

In This Issue

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *Northeast Ohio Journal of History*. An interdisciplinary and interactive publication, the *NOJH* combines the high scholarly standards of refereed print journals with the power and capabilities of the World Wide Web. As stated in its bylaws, the journal's purpose is:

1. to stimulate and publish high-quality research in Northeast Ohio history and prehistory
2. to facilitate access to Northeast Ohio archives and historical resources
3. to serve as a conduit of information for all archaeologists, academic historians, public historians, and members of the general public interested in Northeast Ohio history and prehistory.

With an editorial board comprised of representatives from the major universities and museums throughout the region, we will endeavor to publish the best and most comprehensive research the area has to offer.

One of the more challenging and rewarding aspects of this project is the medium we have chosen to use. Publishing as a web-based journal affords us opportunities that simply are not available to print journals. Each issue, for example, will feature a virtual museum exhibit on some aspect of Northeast Ohio's past. In addition, our "archives" link will contain not only past articles from the journal, but also (in the near future) a growing list of links to primary source documents. Our "Current History" section will be updated regularly between issues, keeping our readers apprised of new events and announcements. Between these features and world-wide accessibility, we believe that the *Northeast Ohio Journal of History* has the potential to become a necessary stop for anyone interested in exploring the history of the region.

In this issue, we feature a triptych of pieces sharing a Cleveland theme. In our feature article, Dr. Arthur DeMatteo from the University of Wisconsin-Fox Run discusses the life and significance of A.B. duPont. DuPont, a member of the powerful family of American industrialists, was a renowned businessman in his own right and a close friend and confidante of Cleveland's famous reform mayor, Tom Johnson. DeMatteo argues not only that duPont was an important figure in Cleveland history, but also a personification of the several strands of reform that represent the often-confusing world of Progressive-Era history.

Tom Johnson, of course, was not the only Cleveland mayor who won great recognition outside of Northeast Ohio. Dr. Melvin Holli of the University of Illinois-Chicago has

contributed an interpretive essay in our “Notes and Comments” section on the unusual success Cleveland mayors have had on the state and national scene. Holli, the author of fifteen books and the country’s foremost expert on the history of American mayors, argues that despite the fact that the mayoralty is usually a political dead-end, Cleveland has succeeded more than any other American big city in promoting its former mayors to higher office.

The final piece of this issue’s Cleveland trilogy can be found in our virtual museum feature. Dr. Patsy Gerstner and Laura Travis, under the auspices of the Dittrick Museum of the History of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University, have produced a disturbing, yet compelling exhibit on smallpox in Cleveland at the turn of the twentieth century. In ways that words alone cannot express, this display provides the viewer with a more profound understanding of the terror that the specter of this disease evoked in the past, and indeed still elicits a hundred years later.

Beyond these featured items, this issue includes book reviews on Ohio topics ranging from a military unit of the 1830s to football in the 1890s to unsolved murder cases in the 1930s to the environment of today. The “Notes and Comments” section also contains a prospectus for the Consortium of Northeast Ohio History. This promising new project is designed not only to encourage the use of the area’s rich historical and archaeological collections, but also to provide valuable opportunities for students and teachers of history alike to perform and publish research on these materials.

Please address any inquiries about this project (or about any other aspect of the journal) to the editor at kkern@uakron.edu. We welcome all comments and suggestions.

Kevin Kern

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to extend a great deal of credit and even greater thanks to some very important people. What you are reading now would not have been possible were it not for crucial material and financial support from the members of The University of Akron’s Department of History, especially Chairs Elizabeth Mancke and Stephen Harp. Their generosity to this project has been unstinting from the beginning, and we are deeply appreciative. We would like to give special thanks to Dr. Charles Monroe, Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Interim Chair of the History Department, who not only donated sorely-needed equipment, but even helped carry it to our office. We also must express our gratitude to The College of Arts and Sciences and Dean Roger Creel for their support.

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