

Chicago-Focused Topics for Breaking Barriers in History

How did breaking the barrier(s) of _____ create important, impactful change?

CULTURE – ART, MUSIC, LITERATURE, EDUCATION

- Streamlining America*
- Vivian Harsh and the Saving of Black History and Culture
- Charlemae Rollins and Multicultural Books for Students
- AfriCOBRA--Black Arts Movement Makes its Own Rules
- Many Hats of the Artist Ralph Arnold
- Jazz (*Many stories: early jazz, black and white musicians, AACM, etc.*)
- When the Blues Came to Chicago*
- Gospel: BB Blues and Spiritual or Sacred and Secular
- Black Chicago Renaissance (*Consider artists, writers, etc*)
- Exiled Design: New Bauhaus*
- Chicago Sinfonietta
- Worlds Columbian Exposition (*Many stories: African-Americans, women, consumer products, reputation*)
- Frederick Stock and the Groundbreaking CSO
- Hull House and the Small Theater Movement
- Compass Players and Second City
- Black Theater Movement: ETA or Kuumba
- Katherine Dunham Transforms Dance
- Ebony magazine
- Chicago Defender
- Artemisia: Women, Feminism and Art
- Hull House, Immigrants, and Art
- The Surrealists of Chicago
- Charles White: A Universal Artist
- Marion Mahoney Griffin
- Marianne Willisch – A Woman Designer Designing Homes?*
- Architecture: (*Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Bertram Goldberg, etc.*)
- African-American and Mexican Artists Cross the Border
- Maria Tallchief
- Hairy Who
- Mural as Community Builders
- Origins of the Museum of Contemporary Arts

MEDICINE, SCIENCE, & TECH INNOVATION

- Zephyr: Breaking the speed barrier*
- Diabetes: The Insulin Question
- Killing Cancer with Killer Chemicals
- Trains and railways*
- Motorola (cell phones, car radio, mobile communications)*
- Standardization of Time
- Western Electric Connects America
- Barbed Wire
- Disability Rights: ADAPT
- Tucker Auto: What Happens to a Maverick?

- Abbott Laboratories
- Virginia Ohlson and International Nursing
- Keeping Neonatal Babies Alive
- Inventing the Pill
- James Henry Breasted Translates Egyptian Hieroglyphics
- Hubble and the Expanding Universe
- Blood! Banking It, Preserving It
- Salmon in the Great Lakes
- Medical Committee for Human Rights

POWER, AUTHORITY

- Ida B Wells-Barnet Speaks the Truth Power
- Ben Hecht and Rescue of European Jews
- Parks for All: (*The Chicago Park District and Consent Decree, Women and Sport CWLU, From Olmstead to Working Peoples' Parks*)
- Addie Wyatt: Fighter on Four Fronts
- Harold Washington Mayoral Election and Leadership
- Free speech Dil Pickle Club
- CHA Plan for Transformation
- Joanne Alter: Getting in the Boys' Room
- Annexation and the Growth of Chicago
- Starving for a Home: Pilsen Fights for a High School
- Clarence Darrow
- Gautreaux and Section 8 Housing
- School Boycotts and Freedom Day
- Pullman Town: Whose Utopia?
- Urban Indians Claim Space
- Breaking Gerrymandering, Building Latino Power
- The Treaties that Made Chicago
- Chicago Anti-Apartheid Movement
- Campaigns to abolish the death penalty
- Fair Housing and Oak Park
- Illinois Legislative Black Caucus
- Black Panther Party
- Saul Alinsky: Community Control
- Fellowship of Reconciliation
- We Won't Go: Fighting the Draft During Vietnam War
- Sister Cities Program
- Pontiac Prison Riot Prompts Reform Efforts
- Division Street as the Center of Early Puerto Rican Power
- From Howell House to Casa Atzlan: A Community Makes Its Home

ECONOMICS, BUSINESS, LABOR

- Zephyr and Transportation*
- Equal Pay for Equal Work: Ellen Roberts Sues Texaco
- Marquette, Joliet and the Global Economy
- CIO: Black & White, Unite and Fight
- IWW and One Big Union
- Michael Jordan and Marketing

- Advertising of the Container Corp of America
- Reversal of the Chicago River
- Leo Burnett
- Chicago Women in Trades
- Coalition of Black Trade Unionist (CBTU)
- Coalition of Labor Union Women
- Sears, Wards mail order catalogs
- Barbed Wire
- Black Expo 1973
- Chicago Bungalow: Path to Home Ownership for the Working Class
- Meatpacking Industry / Stockyards (mass production, food safety)
- Eugene Debs
- Save our Jobs Coalition Takes on the Steel Industry
- Gale Cincotta and Neighborhoods Take on the Banking Industry
- Crosstown Expressway? No Way!
- Environmental Justice (*consider Hazel Johnson, Mary McDowell, etc.*)

RACE AND CIVIL RIGHTS

- African Americans and Century of Progress
- Restrictive Covenants / Shelley v Kraemer
- Chicago Freedom Movement*
- George Leighton: “Lawyer for Hopeless Cases?”
- Chicago Joins the Freedom Riders, Freedom Summer
- Integrating Summer Camp: The Bowen Country Club
- 1919 Riot and the Commission Report: What Happened!
- Howalton School and other community-led alternative schools
- Contract Buyers League
- Operation Breadbasket: Who’s Minding the Store?
- Original Rainbow Coalition
- Abolition of Slavery, the Chicago Contributions
- Afro-American Patrolmen’s League
- Rainbow Beach Wade-In
- Truman Gibson and the Integration of the Armed Forces

WOMEN, GENDER

- Women’s Movement or Labor Movement: The Women’s Trade Union League
- Women’s Suffrage (*consider differing periods, strategies, tactics, race/gender/class*) and Beyond
- Birth Control* The Pill and Beyond
- Reproductive Rights
- The Women’s World Fair
- Women’s Sanitary Fairs during the Civil War
- ACT-UP
- Pride Parade as Political Power
- “Homesteading” Women
- Women’s Work? Sears vs EEOC
- Prison Project of the Chicago Women’s Liberation Union
- Chicago Catholic Women: Feminists Religious
- Bari-Ellen Roberts vs Texaco
- Women Peace Party

- Latina Feminists (*for example, on 18th Street, in NOW, etc.*)
- International Women’s Year, 1977
- Providing Safe Abortions pre- Roe v Wade: (*Lonnie Meyers and the Abortion Rights Association, Clergy Consultative Service, etc.*)
- Spaces of our Own: Lesbian Feminist Community in Chicago
- Mary Alice McWhinnie at Antarctica

SOCIAL HISTORY

- Storefront Churches: Bringing the South, North
- Playgrounds—Not Alleys! A Progressive Era Achievement
- Bilingual Education
- Sex Education
- Esther Loeb Kohn and the Protection of Refugees
- Japanese Relocation, Resettlement in Chicago
- Gray Panthers
- Ben Reitman—hobo doctor, hobo professor
- Making of the ADA Act – Disabilities Rights

SPORTS AND RECREATION

- Title 9
- Ernie Banks
- Special Olympics
- All American Girls Baseball league
- Loyola “Game of Change”
- Harlem Globetrotters
- Nisei Sports League
- Chicago Hosts the Pan-American Games

IMMIGRATION, ETHNIC

- The Immigration Act of 1965
- The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
- Hull House (or other settlement houses) and the Immigrant Communities
- Indian Removal Act, or encroachment upon/destruction of indigenous communities more broadly
- Chicago neighborhood development – immigration, integration, displacement*
- Carlos Montezuma
- Working on the Railroads: Roots of Mexican Labor in Chicago Area

WAR, MILITARY

- Fort Dearborn: Massacre? Battle?*
- Chicago Involvement in the Civil War
- Double V Campaign

When Breaking Barriers mean “Barriers Against” (i.e., to Protect)

- Saving the Game of Baseball after Scandal
- Citizen Groups Take on Pollution
- Protecting Democracy: Chicago Committee for the Bill of Rights

- Fighting Food-based Diseases
- Epidemics and other infectious diseases
- Women's Christian Temperance Union
- Our Lady of Angels and Life Safety Laws
- Don't Kill Your Babies and other campaigns to end child mortality
- Abraham Lincoln – attempts to keep nation from division
- Shikman Decree and Patronage Jobs
- Civil Defense Hysteria: A Reaction to the Bomb
- Skokie, Nazis, and the ACLU