

CWRU presents: Newton D. Baker Symposium

April 19, 2015 @ 1:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Case Western Reserve University invites the community for a day of lectures and discussion with their faculty experts to examine and celebrate the life and times of Newton D. Baker, addressing his impact on the intellectual and political life of Northeast Ohio and beyond. For more information and to buy tickets, [click here](#).

CCWA is a community partner for this event. Newton D. Baker was also a former President of the Board of Directors of CCWA.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

1:30–2:00 p.m. John Grabowski: “Newton D. Baker and the Progressive Era: Defining a Man and an Era”

An introduction to a formative period in American political and civic life. Baker’s legacy is intimately connected to this pivotal movement in United States history.

2–2:45 p.m. Tom Suddes: “Cleveland’s Newton D. Baker and John H. Clarke: Two ‘Gold Democrats’ and the New Freedom—and New Deal”

In 1896 Baker and Clarke both split from Democrat William Jennings “Cross of Gold” Bryan. Both went on to attain great distinction, first in Northeast Ohio, then under President Wilson’s New Freedom. Baker and Clarke eventually diverged, however, in their assessment of the New Deal. How and why—that is the question.

2:45–3:30 p.m. Marian Morton: “The Making of a Political Activist: Belle Sherwin and Woman Suffrage”

Newton Baker was a proud supporter of woman suffrage, but for Clevelander Belle Sherwin, the movement was a transforming experience. Born to privilege and propriety, Sherwin overcame her “natural shrinking from publicity” by joining, and then leading, the campaign for votes for women that changed their lives and American politics forever.

3:30–3:45 p.m. BREAK

3:45–4:30 p.m. Ken Ledford: “Newton D. Baker and the Zimmermann Telegram: From Neutrality to Interventionism”

The ham-handed efforts by Arthur Zimmermann of the Imperial German Foreign Office to deter U.S. entry into World War I by conspiring with Mexico helped Newton D. Baker navigate a path from his neutrality in the European war while mayor of Cleveland to a commitment to interventionism in January 1917 after he had become Secretary of War. The impact of the Zimmermann Telegram on Baker and U.S. policy highlight the perils of insulated and insular strategic thinking in an age of modern communications technology and surveillance.

4:30–5:15 p.m. Richard Baznik: “Newton D. Baker and the Creation of Cleveland College”

As a progressive leader in regional and national affairs, Baker was dedicated to the cause of adult education and seized the opportunity to help launch a remarkable model in Cleveland.