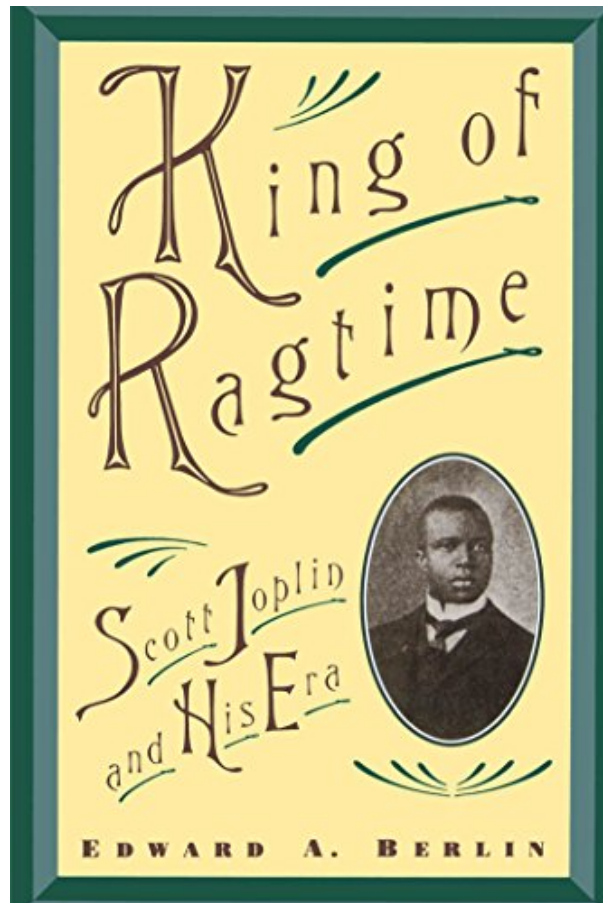
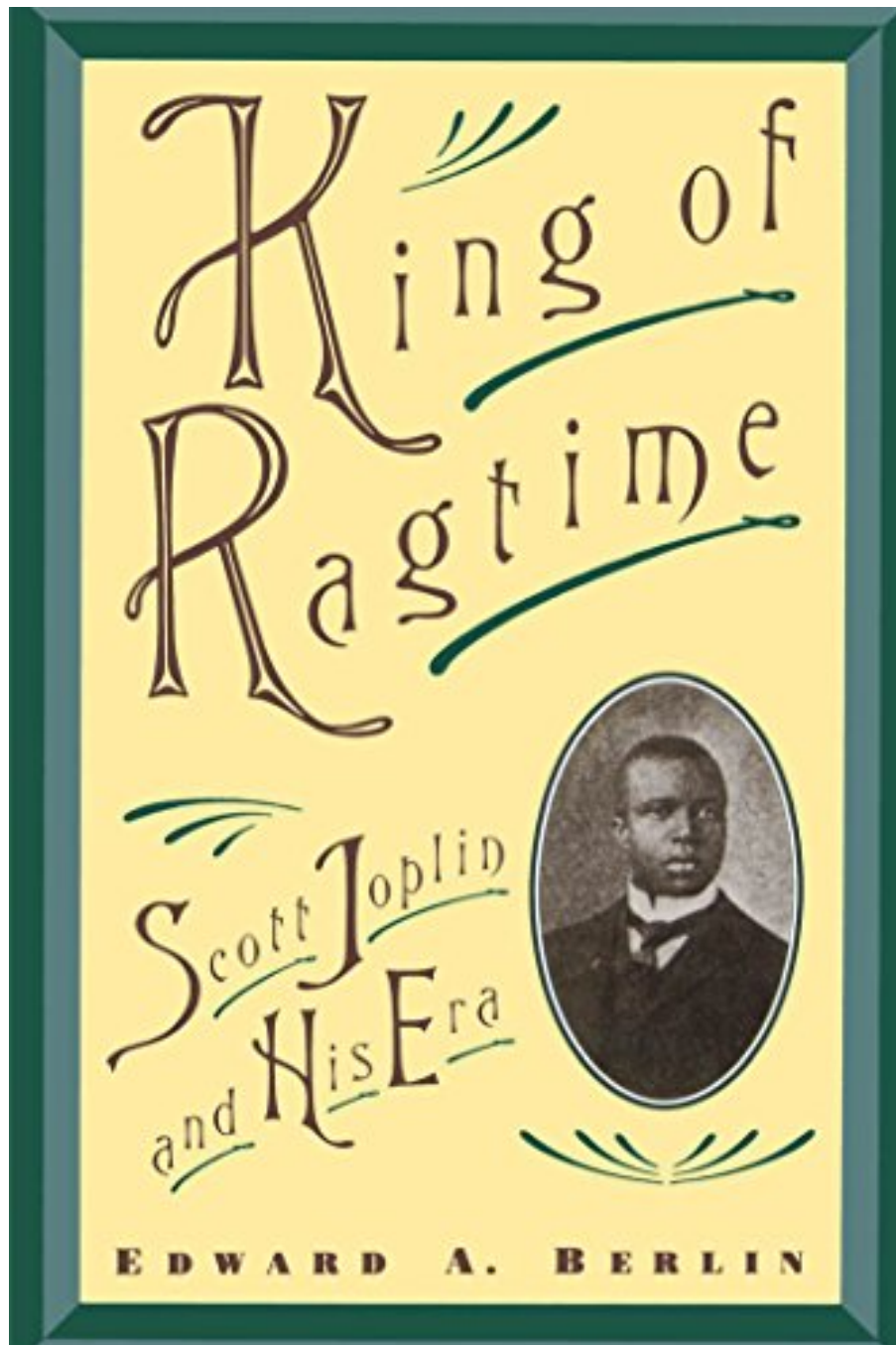


KING OF RAGTIME: SCOTT JOPLIN AND HIS ERA BY EDWARD A. BERLIN



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In 1974, the academy award-winning film *The Sting* brought back the music of Scott Joplin, a black ragtime composer who died in 1917. Led by *The Entertainer*, one of the most popular pieces of the mid-1970s, a revival of his music resulted in events unprecedented in American musical history. Never before had any composer's music been so acclaimed by both the popular and classical music worlds. While reaching a "Top Ten" position in the pop charts, Joplin's music was also being performed in classical recitals and setting new heights for sales of classical records. His opera *Treemonisha* was performed both in opera houses and on Broadway.

Destined to be the definitive work on the man and his music, *King of Ragtime* is written by Edward A. Berlin. A renowned authority on Joplin and the author of the acclaimed and widely cited *Ragtime: A Musical and Cultural History*, Berlin redefines the Scott Joplin biography. Using the tools of a trained musicologist, he has uncovered a vast amount of new information about Joplin. His biography truly documents the story of the composer, replacing the myths and unsupported anecdotes of previous histories. He shows how Joplin's opera *Treemonisha* was a tribute to the woman he loved, a woman other biographers never even mentioned. Berlin also reveals that Joplin was an associate of Irving Berlin, and that he accused Berlin of stealing his music to compose Alexander's Ragtime Band in 1911.

Berlin paints a vivid picture of the ragtime years, placing Scott Joplin's story in its historical context. The composer emerges as a representative of the first post-Civil War generation of African Americans, of the men and women who found in the world of entertainment a way out of poverty and lowly social status. *King of Ragtime* recreates the excitement of these pioneers, who dreamed of greatness as they sought to expand the limits society placed upon their race.

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Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

"Most complete biography on Scott Joplin"

By Princess Hannah

The reason I purchased this book was for my Jazz history class presentation on the 'King of Ragtime'. I could not find any recorded live performances by the classical ragtime composer because talking movies were not invented until 1920's long after his death in 1917. This book is just as good as recorded interviews from people who knew him as a friend, a composer, a performer, and a teacher. My teacher complimented me on my presentation for the interesting and valuable information I have shared with the class. This book contains speculations and contradicting facts about the composer. The author did a very diligent research on Joplin's life. It is an excellent book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Five Stars

By Do205

good read

2 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Interesting, but slow in parts

By Marc K. Linhardt

After reading Doctorow's *Ragtime* and visiting Scott's St. Louis home I was eager to learn more about Scott Joplin and this book satisfied that need.

It is a detective story putting the clues together how his life was lived. This makes it an interesting read.

The only warning I would have is that it is blocky and interrupted with music scores and other interludes

which don't lend itself to a reading rhythm.

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