Marling is a professor emerita of art history and American studies at the University of Minnesota. She is the author, most recently, of *Merry Christmas!: Celebrating America's Greatest Holiday* and *Illusions of Eden: Visions of the American Heartland*.

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