

# **Broadcasting the Gospel of Tolerance: Media, Capitalism, and Religion in Twentieth-Century America**

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## Abstract

Most histories of religion, media, and capitalism have focused on televangelists or on conservative religious leaders who built their own broadcasting networks. But this is not the entire story. Religious insiders—frequently centrist liberals—did not need to create their own broadcasting networks because their connections with media networks and philanthropists gave them a privileged place in the American mediascape. In this report, I investigate the relationship between the Rockefeller family and religious media. I focus especially on John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and his funding of Riverside Church’s Harry Emerson Fosdick and his *National Vespers* radio program. This report demonstrates the prominence of liberal religious media during the “Golden Age” of radio, and it helps explain how religious liberals navigated the financial dilemmas of producing sustaining programs.

## Introduction

On May 23, 1938, in the midst of the Great Depression, radio industry executives and liberal Protestant broadcasters gathered at the luxurious Waldorf Astoria Hotel to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the first radio sermon. Harry Emerson Fosdick, the host of *National Vespers* and the older brother of the Rockefeller Foundation's President Raymond B. Fosdick, delivered the keynote address. The "Dean of the Air" claimed, "What one says on the air must be universal, catholic, inclusive, profoundly human."<sup>1</sup> But why did the radio demand universality? Who was footing the bill? And why were religious liberals supplanted by evangelicals as the leading religious voices in broadcasting? Answers to these questions help explain fundamental changes in religion, media, and capitalism in twentieth-century America.

Even though John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (JDR Jr.) chose not to attend the anniversary at the Waldorf, his philanthropy had shaped the event. Rockefeller not only built Fosdick a church in which to preach, he helped pay for the radio program that allowed Fosdick to earn the title "Dean of the Air." In this report, I will analyze the relationship between the Rockefellers, especially JDR Jr., and liberal religious media. My research at the Rockefeller Archive Center shows how the Rockefeller family was interested in cultural, educational, and religious broadcasting. Regarding the latter, Rockefellers occasionally delivered addresses about religion over television and the radio. Unsurprisingly, the Rockefellers' primary impact on liberal religious media however was through their philanthropy. For instance, JDR Jr.'s generosity enabled Riverside Church's ministers to reach national and international audiences and helped make Riverside the foremost mouthpiece for liberal Protestantism. Despite this generosity, the Rockefeller family was not an open checkbook for liberal religious media. For instance, JDR Jr. refused to donate—or donated inconsequential sums—to numerous liberal religious and tolerance-promoting programs. This essay will conclude with a coda that will explain why JDR Jr. also donated to revivalists who did not espouse his own form of liberal Protestantism.

## Rockefellers and Radio

The Rockefeller family had an early interest in broadcast media. One example of this interest is the extensive 1930 report that JDR Jr. commissioned his friend and future biographer, Raymond B. Fosdick, to conduct. Several hundred pages long, Fosdick's 1930 report detailed his assessment of radio broadcasting, especially regarding the two newly created chain networks. The report stemmed from JDR Jr.'s desire to improve "the cultural aspects of broadcasting" due to the perceived over-commercialization of radio.<sup>2</sup> Network chains made money by selling air time to companies that could then use that time for advertising. The National Broadcasting Company (NBC), for instance, charged \$10,180 an hour (approximately \$150,000 in 2019 dollars) to broadcast over its Red Network.<sup>3</sup> That said, according to Fosdick, NBC was "not a money-making enterprise." Rather, at least in this era, NBC's parent company made tremendous profits through the sale of radio sets. Interestingly, Fosdick characterized the Columbia Broadcasting System as "much more frankly commercial."<sup>4</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, since much of his research consisted of conferences with network officials, Fosdick characterized independent stations as without "much of a future" as "they can hardly compete with the national chains" when competing for listeners' attention.<sup>5</sup>

Fosdick considered several options for elevating radio's broadcasting. He first considered that JDR Jr. could purchase time from either NBC or CBS. However, Fosdick believed that to be a "very expensive" option and therefore not worthwhile, especially considering "such a program as we would be sponsoring would be sandwiched in between a couple of advertising programs, and I cannot see that our demonstration would have any effect on the advertising programs."<sup>6</sup> Fosdick also considered that the Rockefellers could build their own station, but he believed this was not a great investment. According to Fosdick, technological improvements were happening so fast—the head of NBC told Fosdick that "television would be here in two or three years"—that the materials required for the initial investment would soon be obsolete.<sup>7</sup> Finally, Fosdick proposed creating a third broadcasting chain to rival NBC or CBS by linking several independent stations. Again, however, the "large capital expenditures and large funds for

maintenance, with no funds coming from any other source than our own,” proved prohibitive.<sup>8</sup> While Fosdick’s report tempered JDR Jr.’s desire to make a major investment in broadcasting in 1930, it demonstrates the Rockefellers’ interest in the mass media to spread particular cultural values.

By the mid-1930s, the Rockefeller family and the Rockefeller Foundation were again receiving proposals concerning major investments in broadcasting. For instance, in 1936, the former NBC official and future U.S. ambassador Richard C. Patterson, Jr. proposed to Nelson Rockefeller that he should create a third broadcasting chain that would satisfy “the religious and educational forces” and rival NBC and CBS.<sup>9</sup> While acknowledging the suggestion sounded “reasonable and desirable,” Nelson refrained from endorsing Patterson’s proposal.<sup>10</sup>

The Rockefeller family and the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) did soon begin to fund other expensive broadcasting endeavors. For example, in 1937 the RF began funding the “Radio Research Project,” led by sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, to study the effects of radio on listeners.<sup>11</sup> The next year, the Rockefeller Foundation significantly increased its donations to Walter Lemmon’s World Wide Broadcasting Foundation (WWBF).<sup>12</sup> Designed to promote “international understanding and cooperation and to promote the enlightenment of individuals throughout the world,” the WWBF broadcast educational and cultural programs around the world using shortwave radio technologies.<sup>13</sup> From WWBF’s first broadcast in 1935 through 1940, the Rockefeller Foundation, members of the Rockefeller family, and another philanthropy the Rockefellers established, the Davison Fund, gave \$174,871.85, just shy of two-thirds of the WWBF’s total income.<sup>14</sup>

For my purposes, the WWBF is particularly interesting because it enfolded religion into its political and cultural programming. The WWBF promoted a number of explicitly religious programs, such as broadcasts from Harvard Memorial Chapel and the Old South Church in Boston that represented a liberal, socially engaged Protestantism that the Rockefellers endorsed.<sup>15</sup> Yet these programs do not capture all of WWBF’s religiousness. For instance, religious language is littered throughout the WWBF’s statement of purpose in its “Certificate of Incorporation.” The WWBF claimed they would “study, develop

and disseminate radio programs which will enhance the cultivation of spiritual values and tend to promote the growth of individual characters.”<sup>16</sup> While these “spiritual values” were cultivated in part through explicitly religious programs, they were also cultivated through programs pertaining to music and literature. While the rest of this essay focuses on media explicitly named as “religious,” it is worth noting that the Rockefellers did not draw hard lines regarding which media was (or was not) religious.

## **Funding Fosdick**

The Rockefellers’ philanthropy extended to many areas, including religion. Much of the Rockefellers’ philanthropy could be interpreted as stemming from religious motivations. But the Rockefeller family also had a long history of donating to religious organizations. Over the years, the family gave money to numerous individual churches and seminaries. JDR Jr. also supported organizations that sought to unite and modernize Protestantism. A sampling of these organizations includes the Interchurch World Movement, the Institute for Social and Religious Research, and the Federal Council of Churches.<sup>17</sup>

The religious organization that received the most attention from JDR Jr. was Riverside Church. Over the course of his life, JDR Jr. gave \$32,462,187 to the church, and he frequently exhibited a degree of personal interest not shown in all of his philanthropic endeavors.<sup>18</sup> JDR Jr. was especially involved in the creation of Riverside. In the fall of 1924, JDR Jr. began courting Harry Emerson Fosdick—the brother of JDR Jr.’s friend and employee, Raymond Fosdick—to become pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church.<sup>19</sup> After Fosdick declined the initial offer, Rockefeller countered by offering to build a new church in the Morningside Heights neighborhood of New York City. Though Fosdick noted he did not want to be known as the pastor of the richest man in the country, JDR Jr. responded effectively saying, “Do you think that more people will criticize you on account of my wealth, than will criticize me on account of your theology?” Enticed by the new church and the possibility of creating a modernist interdenominational congregation, Fosdick accepted the offer in May 1925.<sup>20</sup> Though the construction

of the new gothic cathedral—for which Rockefeller paid over ten and a half million dollars—would not be completed for several more years, Fosdick delivered his first sermon as the pastor of Riverside at the Park Avenue site and over WJZ radio in the fall of October 1926.<sup>21</sup>

Fosdick's first sermon as the pastor of Riverside Church was neither the beginning nor end of his engagement with the mass media. Though he is perhaps most remembered for his 1922 sermon "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" and for his 1943 best-selling book, *On Being a Real Person*, most Americans came into contact with Fosdick and his ideas through his weekly radio program, *National Vespers*. Fosdick began consistently broadcasting sermons over WJZ as early as 1924 and continued to do so until his retirement in 1946.<sup>22</sup> His popularity grew over time. In 1936, NBC estimated Fosdick had 20 million listeners.<sup>23</sup> In 1938, Fosdick received over 130,000 letters (more than half of which included requests for sermon transcripts) during his seven-month season. This amount of correspondence stayed relatively consistent for the next eight years.<sup>24</sup> Fosdick's radio sermons were a major reason why many people—including a man who would deliver a famous anti-Vietnam speech at Riverside in 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr.—believed Fosdick to be "the greatest preacher of this century."<sup>25</sup>

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. funded much of Fosdick's media empire. For instance, JDR Jr. helped launch Fosdick's career as a national spokesperson for liberal Protestantism by paying his public relations manager, Ivy Lee, to distribute "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" to 130,000 American ministers.<sup>26</sup> Later, JDR Jr. helped underwrite Fosdick's weekly network radio program, *National Vespers*.

Expenses for *National Vespers* were not extraordinary. While networks charged significant prices for commercial programs, they often granted free air to religious, educational, and cultural programs due to legal requirements and a desire to improve their public image. These programs were referred to as "sustaining programs." Still, while most sustaining religious broadcasters such as Fosdick refused a salary, sustaining programs racked up expenses for musicians' fees, secretarial services, printing, taxi services, control engineers, publicity, and petty cash.<sup>27</sup> For Fosdick, this generally meant between ten and fifteen thousand dollars per seven-month season.<sup>28</sup>

But meeting even these relatively meager sums had its challenges. In addition to being legally required, sustaining programs were incredibly important for networks' public relations. By granting free air time to sustaining programs, networks pushed back against the idea that radio networks represented crass commercialism. Because sustaining programs were supposed to be good for public relations and not just another advertisement, networks strongly discouraged sustaining broadcasters from making on-air appeals for money. When an enthusiastic listener wrote to Harry Emerson Fosdick with a plan to raise money from the radio audience, Fosdick responded by saying, "This sort of thing is not allowed by the National Broadcasting Company and I should be decidedly embarrassed by any such movement."<sup>29</sup> In addition to being embarrassed by breaking company policy, Fosdick might have also been embarrassed by participating in a practice commonly associated with Protestant fundamentalists. By not soliciting money on air, Fosdick and other sustaining religious broadcasters further distinguished themselves from supposedly money-grubbing fundamentalists.<sup>30</sup> While it may have given sustaining broadcasters a sense of superiority, networks' refusal to allow on-air solicitations also placed them in a financial bind. Though they were not poor, few ministers had the means to pay for the programs from their own salaries.<sup>31</sup> How could they raise the money needed for programs if they could not have advertisements or on-air solicitations?

In this predicament, sustaining religious broadcasters like Fosdick turned to their wealthy connections. In December 1927, it was agreed that a "Mr. Ballard" and James C. Colgate, a financier with family connections to both Colgate toothpaste and Colgate University, would each pay twenty-five percent of the program's expense while JDR Jr. would pay fifty percent (despite offering to pay a higher percentage).<sup>32</sup> Later that month, JDR Jr. also agreed to pay for a promoter to travel around the country to convince more stations to accept Fosdick's *National Vespers*.<sup>33</sup> Two years later, the financial arrangement shifted. In the winter of 1929, Colgate suggested that he and JDR Jr. agree to underwrite all expenses equally, and JDR Jr. happily obliged.<sup>34</sup>

This arrangement continued until Colgate's death in 1944. The amount each benefactor paid steadily reduced each year. Though it almost doubled the



program's total expenses, providing mimeographed copies of Fosdick's sermons upon request dramatically increased the number of individual contributions, therefore reducing the net expenses.<sup>35</sup> By 1942, these contributions had increased so significantly that neither Colgate nor JDR Jr. had to pay anything. Still, JDR Jr. and Colgate's arrangement demonstrates how sustaining broadcasters had to have connections to wealthy donors.<sup>36</sup>

There are several reasons why JDR Jr. agreed to underwrite *National Vespers*. For one, it was not a lot of money. Over the years, JDR Jr. spent approximately thirty-two thousand dollars, in total.<sup>37</sup> Compared to the thirty-two million dollars he donated to Riverside Church, the cost of supporting *National Vespers* was a pittance. Second, always an advocate of financial self-sufficiency, JDR Jr. likely appreciated that his contributions would eventually be replaced as the program became supported in other ways.<sup>38</sup> Finally, letters suggest that JDR Jr. also supported the program because he was enthusiastic about its mission. For instance, in December 1927, he described the radio program as "in every way a beautiful service."<sup>39</sup> In a letter to his son, John D. Rockefeller, 3rd (JDR3) in 1930, JDR Jr. wrote, "I regard these radio talks as of a value that it would be hard to overestimate. Through them Dr. Fosdick's words are brought to many people all over the country who could never hear him otherwise."<sup>40</sup> Simply put, the broadcasts ensured the mission and vision of JDR Jr.'s beloved Riverside Church echoed far beyond its stone walls.

## **Other Religious Broadcasting**

Fosdick was not the only religious broadcaster to whom John D. Rockefeller, Jr. listened and appreciated. In 1937, for instance, JDR Jr. listened to a sermon by Monsignor Fulton Sheen on *The Catholic Hour* and liked it so much that he purchased six copies of the sermon.<sup>41</sup> As evidenced by this devout liberal Protestant listening to *The Catholic Hour*, listening to network radio often facilitated Americans encounters with the religious services and leaders of different denominations and religions.

Fosdick was also not the only religious broadcaster who thought the Rockefellers could help fund their programs. Over the years, the Rockefellers received numerous requests for support. His associate's response would generally be something akin to "deeply interested though he is in religious work...[the] demands of responsibilities he is already carrying prevent him from exploring new opportunities for cooperation."<sup>42</sup> In other words, no thanks!

While JDR Jr. did occasionally support some other national liberal Protestant programs, he rarely did so enthusiastically. For instance, in 1945 he gave \$500 to support Daniel Poling's *They Knew God* dramatic radio series on NBC. However, JDR Jr. refrained from making any additional donations and a confidant later shared "he apparently was not deeply interested in it."<sup>43</sup> Similarly, in 1930 Stanley High solicited JDR Jr.'s contribution for a new show, titled *The World of Religion*. Essentially "a religious news hour," the program was designed to contribute "to the development of a sympathetic understanding between adherents of various religious faiths in the United States," and even used a committee of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish laymen to "lift the hour entirely out of the realm of controversy."<sup>44</sup> This type of Protestant-led religious tolerance was in keeping with JDR Jr.'s religious beliefs. And yet, he only gave Stanley High five hundred dollars as opposed to the one thousand requested.<sup>45</sup> Later, High admitted that while the program was very popular, he decided not to do another season in 1931 due to the "financial burden upon himself."<sup>46</sup> Put simply, the show did not continue in part because it lacked the funding that Rockefeller could easily have provided.

High's *The World of Religion* was not the only time a Rockefeller passed up on the opportunity to support religious tolerance efforts on the radio. For instance, in 1936 and 1937 Rabbi William F. Rosenblum and Francis Henson attempted to garner the support of JDR3 for the Fair Play Radio League, an organization designed to use the radio to "combat the growing racial intolerance, particularly anti-Semitism, and to oppose all fascist tendencies."<sup>47</sup> JDR3 neither met with them nor allowed his name to be used. Similarly, in 1942 JDR Jr. received a letter from Harry Lebowitz complaining about the popular radio program "Abie's Irish Rose." Lebowitz noted how the storyline and dialect ridiculed Jews and even suggested it could unintentionally "do as much harm to an innocent race as a Father Coughlin."<sup>48</sup> An associate of JDR Jr. demurred, noting that JDR Jr. "is

neither an officer nor a director of any of the broadcasting companies.”<sup>49</sup> Later, in the 1940s and 1950s, the Rockefellers debated supporting *The Christophers* due to its use of mass media to further an action- and tolerance-oriented Christianity. However, the Rockefellers ultimately did not contribute. This decision was perhaps because a gift to this liberal Catholic organization “might cause resentment” among conservative Catholics, or because, according to the head of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Dana Creel, “Despite its interfaith flavor, the agency is essentially a Roman Catholic organization.”<sup>50</sup> As these examples suggest, while sympathetic to the idea of religious tolerance, the Rockefellers typically chose not to use their influence to achieve it on the radio. This was especially true when the efforts were led by Jews and Catholics.

Though it could be described as Protestant-led, a notable exception to the rule that the Rockefellers played a backseat to religious tolerance media efforts was their support of the Temple of Religion at the New York World’s Fair in 1939. The Temple was designed to be the expression of American religion in “The World of Tomorrow,” the Fair’s theme. While the Temple always had a strong bias toward what it called “the three great faiths” (Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism) rather than a more expansive pluralism, its advocates insisted the Temple embodied the principle that “men may differ deeply in religious belief while maintaining mutual respect.”<sup>51</sup> In an address at a fundraising luncheon for the Temple of Religion in November 1938, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. expounded on this contained pluralism. He declared, “this nation will not give its allegiance to any religion that is insincere or intolerant, that is narrow or divisive....let us unite irrespective of race or creed in dedicating this Temple of Religion.”<sup>52</sup> At the end of his speech, Rockefeller announced that he was donating twenty-five thousand dollars to the Temple and challenged his audience to help raise the other twenty-five thousand. Over the next two years, JDR Jr. and his son JDR3 donated over thirty thousand dollars and sent solicitations that helped raise another thirty thousand dollars.<sup>53</sup>

Though the “Temple of Religion” was primarily a physical site where people could visit (and an estimated 6.25 million did so), organizers repeatedly referred to the mass media’s role in publicizing the Temple. For instance, the Catholic director of the Temple reported to JDR Jr. that they were “aided by the extremely good ‘Press’

we received constantly” and also talked about a “series of radio programs” that “spurred our attendance [and] enabled us to reach millions of radio listeners and inform them of the Temple’s purposes and ideals.”<sup>54</sup> For instance, in a letter to JDR Jr., one of the Temple’s directors, Peter Grimm, described a “typical Sunday schedule” that included radio broadcasts over Mutual’s WOR and CBS’s WABC and the independent WNYC.<sup>55</sup>

## **Broadcasting Rockefellers**

While the Rockefellers typically stayed out of the limelight, there were a number of instances when members of the Rockefeller family stood before broadcasting microphones to talk about religion. JDR Jr.’s 1937 “Church Unity Address” in honor of liberal Methodist missionary E. Stanley Jones was perhaps one of the most well-known moments. With America still grinding through the Great Depression, JDR Jr. began his address by stating that Christ’s message is antithetical to the idea that you should “get the most you can at the least cost of money and effort and do not be too particular about how you do it,” a line Ida Tarbell surely would have found ironic coming from a Rockefeller. JDR Jr. quickly moved to arguing that a simple, tolerant, united Christianity was the only way to beat back the “rising tide of materialism, of selfishness, of shaken traditions, [and] of crumbling moral standards.”<sup>56</sup> Rockefeller’s speech, which did have a pretty effective final paragraph, received accolades from many around the nation. For instance, Mary McLeod Bethune wrote to JDR Jr. that his “words were spiritual and inspiring” and that her “faith was strengthened.”<sup>57</sup> The feedback JDR Jr. might have most appreciated, however, was from his father. JDR Jr. replied to his father’s “beautiful telegram” by noting “Your approval of what I said over the radio is most gratifying.”<sup>58</sup>

There were a few other moments that JDR Jr. gave religious-oriented speeches on the radio. JDR Jr.’s 1938 address regarding the “Temple of Religion” was broadcast over WMCA, as was his July 1941 appeal on behalf of the United Service Organization.<sup>59</sup> In the latter speech, Rockefeller outlined the ten principles that composed his family “credo.” While the word “credo” implies religious overtones

over all of the principles, some of the principles were explicitly religious. For instance, JDR Jr. wrote, “I believe in an all-wise and all-loving God, named by whatever name, and that the individual’s highest fulfillment, greatest happiness and widest usefulness are to be found in living in harmony with His will.”<sup>60</sup> While many cheered JDR Jr.’s creed, some of his Baptist brethren were less pleased. One wrote, it “pained the heart of God” that Rockefeller “did not mention his beloved son Jesus your Saviour.”<sup>61</sup> A few years later, JDR Jr. again engaged in religious broadcasting, as he wrote and recorded a prayer which was broadcast nationally over the Mutual Broadcasting System on New Year’s Day 1944. A few weeks later, he was asked to speak on a three-person panel for Brotherhood Week with former Democratic presidential candidate Al Smith, a Catholic, and the president of the American Jewish Committee, Joseph Proskauer. While JDR Jr. frequently received and declined invitations to speak on religious programs, the care JDR Jr. put into his response indicates that he truly did believe the “broadcast is...of critical importance and especially appealing.”<sup>62</sup> In sum, while he usually declined invitations to make addresses over the radio, JDR Jr. did occasionally use the radio to share his own liberal religious faith.

Similarly, JDR3 occasionally appeared on religious television programs, but he too refrained from making this a regular occurrence. For instance, in March 1955, two months after his father donated twenty million dollars to support Protestant seminaries, JDR3 was asked to appear on a televised panel discussion about theological education for NBC’s *Frontiers of Faith*.<sup>63</sup> Sitting across from some of Protestantism’s leading figures in the 1950s—Liston Pope, Nathan Pusey, and Ralph Sockman—JDR3 held his own.<sup>64</sup> JDR3 and his fellow panelists believed the show “really came off well.”<sup>65</sup> The National Council of Churches (NCC), which organized the Protestant broadcasts for *Frontiers of Faith*, must have thought so as well, because it invited JDR3 back the following April for a panel titled “Money vs. Christianity.” A Rockefeller aide, Francis Jamieson, advised against appearing on the panel. While he may have also been hesitant about the subject matter of the discussion, Jamieson said, “I think it would be unwise for you to appear two years running as it would tend to identify you too closely both with the program and the Council.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, while the Rockefellers were integral to liberal and mainline Protestantism’s presence on the mass media, they were somewhat

reluctant about being perceived as one-and-the-same with organizations primarily responsible for organizing mainline mass media.

## Riverside's FM Radio Station

While mainline Protestants had a presence on national television networks with shows like NBC's *Frontiers of Faith* and CBS's *Lamp Unto My Feet*, they were not satisfied with this allotment. For one, these programs were typically broadcast during times NBC and CBS considered the least profitable. Moreover, both of these shows required Protestants to share time with Jews and Catholics. Unsurprisingly, many Protestants envied the tremendous success of Catholic priest Fulton Sheen and his television program, *Life is Worth Living*. Sheen even won an Emmy in 1952 for being the "Most Outstanding Television Personality."<sup>67</sup>

By the late 1950s, members of Riverside Church looked with envy not only at Sheen but also at their own past. A 1957 memo from Dana Creel to JDR Jr. that explains a meeting between Creel and Fosdick's successor at Riverside, Robert McCracken, is particularly revealing. Relaying McCracken's thoughts, Creel explained that Fosdick's *National Vespers* radio program helped make Fosdick a radio star and Riverside Church into "possibly more [of] a national church than...a parish church." Yet while McCracken had frequently been invited on the air, the NCC's Broadcasting and Film Commission now intentionally rotated speakers and denominations, meaning that McCracken had nowhere near the consistency of Fosdick. Thus, McCracken's presence "on the air has been nothing like that of Dr. Fosdick, nor have his appearances been so clearly identified with Riverside Church. The result is that while Riverside still has a degree of national significance, its national importance and outreach is decreasing." As Creel explained to JDR Jr., Riverside Church was now at a crossroads. It could revive its national role by launching a television or FM radio station, or it could focus on serving Morningside Heights and New York City rather than the nation. But before they made that choice, the church's leadership needed to know if their wealthiest congregant—whose checkbook they would very much need to make a

station a reality—had an opinion.<sup>68</sup> Graciously, Rockefeller responded by refusing to take a position so as not to sway the church’s decision.<sup>69</sup>

Dissuaded by the extraordinary costs of building and operating a television station, the Riverside Church leadership planned to move forward with the FM radio station. They decided to follow the recommendations in the 1955 study, *The Television-Radio Audience and Religion*. For instance, they agreed to “avoid any special emphasis on sermon broadcasts” and to collaborate with the NCC’s Broadcasting and Film Commission. As an expression of the study’s best practices, Riverside’s FM station could “demonstrate to large urban churches everywhere and to local and state councils of churches what can be done with local radio or TV.” In doing so, the FM station would declare, to quote a section title from a 1957 planning document, “Riverside Church – The ‘Answer’ to Bishop Sheen.”<sup>70</sup>

Before it could answer Sheen, Riverside Church needed to determine where to place the radio antenna. By far the most effective location was on top of the church’s twenty-story gothic tower. JDR Jr., however, had no intention of letting his beloved gothic tower—the home of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon—look like the Empire State building. New technological developments and creative engineering ultimately saved the day. The church could now use a smaller circular antenna that would be less visible. JDR Jr. agreed to pay the difference and more with a donation of one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars.<sup>71</sup>

JDR Jr. did not live to hear the first broadcast of Riverside Radio WRVR on New Year’s Day 1961. The receipt of JDR Jr.’s one hundred twenty-five thousand dollar gift affectionately included a note—glossing over the fact that JDR Jr. had been the impetus for needing a more expensive antenna in the first place—that the radio station was “the result of the support and imagination of Mr. Rockefeller, Jr. and those associated with his Estate.”<sup>72</sup> Over the next decade and a half, WRVR broadcast numerous political, educational, cultural, and social programs. It became notable especially for its support of jazz and fusion. Even though it diversified its programs, the station’s religious programs continued to reach

listeners. For instance, a 1969 survey even noted that Riverside Church's Sunday morning worship service was WRVR's second most popular program.<sup>73</sup>

Riverside Church's WRVR station did not last very long. By the mid-1970s, the station's inability to break even, the growing disconnect between the church and the station, and racial tensions among the station's employees ultimately led Riverside to sell WRVR in November 1976. Still, according to historian Judith Weisenfeld, the station "had a lasting impact on discussions of public affairs in New York City in its time, on many listeners over the years, and on the future of noncommercial radio in the United States."<sup>74</sup>

JDR Jr.'s money had powered much of mainline and liberal Protestantism's broadcasting during its peak from the 1920s through the 1960s, and his death in 1960 coincided with other major events that signaled the decline in liberal Protestant media's hegemony. For instance, in 1960, after years of activism by religious conservatives, the Federal Communications Commission ceased to distinguish between sustaining time and commercial time when they determined whether a station was meeting its mandated public service requirements. This meant that broadcasting networks felt less incentivized to offer free access to liberals and could now accept paid time from religious conservatives.<sup>75</sup> The death of key philanthropists like Rockefeller and the end of the legal requirements that advantaged religious insiders meant that the firm financial foundation for liberal and mainline Protestant broadcasting was beginning to crumble. Consequently, many major liberal religious broadcasting initiatives, like Riverside Church's WRVR and network television shows, such as *Lamp Unto My Feet* and *Frontiers of Faith*, would not survive the 1970s.

## **Coda: Paying Bills**

Billy Sunday and Billy Graham were the two most famous revivalists of the twentieth century. Billy Sunday was undoubtedly the most well-known religious leader in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and Billy Graham's influence in the second half of the twentieth century led many to label him



“America’s Pastor.”<sup>76</sup> Emerging onto the national scene several decades after Sunday, Graham denied the oft-noted similarities between the two Billies. Still, despite Graham’s protestations, the two men did indeed have more in common than just their first name. They both were the leading revivalist of their generation, had White House connections, and strongly relied on altar calls, gendered appeals, and a theology of individual salvation and conversion.

Another surprising connection between the two revivalists was that they shared a major donor: John D. Rockefeller, Jr. He served as an executive committee member for Sunday’s 1917 New York City revival, and donated fifty thousand dollars to support Billy Graham’s 1957 crusade in New York City.<sup>77</sup> JDR Jr.’s sponsorship of Sunday and Graham seems, at first, counter-intuitive. Neither men espoused Rockefeller’s brand of liberal Protestantism. Dana S. Creel put it even sharper in 1956 when he wrote that JDR<sup>3</sup>, and his brother David’s “whole background, as well as the office, is diametrically opposed to Graham’s interpretation of religion.”<sup>78</sup> Why then would JDR Jr., the financial cornerstone of American liberal Protestantism, financially support two of the century’s most famous fundamentalists?

JDR Jr’s support of Sunday stemmed in part from a personal connection with the revivalist. JDR Jr. claimed in 1921 that he believed Sunday “to be absolutely sincere” and happily provided the preacher with a truck for his farm.<sup>79</sup> Sunday, meanwhile, saw his friend “John” (one of the only instances I found when writers did not refer to JDR Jr. as “Mr. Rockefeller”) as a primary source of income. During the 1920s, JDR Jr. gave Sunday \$16,383.<sup>80</sup> Sometimes Sunday asked for too much. For instance, in 1926 he asked JDR Jr. to guarantee him a salary of fifty-thousand dollars per year for the next five years. JDR Jr. declined.<sup>81</sup> Still, by November 1927, even after Sunday’s many requests, JDR Jr. described him as a “warm friend of mine and a fine, useful man.”<sup>82</sup>

Their friendship would cool over time, however, as Sunday increasingly asked for donations, loans, and favors. Sunday’s financial situation was not as strong in the 1920s as his prestige, and therefore profits declined after World War I and the advent of radio. Sunday’s financial situation became particularly precarious in the late 1920s, as Sunday’s children became ensnared in a series of scandals. As a

result, Sunday paid countless thousands in divorce settlements and hush money. These payments and the Great Depression put the Sundays in dire financial straits. Seemingly undeterred by rejection letters, Sunday desperately pleaded with Rockefeller for money throughout the 1920s and 1930s. For example, Sunday wrote, “I will die if I cannot get help...please please John help me.”<sup>83</sup> While they may have connected personally in the late 1910s, dozens of similar pleas and JDR Jr.’s persistent refusals made it near impossible for their friendship to persist.

There were other reasons besides friendship why JDR Jr. supported Sunday and later Graham (with whom JDR Jr. never had a personal relationship). In 1917, Rockefeller gave his Bible class a straight-forward explanation as to why he supported Sunday. JDR Jr. claimed, “Our churches do not lay hold of the masses of the people. If [Sunday] can touch them, there is just one place for me, and that is at his back.”<sup>84</sup> A few years later, JDR Jr. claimed that Sunday’s campaigns not only helped create new Christians, they also reawakened “a sense of duty and stimulating activity on the part of those who are already Christians.”<sup>85</sup> Though the record is less clear, the idea that popular revivalists reached the unchurched and stirred the hearts of churchgoers also likely guided JDR Jr.’s support of Graham’s 1957 New York City Crusade.

JDR Jr.’s support also likely stemmed from advice he received from other religious leaders. Many of New York’s leading preachers supported Sunday’s 1917 revival. Similarly, JDR Jr. followed the lead of Riverside Church and its leaders regarding Graham’s 1957 New York City Crusade. Riverside’s leadership agreed to “cooperate with a ‘weary and cautious’ attitude.”<sup>86</sup> For JDR Jr., tentatively cooperating meant donating an amount “large enough to be helpful but not...indicating a desire to assume a sponsoring relationship with the Crusade.”<sup>87</sup> For JDR Jr., this meant an initial gift of twenty-five thousand, followed by another gift of twenty-five thousand dollars.<sup>88</sup> While this may have been a small donation from Rockefeller’s standpoint, a newspaper article later indicated that JDR Jr.’s gift (though not naming Rockefeller) was the second-highest.<sup>89</sup> Still, despite JDR Jr.’s generosity toward Graham’s crusade, JDR Jr. refused to support Graham’s media efforts. For instance, he indicated that he did not want his second twenty-five-thousand-dollar donation to support the television budget and later refused to help pay for Graham’s 1958 film, *The Heart is a Rebel*.<sup>90</sup>

JDR Jr. also supported Sunday and later Graham because he believed they bridged gaps of sectarianism. JDR Jr. frequently funded and endorsed institutions that united churches and denominations. As expressed in his 1937 Church Unity address, JDR Jr.'s vision for the future of Christianity was of one united church with various branches. Sunday's revivals and Graham's crusades facilitated connections across churches and denominations. JDR Jr. claimed, "Sunday's work has an important influence in bringing about cooperation among the churches and religious organizations."<sup>91</sup> By encouraging cooperation, revivals helped facilitate the creation of one united church.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s vision of unity also provides a final way to understand why he supported both Sunday and Graham. Unity demands that differences—at least to a degree—must be set aside. A united Protestant church, then, demanded that differences in theology and practice—at least to a degree—must be set aside. Consequently, while JDR Jr may have advocated for a different branch of the united church, he was willing to set aside his personal religious preferences and donate to campaigns he believed benefited the church universal.

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<sup>1</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick, "National Vespers," in *The Church in the Sky* (New York: Department of National Religious Radio of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, [1938?]), 32.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond B. Fosdick, "Memorandum on Radio," 14, Folder 1186, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>3</sup> Fosdick, "Memorandum," 4; "CPI Inflation Calculator," Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed June 26, 2019, <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.

<sup>4</sup> Fosdick, "Memorandum," 3.

<sup>5</sup> Fosdick, "Memorandum," 4.

<sup>6</sup> Fosdick, "Memorandum," 4.

<sup>7</sup> Fosdick, "Memorandum," 15.

<sup>8</sup> Fosdick, "Memorandum," 16.

<sup>9</sup> Richard C. Patterson, Jr. to Nelson Rockefeller, June 8, 1936, Folder 1181, Box 134, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>10</sup> Nelson A. Rockefeller to Richard C. Patterson, Jr., June 17, 1936, Folder 1181, Box 134, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

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<sup>11</sup> “Communications,” The Rockefeller Foundation: A Digital History, Accessed June 26, 2019, [https://rockfound.rockarch.org/communications#\\_ftn2](https://rockfound.rockarch.org/communications#_ftn2).

<sup>12</sup> “Waves Seek Good-will,” *The New York Times*, July 10, 1938, Folder 1189, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>13</sup> “Certificate of Incorporation of World Wide Broadcasting Foundation, Inc.,” 1, Folder 1189, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>14</sup> RF gave \$158,803.85 and members of the Rockefeller family and the Davison Fund gave \$16,068. In addition, Laurance Rockefeller also guaranteed loans for the WWBF. The total income received by the WWBF was \$265,460.39. “Project Memorandum,” 3, Folder 1189, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>15</sup> “Program Schedule: February 16-28, 1938,” Folder 1189, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>16</sup> “Certificate of Incorporation,” 1.

<sup>17</sup> Albert F. Schenkel, *The Rich Man and the Kingdom: John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the Protestant Establishment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

<sup>18</sup> Robert Moats Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1985), 211-212.

<sup>19</sup> According to Miller, JDR Jr. and Colgate had favored Fosdick as their next pastor since 1912. = Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 159.

<sup>20</sup> Schenkel, *The Rich Man and the Kingdom*, 176.

<sup>21</sup> Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 200, 211-212. JDR Jr.’s initial gift would equate to over \$150 million according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Inflation Calculator. “CPI Inflation Calculator,” Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed June 26, 2019, <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.

<sup>22</sup> Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 382.

<sup>23</sup> James C. Colgate to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., June 4, 1936, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>24</sup> James C. Colgate to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., June 21, 1939, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>25</sup> King, Inscription to Harry Emerson Fosdick, November 1958, accessed June 26, 2019, [kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/harry-emerson-fosdick](http://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/harry-emerson-fosdick).

<sup>26</sup> Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 116-117.

<sup>27</sup> “Complete Financial Statement for the Season of October 19, 1930 to May 31, 1931,” Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>28</sup> In this letter, Colgate estimates the cost would be between twelve and fifteen thousand dollars, but many years it was between ten and twelve thousand. James C. Colgate to W.S. Richardson, December 17, 1929, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>29</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick to Ann Adams, May 31, 1928, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>30</sup> For radio and fundamentalism, see Tona J. Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial: Radio, Religion, & Popular Culture in America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University North Carolina Press, 2003).

<sup>31</sup> When he accepted the position, Fosdick said that the maximum salary he would accept was five thousand dollars. Harry Emerson Fosdick to James C. Colgate, May 13, 1925, Folder 559, Box 72, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>32</sup> W.S. Richardson to JDR Jr., December 9, 1927, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive

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Center; W.S. Richardson to James C. Colgate, December 12, 1927, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>33</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., December 17, 1927, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center; John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to Harry E. Fosdick, December 19, 1927, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>34</sup> James C. Colgate to W.S. Richardson, November 30, 1929, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>35</sup> James C. Colgate to John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, July 26, 1938, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>36</sup> For instance, Daniel Poling leaned on retail magnate J.C. Penny. Harry Emerson Fosdick to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., December 17, 1927, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>37</sup> Janet M. Warfield to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., June 1, 1942, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>38</sup> JDR3, for instance, noted concern when individual donations dropped in 1936, writing "it would be nice to feel that the broadcasts were moving in the direction of carrying themselves." John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, to James C. Colgate, June 5, 1936, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>39</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to Harry E. Fosdick, December 19, 1927, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>40</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, January 29, 1930, Folder 1187, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>41</sup> Robert W. Gumbel to E.J. Heffron, March 31, 1937, Folder 1181, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>42</sup> Mary Mills to Warren Richards, May 15, 1945, Folder 1181, Box 134, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>43</sup> Yorke Allen, Jr. to Dana Creel, May 12, 1959, Folder 1182, Box 134, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>44</sup> Stanley High to Arthur W. Packard, April 18, 1930, Folder 1184, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>45</sup> Arthur W. Packard to Stanley High, April 23, 1930, Folder 1184, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>46</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation: Mr. Stanley High," September 3, 1931, Folder 1184, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>47</sup> Frances A. Henson to John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, October 30, 1936, Folder 1181, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>48</sup> Harry Lebowitz to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., March 21, 1942, Folder 1181, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

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<sup>49</sup> Arthur W. Packard to Harry Lebowitz, April 1, 1942, Folder 1181, Box 135, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>50</sup> Yorke Allen, Jr. to General Files, October 31, 1952, and Dana S. Creel to Nelson A. Rockefeller, November 10, 1952, Folder 451, Box 57, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>51</sup> “The Program for the Temple of Religion at the New York World’s Fair,” Folder 228, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center. For the Temple’s bias toward a tripartite America, see Wendy Wall, “The ‘Interfaith Idea’ in Wartime and Cold War America,” in *Making the American Century: Essays on the Political Culture of Twentieth Century America*, ed. Bruce Schulman (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 172.

<sup>52</sup> “Address of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. at a luncheon in behalf of the Temple of Religion at the New York World’s Fair, Bankers Club, November 9, 1938,” Folder 229, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>53</sup> Peter Grimm to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., March 4, 1940, Folder 230, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center; “J.D. Rockefeller Jr.,” Folder 230, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center; “Contributions Received by JDR 3rd for Temple of Religion of World’s Fair,” November 22, 1938, Folder 230, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>54</sup> John Gilland Brunini to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., November 13, 1940, Folder 228, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>55</sup> Peter Grimm to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., November 18, 1940, Folder 228, Box 26, Series F, Economic Interests, FA315, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>56</sup> “Radio Address,” February 17, 1937, Folder 78, Box 12, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>57</sup> Mary McLeod Bethune to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., February 18, 1937, Folder 79, Box 12, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>58</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to John D. Rockefeller, Sr., February 19, 1937, Folder 78, Box 12, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>59</sup> A. Moran to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., November 28, 1938, Folder 1195, Box 136, Series E, Cultural Interests, FA314, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>60</sup> “Rockefeller Gives his Family’s Creed,” *The New York Times*, July 9, 1941.

<sup>61</sup> “A Baptist” to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., March 18, 1942, Folder 558, Box 72, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>62</sup> John D. Rockefeller Jr. to Samuel McCrea Cavert, January 28, 1944, Folder 248, Box 32, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center. For instances of JDR Jr. declining invitations to make religious broadcasts, see Henry St. George Tucker to John D. Rockefeller Jr, March 22, 1943, and Arthur Packard to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., April 8, 1943, and B.S. Abernathy to Arthur W. Packard, August 8, 1944, in Folder 248, Box 32, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>63</sup> George Barrett, “\$20,000,000 Given by Rockefeller: Fund Set Up to Aid Protestant Theological Education,” *The New York Times*, January 12, 1955.

<sup>64</sup> At the time, Pope was the Dean of Yale’s Divinity School, Pusey the President of Harvard, and Ralph Sockman the star of NBC’s *National Radio Pulpit*.

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- <sup>65</sup> John D. Rockefeller, 3rd to Eugene Carson Blake, March 18, 1955, Folder 475, Box 60, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>66</sup> Francis A. Jamieson to John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, April 23, 1956, Folder 475, Box 60, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>67</sup> David Weinstein, *The Forgotten Network: DuMont and the Birth of American Television* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 157.
- <sup>68</sup> Dana S. Creel to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., August 6, 1957, Folder 622, Box 79, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>69</sup> Dana S. Creel to Robert J. McCracken, August 9, 1957, Folder 622, Box 79, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>70</sup> "A Study of the Possibilities for Enlarged Use of Radio and Television by the Riverside Church," January 5, 1957, Folder 623, Box 79, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>71</sup> Dana S. Creel to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., My 22, 1959, Folder 622, Box 79, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>72</sup> Carroll B. Fitch to Philip F. Keebler, January 11, 1961, Folder 624, Box 79, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>73</sup> Judith Weisenfeld, "Universal in Spirit, Local in Character: The Riverside Church and New York City" in *The History of the Riverside Church in the City of New York* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 210.
- <sup>74</sup> Weisenfeld, "Universal in Spirit, Local in Character," 215-216.
- <sup>75</sup> Tona J. Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial: Radio, Religion, & Popular Culture in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 152.
- <sup>76</sup> Grant Wacker, *America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).
- <sup>77</sup> R. Campbell to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., October 12, 1956, and Dana S. Creel to John D. Rockefeller Jr., May 29, 1957, Folder 422, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>78</sup> Dana S. Creel to Richard H. Dana, July 3, 1956, Folder 422A, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center. This letter is about David, but Creel made the same claim about JDR3 in Dana S. Creel to Edgar B. Young, July 5, 1956, Folder 422A, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>79</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to J.B. Slocum, January 25, 1921, and W.S. Richardson to Arthur Woods, January 18, 1926, Folder 742, Box 91, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>80</sup> Robert W. Gumbel to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., November 28, 1934, Folder 745, Box 92, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>81</sup> W.S. Richardson to Arthur Woods, January 18, 1926, Folder 742, Box 91, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>82</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to Robert W. Stewart, November 2, 1927, Folder 745, Box 92, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>83</sup> W.A. Sunday to JDR Jr., n.d. [November 1929?], Folder 745, Box 92, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>84</sup> Schenkel, *Rich Man and the Kingdom*, 210.

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<sup>85</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to J.B. Slocum, January 25, 1921, Folder 742, Box 91, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>86</sup> Yorke Allen, Jr. to Dana S. Creel, September 27, 1956, Folder 422, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>87</sup> Dana S. Creel to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., October 8, 1956, Folder 422, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>88</sup> R. Campbell to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., October 12, 1956, and Dana S. Creel to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., May 29, 1957, Folder 422, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>89</sup> "Businessmen Top Givers to Billy Graham Crusade," *World Telegram*, n.d. [June 1957?], Folder 422, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>90</sup> Dana S. Creel to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., May 29, 1957, and Dick Ross to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., August 29, 1958, Folder 422, Box 53, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.

<sup>91</sup> John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to J.B. Slocum, January 25, 1921, Folder 742, Box 91, Series N, Religious Interests, FA323, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller records (OMR), Rockefeller Archive Center.