

Julianna J. Thomson

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Education

George Mason University

Expected May 2026

Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science

Comprehensive Exams: American Government, International Relations

Committee: Mark J. Rozell (Chair), Robert J. McGrath, Kendrick Kuo, James P. Pfiffner

Dissertation: Sacred Speech in a Secularizing Society: Congress, the President, and the Politics of Religious Rhetoric

Villanova University

2022

M.B.A.

Specialization: Strategic Management

Dartmouth College

2020

B.A., Religion

Exchange Program: New College School of Theology, University of Edinburgh

Additional Training

The Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR), Syracuse University

2025

Graduate Teaching Academy, Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning, George Mason University

2025

Publications

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

2. **Thomson, Julianna J.**, and Mark J. Rozell. 2025. "Challenges to Protecting Religious Freedoms: The Roles of Government and Societal Norms." *Ethos. Quarterly of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin*. 38(3):155-73. <https://doi.org/10.12887/38-2025-3-151-10>.
1. **Thomson, Julianna J.**, and Alena Smith. 2025. "Sacred Speech: Analyzing the Influence of Congressional Leadership on Religious Rhetoric." *Politics and Religion*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048325100102>.
 - Awarded the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion 2025 Student Paper Award for the best student paper published in 2025.

Book Chapters

1. Carty, Thomas J., and **Julianna J. Thomson**. 2025. "Catholic Senators and Abortion Politics: The Cases of Joe Biden and Ted Kennedy." In *Religion and Congress: The Intersection of Faith and Politics*, edited by David A. Dulio and Colton C. Campbell, 97-114. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Public Scholarship

2. Smith, Alena, and **Julianna J. Thomson**. 2025. "The 2026 Midterms: Speaker Mike Johnson's Religious Rhetoric Will Continue to Shape How Republicans Speak to Their Constituents." London School of Economics United States Centre (blog). <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2025/07/30/the-2026-midterms-speaker-mike-johnsons-religious-rhetoric-will-continue-to-shape-how-republicans-speak-to-their-constituents/>.
1. Smith, Alena, and **Julianna J. Thomson**. 2025. "The Johnson Effect: How the New Speaker Sparked a Religious Rhetoric Surge." Religion in Public (blog). <https://religioninpublic.blog/2025/07/14/the-johnson-effect-how-the-new-speaker-sparked-a-religious-rhetoric-surge/>.

Works in Progress

The Christian Right: What Everyone Needs to Know with Mark J. Rozell (George Mason University) and Clyde Wilcox (Georgetown University) - *Under contract with Oxford University Press.*

“Christian Nationalism in Congressional Communication in the Twenty-First Century” with Cammie Jo Bolin (University at Albany) and Alena Smith (Stanford University) - *In progress and accepted for the Political Studies Review special issue, “250th Anniversary of the United States of America’s Founding: America at a Turning Point?”.*

“Religious Language and U.S. Presidential Wartime Leadership” - *In progress.*

“The State of NCAA Student Athletes’ Voting, Civic Engagement, and Community Leadership” with Cammie Jo Bolin (University at Albany) - *In progress.*

“Exploring the Mechanism of Crisis Escalation in Territorial Disputes: Lessons from the Greek-Turkish Crises” with Georgios Zacharias (George Mason University) - *In progress.*

“God and War on Capitol Hill” with Andrew Kenealy (Duke University) - *In progress.*

Teaching Experience

Instructor of Record

Religion and the American Presidency, Encore Learning

Fall 2024

Research and Work Appointments

Graduate Research Assistant, Schar School of Policy and Government 2022-2026

Research Assistant to Dr. Mark J. Rozell, Dean of the Schar School of Policy and Government

Business Research Fellow, Villanova School of Business 2020-2022

Research Assistant to Dr. Jonathan Doh, Senior Associate Dean for Research

Research Assistant to Dr. Denise Downey, KPMG Endowed Professor in Accounting

Senior Admissions Fellow, Dartmouth College 2019-2020

Research Intern, Council for Advancement and Support of Education 2018

Awards, Fellowships, and Grants

George Mason University

Presidential Scholarship (full tuition and stipend) 2022–2026

Daniel Druckman Fellowship (\$8000) 2025

Schar School IQMR Grant (\$3025) 2025

May La Due Bishop Book Fund (\$1200) 2024

Schar School Conference Travel Grant (total \$3300) 2023, 2024, 2025

Villanova University

Graduate Research Fellowship (full tuition and stipend) 2020–2022

Dartmouth College

Religion Department Faculty Prize (\$750) 2020

Citation for Meritorious Performance 2019

External

Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Student Paper Award (\$500) 2025

Graduate Student Workshop Grant, ASREC (\$800) 2023

All-Academic First Team, Big East Conference 2021, 2022

Conference Presentations

7. “Presidential Religious Rhetoric and War.” 2025 West Point Social Sciences Seminar, West Point, NY. February 2025. *Paper presentation.*
6. “Leathernecks and Lexicon: Exploring Partisanship in the US Military.” The Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society Canada Conference, Ottawa, Canada. October 2024. *Paper presentation (Virtual).*
5. “Sacred Speech: Analyzing the Influence of Congressional Leadership on Religious Rhetoric.” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA. October 2024. *Paper presentation.*
4. “From Silence to Speech: Women’s Participation in Christian Nationalism.” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. September 2024. *Paper presentation.*
3. “Leathernecks and Lexicon: Exploring Partisanship in the US Military.” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. September 2024. *Paper presentation.*
2. “Leathernecks and Lexicon: Exploring Partisanship in the US Military.” US Army War College Civil-Military Relations Center Annual Conference, Carlisle, PA. May 2024. *Paper presentation.*
1. “Faithful Leadership: Analyzing the Influence of Speaker Mike Johnson’s Religious Identity in the House.” Henry Institute Symposium on Religion and Public Life, Grand Rapids, MI. April 2024. *Paper presentation.*

Service and Leadership

International Officer, Religion and Politics Specialist Group, Political Studies Association	2025-Present
Leadership Team, Schar PhD Student Association, George Mason University	2025-Present
Consultant, Writing Support Lab, George Mason University	2024-Present
Treasurer, Schar PhD Student Association, George Mason University	2024-2025
Division 1 Track and Field Coach, George Mason University and Villanova University	2023-2025
<i>Organizer</i>	
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting Religion and Politics Working Group	2026
<i>Panel Chair</i>	
West Point Social Sciences Seminar	2025
Henry Symposium on Religion and Public Life	2024
<i>Conference Discussant</i>	
Henry Symposium on Religion and Public Life	2024
<i>Reviewer</i>	
Stearns Center Innovations in Teaching and Learning Conference	2024

Professional Memberships

Political Studies Association	2025-Present
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion	2024-Present
American Political Science Association	2023-Present

Skills

Computing: R, R Markdown, L^AT_EX, Microsoft Suite
Language: English (native), French (basic)