Bring the story of this trailblazing explorer—the first woman to lead an expedition to the polar seas—to your community.

UNLADYLIKE 2020

Do-It-Yourself Screening Kit: Louise Arner Boyd

Bring the story of this trailblazing explorer—the first woman to lead an expedition to the polar seas—to your community.
ABOUT THE SERIES

UNLADYLIKE2020 is an innovative multimedia series featuring diverse and little-known American heroines from the early years of feminism, and the women who now follow in their footsteps. Presenting history in a bold new way, the rich biographies of 26 women who broke barriers in male-dominated fields 100 years ago, such as science, business, politics, journalism, sports, and the arts, are brought back to life through rare archival imagery, captivating original artwork and animation, and interviews with historians, descendants, and accomplished women of today who reflect on the influence of these pioneers.

Narrated by Julianna Margulies (ER, The Good Wife, Billions) and Lorraine Toussaint (Selma, Orange is the New Black, The Glorias), the series features 26 ten-to-twelve-minute animated documentary films released digitally on PBS’s flagship biography series American Masters, along with a television hour on PBS showcasing the stories of trailblazers in politics and civil rights, plus a resource-rich interactive website, a grades 6 through 12 U.S. history curriculum on PBS LearningMedia, and a nationwide community engagement and screening initiative staged in partnership with public television stations and community organizations.

Although the series was timed to honor the 100th anniversary of the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment giving women suffrage, this content is evergreen, and merits screening and discussion anytime! This kit aims to give you all the tools you need to bring Louise Arner Boyd’s adventurous life story to your community.

“People openly told me the Arctic was a place only for men — that for me to go where I did was not to be taken seriously. Determination and persistence brought me to the position I achieved.”

—LOUISE ARNER BOYD
Louise Arner Boyd (1887-1972) was born in San Rafael, CA to a family that generated considerable wealth due to their part ownership of a California gold mine. After losing her parents and siblings, Boyd was left at the age of 32, with no immediate family and a substantive inheritance which she used to pursue her dream of exploring the Arctic. In 1926, hiring her own ship and crew, she became the first woman to finance and lead an expedition to the polar seas. As a self-taught polar scientist and photographer, she mapped previously uncharted regions of Greenland using photogrammetry. She also filmed and photographed topography, sea ice, glacial features, and land formations, measured ocean depths, and collected plant specimens. A fjord in East Greenland was named “Louise Boyd Land” in her honor, and her photographs of glaciers provide baseline information to climate change researchers today. In 1938, Boyd was awarded the Cullum Medal from the American Geographical Society, and she became one of the first women to autograph the Explorers Globe, signed by the major explorers and aviators of the 20th century. In 1955, Boyd also became the first woman to fly over the North Pole in a plane that she chartered.

WHO IS INTERVIEWED?

Durlynn Anema, author of over 15 books including two biographies of Louise Arner Boyd: Taming the Arctic: The 20th Century Renown Arctic Explorer Louise Arner Boyd and Louise Arner Boyd, Arctic Explorer.

Lorie Karnath, author, explorer, and lecturer. Karnath was the 37th president of The Explorers Club from 2009 to 2012, the second woman to hold this position in the organization’s 107-year history, and she co-founded the Explorer’s Museum.

Twila Moon, research scientist and glaciologist at the National Snow and Ice Data Center, part of the University of Colorado Boulder’s Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences.
EVENT/PROGRAMMING IDEAS

- Invite a climate scientist to speak on the ways in which the Arctic is changing.
- Brainstorm about ways you and your community might help slow the progress of global warming.
- Have a conversation about new career opportunities that may exist in STEM/climate research fields.
- Have local teachers and researchers make a presentation about the new frontiers of STEM/climate research.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- Why do you think it is important to know and celebrate Louise Arner Boyd’s accomplishments as an explorer and woman in STEM?
- Do you think Boyd has made a lasting impact on science? If so, how?
- What do you think led Boyd to devote her life to exploring the Arctic?
- Why do you think a privileged young woman like Boyd dreamed of becoming an explorer?
- How do you think being a woman impacted Boyd’s life as an explorer and her accomplishments in the field?
- What is interesting to you about the Arctic climate?
- How do you think climate change has affected polar exploration and Arctic wildlife since the time Louise Arner Boyd was exploring?
- What do you think drives humans to explore unknown regions? What are areas of our world - and beyond - that we have yet to explore or that you are interested in exploring or visiting?
- How do you think exploring has changed since the time Boyd was alive? How do you think greater travel for pleasure, rather than exploration or science, has changed the experience?
- Do you feel that opportunities for women in STEM have improved since the time Louise Arner Boyd was a STEM pioneer?
RESOURCES/READING LIST

PBS LearningMedia Louise Arner Boyd Teaching Resource


“She was a trailblazer who had courage, bravery, and curiosity, and became one of the most knowledgeable people on the planet of the Arctic region.”
—LORIE KARNATH

PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES FOR YOUR EVENT

Please visit https://unladylike2020.com/host-an-event/ to view a full list of promotional resources for your event, such as a social media toolkit, press release, audience evaluation form, and more.