



CHICAGO METRO HISTORY FAIR

Triumph and Tragedy Topics List

We're giving you many broad topics – it is up to you to read more and dig deeper to narrow the topic and find the story you want to tell.

*Consider starting your investigations with a **keyword search** in the [Encyclopedia of Chicago](#) and even do a newspaper search through the *Chicago Tribune*, *Defender*, or [newspapers.com](#).*

As you explore, ask yourself, “What is the Triumph or Tragedy (or both) that I can focus on? Will I be able to investigate the ‘how’ and ‘why’—and figure out the ‘so what?’”

AFRICAN-AMERICAN & LATINX (see other categories as well)

- 1919 Riot and the Commission on Race Relations
- African American Patrolmen's League
- Banks and Bombs: Jesse Binga
- Black, Latinx Political Empowerment: Machine or Independence?
- Black Press and the Civil Rights Movement
- Charlemae Rollins and Multicultural Children's Books
- Chicago African Americans in World War One
- Double V Campaign of World War Two
- Ebony: Promoting Black Culture
- Great Migration and a New Way of Praying
- Illinois Black Panther Party
- Mexican Chicago during the Great Depression
- Mural Movements: Culture and Politics through Art
- Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
- Politics of Race in Sports (Boxing, Basketball, Baseball, etc.)
- Puerto Rican Political and Cultural Community Building
- Red Record of Shame and Ida B. Wells' Work to Outlaw Lynching
- Young Lords

ARTS, CULTURE, ARCHITECTURE & SPORTS

- Bauhaus Finds a Home in Chicago
- Bicycling: (Manufacturing & Design, Recreation, Transportation, Gender, Race, etc.)
- Birth of a Nation / Birth of a Race--Within these Gates
- Black Arts Movement of Artists and Writers
- Black Chicago Renaissance of Artists and Writers
- Censoring Entertainment: The Police Boards
- Chicago Art Goes Modern
- Chicago's Groundbreaking Comedy
- Chicago Sinfonetta's Vision of a Musical Dream
- Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies Van Der Rohe, Louis Sullivan...Take on Traditional Architecture
- From the Country Club to the Pros: Women in Sports
- Integrating Sports (Loyola, DuSable, professional leagues, etc.)
- Lights at Wrigley Field

- Lost and Saved Chicago: How “Preservation” Shaped the City
- Michael Jordan and the Marketing of Sports
- The Music that Changed America (Jazz, Blues, Gospel, House, etc.)
- Special Olympics
- Playwriting, Poetry, and Prose Rooted in Society (Brooks, Dreiser, Farrell, Hansberry, Wright, Cisneros, Rodriguez, etc.)
- Preserving Irish Music

ECONOMICS

- Cell Phone Nation and Motorola
- Changing Shopping and Consuming, (Wards, Sears, Leo Burnett, etc.)
- Civil War’s Impact on the Chicago Economy
- The Great Depression and New Deal Employment Programs (WPA, CCC, etc.)
- Illinois and Michigan Canal (engineering, labor, economic boom/bust, etc.)
- McDonalds
- Opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway
- Railroads: Chicago as the Center of the Nation
- Rise and Fall of Chicago Industry (Steel, Packing Houses, Candy, etc.)
- Telegraph Central!

EDUCATION

- Americanization Programs in the Schools
- Before the Charters: Alternative Schools in the African-American Community
- Bilingual Education
- Chicago Public Schools (Americanization, Reform, Segregation, Testing, Teacher Organizing, Depression, Washburne Trade School, Vietnam War, etc.)
- Marion Stratton Moore and the First Black History Curriculum
- Willis Wagons, Freedom Day and the Campaign for Equity

LABOR

- 1919 Steel Strike, Stockyards Council
- No More George: Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
- Cherry Mine Disaster
- Child Labor in Chicago, other towns in Illinois—specific cases, industries
- City Solidarity for the United Farm Workers
- Feminists and Unionists: Coalition of Labor Union Women
- Haymarket Tragedy
- Hull House and Labor
- Memorial Day Massacre
- The Musicians Union Integrates
- Negro and White, Unite & Fight: The CIO Years
- PATCO Strike
- Pullman Strike
- Bloody Coal
- When the Women Walked: 1911 Clothing Workers Strike
- Wisconsin Steel Workers Struggle for Plant Closing Justice

LAWS & LEGAL

- ACLU and Freedom of Speech: The Nazi March on Skokie
- Against the Death Penalty (Darrow, Illinois Coalition--)
- Disaster[s] that Changed Laws
- Fear and Dissent: The Suspension of Rights during War
- Freedom of the Press Fights
- Insanity Trials and Seeking Justice
- Integrating Public Accommodations and Recreation (Illinois Civil Rights Law of 1885, Rainbow Beach, Chicago Park District, etc.)
- John Hossack, Civil Disobedience and the Fugitive Slave Act
- Juvenile Court: Reforming Reform
- Munn vs Illinois: Sorting Out the New Economy
- Police Reform Attempts
- Sherman Act—Busting Trusts in Chicago
- Vashti McCullum Sues for the Separation of Church and State in Schools
- Women as Property: The Question of Coverture

LESBIAN & GAY

- ACT-UP
- Before Stonewall: Survival, Activism, Community
- From Gay Pride to Gay Power
- The Lesbian Activism of the CWLU
- Chicago Gay Alliance
- Women and AIDS

POLITICS, URBAN PLANNING

- 1995 Heat Wave
- Abolitionism in Illinois and Chicago
- Anti-Apartheid Solidarity Movement
- Anti-War Activism (Civil War, WW1, WW2, Vietnam, Central America, student activism, etc.)
- Battle for the Lakefront
- Burnham Plan
- Campaigns of the Juvenile Protection Association
- The Century of Progress (gender, race, architecture, consumerism, innovation, etc.)
- Chicago 8, 7 Trials
- Chicago 21 Plan: Whose Streets?
- Chicago as Sanctuary
- Chicago Freedom Movement
- Chicago School of Economics Impact on Chile, etc.
- Community Organizing (Woodlawn, Uptown, Lincoln Park, Pilsen, Southwest side, North Lawndale, Austin, etc.)
- Confederates in Chicago
- Daley's Imprint on Chicago
- Effects on the 18th and 21st Amendments on Chicago Society
- Environmental Activism is not New! (Mary McDowell, Citizens for Better Environment, Citizens Action Program, People for Community Recovery, Friends of the River, etc.)
- Erasing Redlining--Gale Cincotta Takes on the Banking Industry

- Fighting Against White Flight and for Integrated Communities (Beverly, Austin, selected suburbs)
- “Founding” of Chicago and Indian Removal
- From Restrictive Covenants to Redlining: The Struggle for Open Housing
- From Smokestacks to Skyscrapers: The Remaking of a City
- Harold Washington Impact on city government, neighborhoods, minorities, etc.)
- Highways and the Shaping of Chicago: (Interstate Highway Act, Dan Ryan Expressway, Crosstown Expressway, etc.)
- Housing and Segregation
- Illinois Coal Wars (labor, environment, etc.)
- Immigrants Protective League
- Japanese-Americans Relocation in Chicago
- Jesse Jackson’s Campaign for the U.S. Presidency
- Lincoln: For Union and Abolition
- Mighty Waves of Immigration Policy and the Peopling of Chicago
- Public Housing: A Dream Deferred
- Principles and Politics of John Peter Altgeld
- Reforming the Machine
- Riots and Rebellions Causes and Consequences
- Slave or Free State in Illinois
- Staking a Claim in Chicago: Indian Liberation Movements in 1970s
- Illinois Country: Native Indians, French, British, Americans Relations
- Trumbull Homes Riot: The Perfect Storm
- The World’s Columbian Exposition (gender, race, architecture, consumerism, innovation, etc.)
- Atomic bomb: (Manhattan Project, SANE, Bulletin Atomic Scientists, Civil Defense, etc.)
- Becoming Americans by Becoming Soldiers
- Chicago Joins the Spanish Civil War
- Fall of the Berlin War/USSR and Impact on Chicago
- On the Homefront
- Political refugees who settled in Chicago: (Cambodians, Vietnamese,
- Women’s Peace Party
- Women’s Christian Temperance Union
- Women’s Democratic or Republican Caucuses (Cook County, Illinois Legislature, etc.)

SCIENCE, MEDICINE & HEALTH

- Beating Tuberculosis
- Blood Banking
- Breakthrough! University professors and researchers who’ve made a difference
- Chicago Medical Community Responds to the AIDS Crisis
- Chicago River Reversal
- Disability Rights
- Invention of _____
- “Don’t Kill Your Baby!” The Campaign to End Infant Mortality
- How did the Flexner Report Change Medical Schools in Chicago?
- The La Leche League
- Occupational Health and Safety for Workers Pandemics
- Poison Control
- The Quests to Kill the Cancer
- You Are What You Eat! Food Safety, the FDA, and the Food Industry

WOMEN (see other categories as well)

- Activism Among the Sisters
- After Suffrage, the Education Begins: The League of Women Voters
- Before Roe v Wade: Chicago's Struggle to Provide Safe Abortions
- Black Feminists and the Double Oppression
- Business? Exploitation? Liberation? Tackling the White Slave Trade
- Chicago Women's Liberation Union
- The Family Planning Movement
- Her Own Gallery: Women Artists Create their own Spaces
- Illinois Women in the Legislature as Voices for Women's Issues
- The Fights for Suffrage
- Myra Bradwell and Mary Todd Lincoln: Insanity and Male Power
- Title IX: Equal Rights to Victory and Defeat
- Race & Womanhood: Black Women's Club Movement
- Why We Lost the ERA
- Women's Political Activity Prior to Suffrage (Lucy Flowers, Mary Livermore, Hull House Women, Lucy Parsons, etc.)
- Motherhood and the State: The Challenge of the Sheppard-Towner Act to WIC
- Women Invade the Chicago Symphony Orchestra