



WOMEN ORGANIZE FOR CHANGE

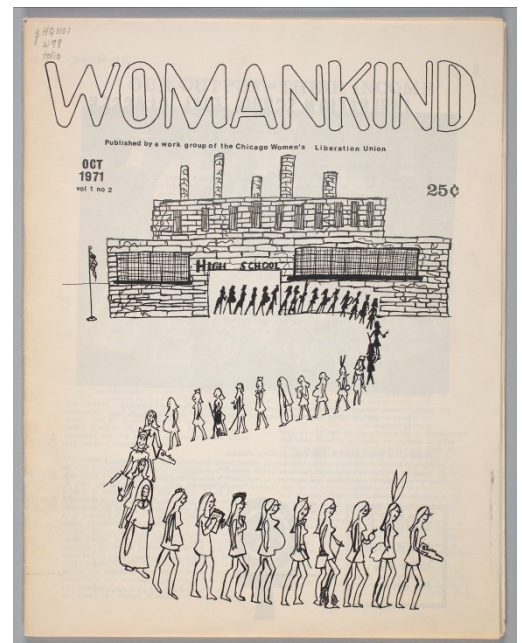
In the late 1960s, women did not have the same rights as men. Women were not hired for what many thought of as male jobs. Such jobs included everything from firefighters to Supreme Court Justices. Women did not have financial independence. They could not get credit cards in their own names. Legally, they could be paid less than men. In response, women started forming national and local **organizations** to fight for their equal rights.

Three important local organizations were the Chicago Women's Liberation **Union**, the Chicago Women's Graphic Collective, and the National **Alliance** of Black Feminists. Supporters of women's rights were sometimes divided over racial, social, and political differences. But they all used art and design to share their ideas.

THE CHICAGO WOMEN'S LIBERATION UNION (CWLU)

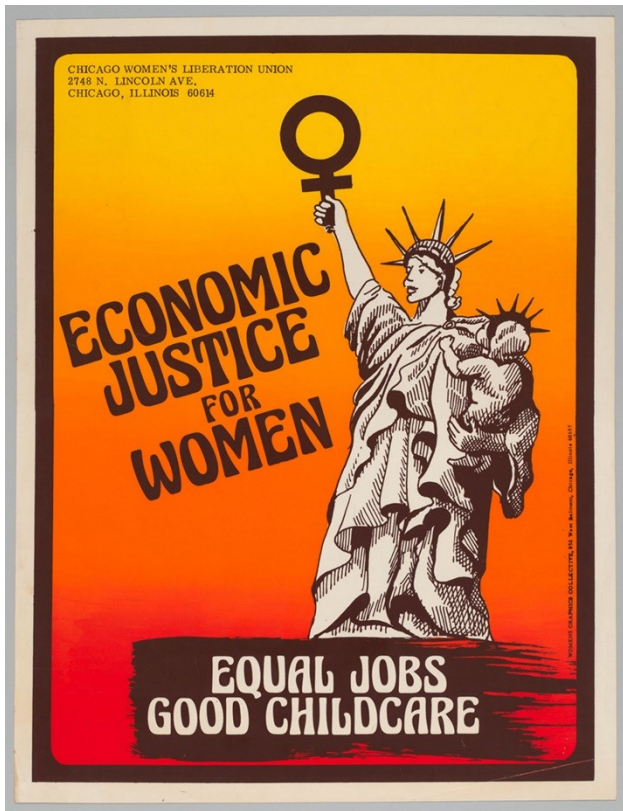
The CWLU started in 1969. They offered programs and projects including a liberation school, a legal clinic, and a rape crisis center. They had action groups working for equal employment rights and better childcare. Many women sought their abortion counseling service known as "Jane".

Their newsletter, *Womankind*, often included art to help express their ideas. The cartoon on the cover of this issue comments on gender and work. In the cartoon, female graduates become secretaries, nurses, mothers, and other roles traditionally held by women. The CWLU valued



Womankind newsletter, October 1971, CHM, ICHI-182531

women's roles as homemakers and mothers. But they offered classes that encouraged women to think beyond "typical" female occupations. The CWLU wanted women to feel supported in achieving anything they chose to do.



Economic Justice for Women, (c) Chicago Women's Graphic Collective, artist Estelle Carol, CHM, ICHI-183507

THE CHICAGO WOMEN'S GRAPHIC COLLECTIVE (CWGC)

The CWGC formed out of the CWLU in 1970. They wanted to make change by creating large, bright, and bold posters. Their posters often included easy to read and memorable messages. Posters addressed issues such as women's equality, women's healthcare, abortion, immigrant rights, the anti-Vietnam War movement, and the environment.

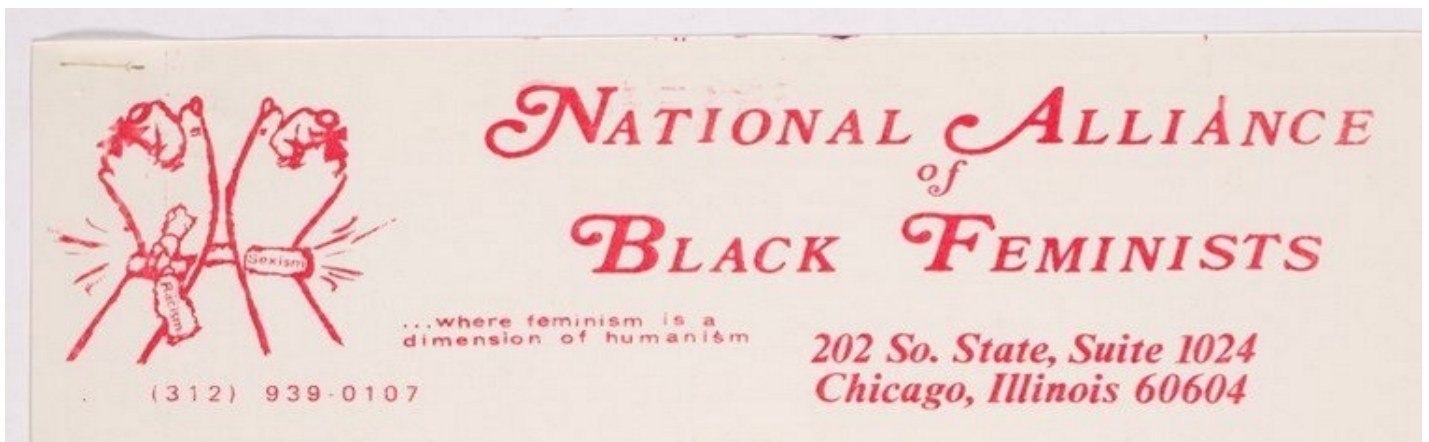
Their posters were designed and created as a group. They were not signed by individual artists but were instead stamped "CWGC." Any artist in the CWGC could suggest a poster idea that

members of the group would then help to create. The CWGC shipped posters to bookstores and women's groups all over the world. Their art drew attention to women's issues and other causes that impacted women. The CWGC posters spread the word about the women's movement far and wide!

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BLACK FEMINISTS (NABF)

Brenda Eichelberger founded NABF in 1975. Eichelberger was a Chicago public school teacher and guidance counselor. Over time, thousands of Black women became members nationwide. The NABF was an organization “dedicated to achieving full equality for Black women.” The NABF wrote a “Bill of Rights for Black Women” modeled after the US Constitution’s Bill of Rights. The ten articles included rights such as:

- ◆ accurate media portrayal
- ◆ quality health care, education, and childcare
- ◆ civil and criminal justice
- ◆ economic and political gains



Close up of a National Alliance of Black Feminists flyer, c. 1975, CHM, ICHi-183260-001

The NABF’s logo was a drawing of a pair of Black female hands breaking the bonds of racism (left hand) and sexism (right hand). The NABF offered publications, programs, a speakers’ group, financial services, and peer counseling.

Although each of these organizations had specific purposes and methods, they all worked to advance women’s equality. Their contributions made both local and national impacts. They left an important legacy in the continuing work for women’s rights.



VOCABULARY IN “WOMEN ORGANIZE FOR CHANGE”

Alliance - when people, organizations, or even countries come together for the good of all

Organization/Organize - An official group of people working for a common cause who plan efforts and activities. When people organize, they try to persuade others to join or support their cause. To do this, they might hold a march or rally, for example.

Union - a club or organization formed by people with a common interest or purpose

