

The History of the Twentieth Century
Episode 017
“Such a Bully Pulpit”
Transcript

[music: “The Twentieth Century Rag”]

Theodore Roosevelt was sworn in as the 26th president of the United States on September 14th, 1901 at the age of 42 making him the youngest person ever to take the Presidential Oath of Office in American history. In 1899, a classically trained composer named Scott Joplin published *The Maple Leaf Rag*, a lively syncopated piano piece that would come to define ragtime, a lively, syncopated music that would come to define an era, and serve as the perfect accompaniment for Theodore Roosevelt’s lively, syncopated presidency.

Welcome to Theodore Roosevelt’s America. Welcome to the Age of Ragtime. Welcome to the History of the Twentieth Century.

[music: “The Twentieth Century Rag”]

Episode 17, “Such a Bully Pulpit”

The establishment was appalled at the prospect of a Roosevelt presidency. Roosevelt had impressed upon him the importance of continuing the policies of the McKinley Administration. He was told that a radical change in direction would provoke a stock market crash. Roosevelt seems to have taken these concerns to heart, he kept McKinley’s cabinet and in the early days of his administration, repeatedly promised to continue McKinley’s cautious, conservative policies. And he may even have meant it at the time he said it. But hey, this is Theodore Roosevelt we’re talking about. A joke went around elite Washington circles during this time; that while President McKinley listened to a great many people but only spoke to a few, President Roosevelt spoke to a great many people, and listened to no one.

In 1902 the new French ambassador to Washington, Jules Jusserand, came to the White House in formal attire to present his credentials. He later reported that Roosevelt took him for a walk in the park that soon turned into something like a forced march. When they reached a creek, the relieved Jusserand assumed his ordeal was over, only to be horrified when the president began to strip off his clothes and insisted that the ambassador do likewise. Jusserand remarked that for the honor of France, he too went skinny dipping, taking off everything except his lavender gloves. Which, he explained archly, he kept on in case they should encounter some ladies, because it would be embarrassing to be seen without gloves in front of the ladies.

I’m going to review some of the foreign and domestic policy issues facing the new president, and let’s start with the Philippines. I left off the story of the Philippines when Aguinaldo surrendered, although I may have hinted that that wasn’t quite the end of the story. You may recall that I mentioned the constitutional question of annexing the Philippines. When the United

States annexes a territory, do the people living there automatically become US citizens, with the full rights of US citizens? That was never the plan for the Philippines. And yet there was nothing in the Constitution that permitted a two-tiered legal system, where some people living under American administration had full constitutional rights, and other people do not. At the time this question was often framed as “does the Constitution follow the flag?” That is, is the Constitution in full effect anywhere the American flag is flying?

The Supreme Court answered this question in May 1901, with a set of decisions that have come to be called the Insular Cases. In a 5-to-4 decision, the Supreme Court ruled “no”. For the United States merely to take possession of a territory was not enough. Congress had to affirmatively incorporate that territory into the United States. In the absence of such an affirmative act, the United States is merely a proprietor and Congress was free to enact whatever laws for that territory it saw fit, unrestrained by the limitations imposed by the Constitution. Critics of the decision might very well wonder how Congress can have any power at all outside of the Constitution, since the Constitution created the Congress, and some wonder if the Insular Cases are still good law today. But that was the decision of the Court. Finley Peter Dunne’s fictional pub proprietor, Martin Dooley, commented on the Insular Cases with a remark that would become his most famous and widely quoted observation. “The Constitution may or may not follow the flag,” Mr. Duley said, “but the Supreme Court follows the election returns”.

William Howard Taft, whose commission had been working in the Philippines since 1900, officially became governor-general of the Philippines in July 1901. Taft and his commission had been operating as the Philippine government. When they arrived in the Philippines, the commission took a tour of the islands. Nellie Taft, William Howard’s wife, who was the daughter of a congressman and a politically active woman, who in today’s world probably would have had her own political career, but back then she had to settle for vicariously enjoying her husband’s. Anyway, she insisted on going along to the Philippines and bringing the Taft children, and then going along on the tour of the archipelago. When the other commissioner’s families got wind that the Tafts were coming along they wanted to go too, and the whole thing turned into a family affair. It might have been an accident, but it was probably the smartest thing they could have done. Family is very important in Filipino culture, and an opportunity to greet not only the new commissioners, but their wives and children as well, struck a chord. And Taft seemed genuinely committed to the welfare of Filipinos. He quickly became the most popular American in the islands, much to the dismay of Arthur MacArthur, then still the military governor of the Philippines, fighting Filipino guerillas in the boondocks, and who thought that all this “lovey dovey, hey there little brown brother, let me introduce you to the missus stuff” was only making America look weak, and therefore making Arthur MacArthur’s job more complicated than it needed to be.

Taft and MacArthur never did get along, and in the summer of 1901 MacArthur was replaced as the military governor of the Philippines by Adna Chaffee, who had previously commanded American forces during the Boxer Uprising.

In the summer of 1901, one of America's biggest headaches in the Philippines, declarations of victory notwithstanding, was the island of Samar, the third largest island in the archipelago. Back in 1898, a Filipino named Vicente Lukban had gone there with a small group of soldiers and proclaimed himself governor of the island under Aguinaldo's short-lived republic. There he had formed an alliance with a fanatical religious cult, noted for their suicidal attacks and mystical belief in magic amulets that protected them from bullets. *Where have we heard that before?* And they waged bloody warfare against any Filipinos on the island who cooperated with the Americans.

In August 1901, a US army unit of 74, Company C, of the 9th US Infantry, under the command of Captain Thomas Connell, occupied the port town of Balangiga on Samar to deny supply to Lukban's forces in the interior of the island. Connell was Catholic, and he believed that because of their shared religion, he had a special rapport with Filipino people. In this he was gravely mistaken. Connell had been pressing the mayor of the town to clean up the place. And the mayor brought in some eighty strong young men from the country-side to get the job done. These were, of course, Filipino guerillas in disguise. On Friday September 26th, the Americans first received word of the death of President McKinley. Connell asked the parish priest to say a mass for the fallen president the following Sunday. The priest agreed, but on Sunday morning he was nowhere to be found.

What was to be found was a surprising number of women dressed in mourning. These were, of course, male Filipino guerillas in disguise. They came into town with small coffins, said to contain the bodies of children who had died in a cholera epidemic. Actually, the coffins contained Bolo knives, the Filipino guerillas' preferred weapon when they could not get firearms, which was most of the time.

Early that Sunday morning, the parish priest having been hustled out of the town along with all of the real women and children, the guerillas made their move. Almost all the Americans were in their mess tent eating breakfast. Only three sentries were on patrol. The town chief of police who was coordinating the whole thing, grabbed the rifle of one of the sentries and began firing into the mess tent. This was the signal for the other guerillas to grab their Bolos and get to work. The mostly unarmed Americans fought back with chairs, baseball bats, cutlery and anything else they could get their hands on. Forty-eight of them were killed, including Captain Connell, the rest fled the town. Filipino deaths were, as usual, hard to pin down, but were probably close to a hundred. This event is known in the United States as the Samar massacre. Arthur MacArthur must have felt vindicated. Theodore Roosevelt's new administration was reminded that it had inherited a war that wasn't quite as finished as it was supposed to be.

On the domestic front, Roosevelt quickly established his independence when he invited Booker T. Washington to dinner at the White House, just weeks after he himself had moved in. Booker T. Washington was born in 1856. His mother was a Virginia slave who had become pregnant with him after being raped by a white man. In 1881, Washington, then just 25 years old, was tapped to become the first principal of Tuskegee Institute, what we now call Tuskegee University. Washington built the school, actually the students literally built the school under

Washington's leadership, into the premier African American educational institution in America. Washington would remain the head of Tuskegee Institute until his death in 1915, but he would also leverage his position as the most prominent African American educator in America into the position of "Fundraiser in Chief" for African American educational institutions. He hobnobbed with some of the wealthiest and most influential people in America. These people tended to be industrial magnates who were filthy rich, because it was the Gilded Age. And they also tended to be Republicans, because back then the Republican party was seen as the party of big business and the filthy rich, believe it or not. And so we have the budding relationship between Booker T. Washington and Theodore Roosevelt.

Washington had just published his autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, which is still widely read and studied today, hence the dinner invitation. Now, Roosevelt had had African American dinner guests before, when he was governor of New York. And he must have had some idea there could be controversy, but the intensity of the backlash appears to have caught him off guard. Benjamin Tillman, the Senator from South Carolina, and architect of disenfranchisement of African Americans in that state said, "The action of President Roosevelt in entertaining the African American will necessitate our killing a thousand African Americans in the South before they will learn their place again." Except he didn't say "African American".

Tillman's remark is significant, not only for what it reveals about his attitude toward African Americans, but also for his unusually frank acknowledgement of what lynchings are all about. They weren't just assaults on individuals, they were a tool for asserting white control over the entire African American community. Lynchings were a plague on the United States in this period in history. We'll go into more detail on that in future episodes. Senator Tillman by the way was an ardent anti-imperialist, and opponent of annexing the Philippines, a position that is more consistent with his horrific views on race than it might seem at first blush. Think about it.

Roosevelt's response to the uproar was to remark that he might very well have dinner with Mr. Washington again, although in fact he did not, and it would be thirty years before another African American was invited to a dinner at the White House. Scott Joplin must have approved of Roosevelt's invitation though, because he composed his first opera, *A Guest of Honor*, on the subject of Booker T. Washington's dinner with Theodore Roosevelt. It was performed a few times in 1903, but alas, it appears that no copy of the score has survived, and the opera is presumed lost. If you know where there is a score of *A Guest of Honor* available please email me at historyofthetwentiethcentury@gmail.com .

Shortly after that dinner it was time for the new president to present Congress with his first State of the Union Address. The State of the Union address was not delivered in person in those days, as it is today. The President simply wrote out an address which was sent to Congress and a clerk read it aloud. Or more precisely, different departments of the administration would write different sections of the address, which would be sent to the White House, collated, and passed on to Congress. This of course was not Theodore Roosevelt's way, he wrote the message himself. All 20,000 words of it.

As this address was being prepared there was much anticipation. This would be the new president's first public statement of his priorities, and everyone wanted to know what was on the new president's mind. Unsurprisingly, to anyone who's been paying attention to the speeches Roosevelt had been giving since he was governor, and then as Vice President, he wanted to talk about trusts. Now as I said before, the Republican party of this time was seen as the party of big business and the rich. Taking on the trusts didn't seem like a very Republican thing to do. But here we see the paradox of Theodore Roosevelt. He was always a staunch Republican, but he increasingly took views that were progressive, even radical. He did not see this as repudiating the principles of the Republican party. He saw it as extending those principles to cover not just a favored few but all Americans. In his State of the Union Address he presented his argument in a "on the one hand... but on the other hand..." style, as a way of easing the minds of his fellow Republicans. He acknowledged the contributions of the captains of industry toward building the economy and making America strong, but also acknowledged that wealth and power had led to abuses and called for government supervision.

Roosevelt's attempt to present the issue in a balanced way may have made the address more palatable to his fellow Republicans, but it struck other people as a McKinley-esque attempt to split the difference. Mr. Dooley mocked Roosevelt saying, "The trusts are hideous monsters built up by the enlightened enterprise of the men who have done so much to advance progress in our beloved country. On the one hand I would stamp them underfoot, on the other hand, not so fast".

Now to understand this issue we're going to have to take a closer look at trusts. This gets a little technical, and I don't want to tire you out too much, so let's let Scott Joplin take us on a little mental holiday before we get down to work. Scott Joplin composed some new rags in 1902, including *The Entertainer* which is today, probably his most popular work. Joplin is probably the first African American musician to become popular with white Americans, apart from minstrel performers, who earned their living at the price of mocking their own people. It's a shame though that Joplin never again achieved the level of success of *The Maple Leaf Rag*, because Joplin's work grew more sophisticated as he grew older. The public seems not to have noticed.

The Entertainer for example is a much more complex and richer work which somehow manages to be bright and cheery on the surface while hinting at an undercurrent of suppressed melancholy. When it was first published the cover illustration showed an African American minstrel performer on stage in evening dress. Which gives us a clue as to the source to the composer's emotional palate. *The Entertainer* is in the public domain, which means I can play it here if I want to. So before we plunge into the topic of trusts, sooth your spirit with a little Scott Joplin. And as you listen, try to picture that African American minstrel performer in his tophat and tails entertaining an appreciative audience, while deep down inside, wishing he was somewhere else, anywhere else.

[Scott Joplin's The Entertainer]

Now it's come to my attention that some of you young people no longer understand the phrase "bully pulpit". It has nothing to do with being a bully, in the sense of a person who is mean and pushes other people around. In Theodore Roosevelt's day, "bully" was a vernacular term that meant something like what "excellent" or "awesome" means today. And Roosevelt used it frequently in that sense. The story goes that early in his presidency, about the time we're discussing today, Roosevelt was writing a message to Congress and consulting with some friends. He read out a paragraph that perhaps sounded a little bit "Sunday school", and he remarked to his friends, "I suppose my critics will call that preaching, but I have such a bully pulpit". In other words he was saying the presidency offered a great platform to get a message out. Akin to what a pulpit does for a preacher.

Interestingly, the evidence shows that the phrase "bully pulpit" pretty much died out by the end of World War One. But it came back into vogue back in the sixties and seventies and has remained in the public discourse ever since then, not unlike the music of Scott Joplin. Maybe that's because the rise of both mass media and the imperial presidency have made the phrase seem more relevant today than ever.

So at any rate, as 1901 passes into 1902, the topic of the day became trusts. Because that's what the new president wanted to talk about. And that's about as good an example of the power of the Bully Pulpit as you can ask for. Of course, just because Roosevelt was talking about trusts doesn't mean that Congress was ready to take the regulatory steps Roosevelt was asking for.

The Republican leadership in Congress was very much pro-business. At this time it was seen as very much the responsibility of government to provide a good environment for business, even though such matters as protecting the welfare of workers or investors was considered to be, you know, none of the government's business at all, period!

The McKinley administration had been something of a high-water mark for big business, and the economy had also been doing very well. And so everything was just the way the Republicans liked it. And the Republicans controlled both houses of Congress, and leadership in particular there was very conservative. This was particularly true in the Senate. At this time senators were not directly elected by the citizens of their states as they are today; they were appointed to the office by their state legislatures. In practice, what this meant was the guy most likely to be appointed to the Senate was the guy who made the most campaign contributions to the majority party in the state legislature. Many senators were men of business who had planned for years that once they had built up their businesses large enough, and made enough money for themselves, and spread enough of it around to their friends in state politics, they would cap off their careers by trading the executive desk for a stint in the United States Senate.

An old joke that began making its rounds back in the Grover Cleveland administration went like this: "Mrs. Cleveland wakes up in the middle of the night because she heard a noise. She turns to her husband and says 'Grover, I think there's a thief in the house.' President Cleveland, still

half-asleep mutters in reply, 'No dear, there are no thieves in the house, they're all in the Senate.'"

You may recall Mark Hanna, the Ohio political boss who had masterminded William McKinley's presidential campaign. He's a good example. Hanna was a businessman who used his wealth to become influential in Ohio politics, and later, after McKinley was president, got himself appointed Senator from Ohio. Hanna's critics always believed he was a businessman first, who only got involved in politics for the sake of what it could do for his business. So needless to say, senators like Mark Hanna were not exactly thrilled when the new president sent over a State of the Union message calling for trust regulation.

And now it's time to get down into the weeds on the matter of trusts. What is a trust? In common law a trust is a legal arrangement where the property of one person is managed by another person, for the benefit of the owner. A wealthy person, for example, might put their assets into a family trust to be managed by professional investment managers, with the trust income to be paid to members of the family. So... what's wrong with that, you're probably wondering. Well, nothing wrong with that, people do that all the time. So why does President Roosevelt have a thing about trusts? And why does the United States have what it calls "anti-trust" laws on the books?

It's not because of this kind of trust, it's the way the wealthiest men in America at this time were using trusts as a legal loophole to get around state laws. And let me explain what I mean by that. I assume you know what a corporation is, it's a special kind of organization that allows investors to pool their resources, and enjoy special benefits, like limited liability and corporate personhood. In today's world there are very few limitations on corporations. And pretty much anyone can create a corporation for any reason they like. But back in the beginning of the twentieth century, corporations were still viewed with a certain measure of suspicion. Then, as now, corporations in the United States were chartered under the laws of individual states, there was, and is, no national corporate law in the United States. So individual states back then were leery of corporations and often imposed limits on their size. Many states did not like to see corporations from their own states doing business in other states, so they would try to limit the scope of a corporation's business to their own state. Many states prohibited corporations from owning other corporations as a way of limiting corporate growth.

The poster child for trust abuse in 1901 was the Standard Oil Trust. John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company was not just one company, there were individual Standard Oil companies in individual states. There was a Standard Oil Company of New York, a Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, a Standard Oil Company of Ohio and on and on, dozens of them in all. But there was also a Standard Oil Trust. A trust that owned all these individual Standard Oil companies, and investors didn't hold shares in Standard Oil of Indiana, for example. They held shares in the Standard Oil trust. And Standard Oil wasn't publicly held. The company had been so profitable that Rockefeller and a few other wealthy investors controlled the whole business.

In other words, the Standard Oil Trust has nothing to do with trusts as we usually understand that word. It was John D. Rockefeller's way of exploiting a legal loophole to accomplish with a trust something that would have been illegal to do with a corporation. And Rockefeller was as ruthless toward his competitors as he was about exploiting legal loopholes.

At the time Theodore Roosevelt became president, Standard Oil controlled something like 90% of the oil business in the United States. So when we talk about trusts in this early 20th century context what we're really talking about are large monopolistic businesses. But trust was the term people used at the time, and it's short and simple, and so I'm going to keep calling them trusts. But understand that what we're really talking about are monopolies and near-monopolies. Whether they're organized as trusts or corporations or whatever is beside the point. Not coincidentally, the board game monopoly got its start during this period.

Standard Oil was too big of a target even for Theodore Roosevelt... for now. But there were two new companies that had just formed in 1901 that had a lot of people worried. One of these was the United States Steel Corporation. US Steel was created by the principal financier of the era, John Pierpont Morgan, out of the merger of 10 American steel companies, including Andrew Carnegie's Carnegie Steel Company. You may remember Andrew Carnegie as the man who tried to buy the Philippines for twenty million dollars, so he could give it independence. Carnegie had had to tone down his anti-imperialism by this point, so as not to alienate the other guys in this deal. Basically the ten biggest steel companies in the United States decided that competition was a drag, and that coming together into one big happy company would make everyone a whole lot richer.

Ray Baker, a muckraking journalist of the time, I'll have more to say about muckrakers later, suffice it for now to say that this is another term that Theodore Roosevelt coined, published an expose of the new company in which he noted that some of the steel companies almost surely were forced into the merger against their will. And that, it is difficult to convey any adequate idea of the magnitude of the US Steel Corporation. Nothing like this has ever been seen before. In fact, US Steel was born as the world's first billion dollar corporation. That works out to about 40 billion dollars in today's money, and this was in a much smaller economy. The new company was responsible for more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the entire world's steel production, and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the steel produced in the United States. In 1906, US Steel built a new plant in Indiana and a whole new city to house the workers, which it named after the company chairman, Albert Gary. Gary, Indiana by the way, calls itself The City of the Century.

J. P. Morgan had had a hand in the creation of, or financing of, many of the most important American corporations of this period. Including General Electric, International Harvester, American Telephone and Telegraph, The Reading Railroad, and the Pennsylvania Railroad; two of the four railroads on the Monopoly board. Which meant that any time you landed on either one of them, you had to pay J. P. Morgan fifty bucks, which is one of the reasons he was the most wealthy and powerful financier in America. Not to mention the reason why the funny little man with the top hat and the handlebar mustache in the Monopoly game was modeled on him.

Morgan also had a hand in the creation of the other worrisome new company in 1901, the Northern Securities Company. In spite of this innocuous name, which makes it sound like the company was in the business of underwriting Canadian bonds or something, it was a railroad company. The short version of the story is that two of the largest railroads in America, the Great Northern Railway and the Union Pacific, got into a bidding war for control of the much smaller Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad. This was a big deal, because the winner of this bidding war would gain control of access to Chicago, one of the nation's most valuable railroad markets. They tried to buy each other out, and stock prices skyrocketed. At this point J. P. Morgan stepped in and suggested what you might call the "US Steel solution". Why doesn't everybody just merge together into one big happy corporation?

And so in November 1901, about the same time President Roosevelt was sharpening his pencil and getting down to writing that State of the Union message, the Northern Securities Company was born. It was the largest corporation in the world, after US Steel, and because it was a conglomeration of railroads it was particularly worrisome. Railroads had built America, Railroads held America together. Practically every other business in America depended on railroads to stay in business. Not to mention all the steamships that the merged companies owned. It was said that a person could travel from England to China across a network of rail lines and steamship routes and never leave the control of the Northern Securities Company. No one knew for sure exactly how many rail and steamship lines the Northern Securities Company controlled, except for a handful of men who owned the company.

And that was another reason why people were leery of the trusts. These large business entities were not the sort of widely held, publicly offered corporations with thousands of shareholders that we know of today. They were closely held, only a small group of people knew what they were up to. Part of what Roosevelt was proposing was that businesses this big and this powerful should be reporting their activities to a federal agency that Roosevelt was proposing to create, the Department of Commerce and Labor.

To many Republicans in Congress this idea was shocking. The internal workings of a corporation were traditionally understood to be no one's business except the owners'. Or at most, maybe the business of the state government that chartered the corporation. Federal supervision of business was an entirely new idea. And bully pulpits are all well and good, but the president can't force Congress to pass a bill. So Congress pondered the president's proposal, but for the time being nothing much was being done.

Well, if you're president and you can't get a bill through Congress you can always fall back on your constitutional role of executing the laws that are already on the books. And one law that was already on the books at this time was The Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890. The Sherman Act had been on the books for over a decade, but seldom used. And when it was used, it was used more often against labor unions, which had not the original intent. The Sherman Act prohibits businesses from forming an agreement in restraint of trade, or from possessing a monopoly. With regard to that second prohibition, there was the added twist that if you got your monopoly

innocently you're okay, it's only shady dealings and conspiratorial arrangements that get you in trouble.

Roosevelt and his Attorney General, Philander Knox, decided to let the US Steel merger stand for the time being and focused their attention on the more troubling Northern Securities Company. On February 19th, 1902 the administration dropped their bombshell, an antitrust lawsuit against Northern Securities. The press compared the shock in the business world to the shock of the assassination of President McKinley, and the stock market crash, or at least the price drop, which Roosevelt had been warned about followed.

Three days later J. P. Morgan was at the White House meeting with Roosevelt and Knox. Morgan told the president, "If we've done something you don't approve of, let us know what it is, we'll fix it." The attorney general replied, "We don't want to fix it, we want to stop it". Morgan asked Roosevelt about US Steel, the president told him that US Steel was safe as long as it behaved itself. After the meeting ended Roosevelt turned to Knox and said, "That is the most illuminating illustration of the Wall Street point of view". In other words, Morgan was treating Roosevelt like another business competitor, all but inviting him to join in the merger instead of fighting it.

Ultimately the United States Justice Department would prevail in its antitrust suit against Northern Securities in 1904, after the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 in the government's favor. The Northern Securities merger was undone. and a powerful new precedent was on the books, and a powerful new president had demonstrated that he was a force to be reckoned with.

We'll have to stop there for today. but I hope you'll join me next week for The History of the Twentieth Century, as we leave Theodore Roosevelt for the time being and dig more deeply into the question of socialism. That's next week on The History of the Twentieth Century.

Oh, and one more thing. Scott Joplin died of complications from syphilis in 1917. In 1920 the music of Scott Joplin had been forgotten. In life Joplin had said, "When I'm dead 25 years, people are going to recognize me", but he was wrong. Actually it took 50 years, until 1970, when Joshua Rifkin, a young musicologist, best know the for his work on the music of Johan Sebastian Bach, recorded an album of eight Scott Joplin piano rags, entitled *Scott Joplin Piano Rags*. The album was released on the Nonesuch label, Nonesuch was a small record label mostly known for acquiring recordings from European chamber orchestras, mostly of baroque music, and then releasing them in America at a budget price. Scott Joplin Piano rags became a classical best-seller. and Nonesuch's first million-copy album .

1973 saw the release of the film *The Sting* directed by George Roy Hill. Hill commissioned Martin Hamlich to commission the score for the film, and Hamlich's score drew heavily from Scott Joplin. The film was set in 1936, nearly a generation after ragtime had been forgotten, but hey, only history buffs care about stuff like that. *The Sting* won seven Academy Awards including Best Score, a single of Hamlich's arrangement of *The Entertainer* made the Billboard Top Ten, and #1 on the easy listening chart in 1974. Scott Joplin was back. In 1975 the novelist

E.L Doctorow published a historical fantasy about the age of ragtime entitled "Ragtime". Doctorow's book opens with Scott Joplin's well known admonition, "Never to play ragtime fast". The novel was adapted into a film and a stage musical. In 1976, Scott Joplin was awarded a posthumous Pulitzer Prize and in 1983 the US Postal Service issued a Scott Joplin stamp. The first African American to be depicted on a US postage stamp, by the way, was Booker T. Washington in 1940.

[music: closing theme]