concerns was demonstrated in the eventual secularization of public schools. Though the Bible debate was not the sole reason for secularization, alleviating tensions between Catholics and Protestants was nonetheless an important factor in the nation's decision to separate religion from public schools (Lannie, 1970).

Both components, religious clothing and Protestant Bible-reading, had long-term effects on public schools. In 1948, the Supreme Court of New Mexico ruled that in public schools, religious garb, including Catholic nuns' traditional attire, was constitutionally impermissible in *Zellers v. Huff*. The justices argued that "the wearing of religious garb and insignia have a propagandizing effect for the church" (as cited in Holscher, 2012, p. 76). The Missouri Supreme Court in the 1950 case of *Berghorn v. Reorganized School District* banned not only Catholic garb, but also nuns themselves from teaching in public schools. The court argued that these women's obligations to the Church prevented them from objectively educating students (Holscher, 2012). The resultant "religious and cultural separatism" (Lannie, 1970, p. 520) between U.S. Catholics and Protestants was also reflected in the establishment of Catholic parochial schools. Ultimately losing their fight to reform Christian education in public schools, Catholics began to envision their own school system. Catholics have since privately funded parochial schools that many Catholic students attend. These long-term consequences reveal the key role religion has had on the nation's identity.

Religion's role in shaping the U.S.'s national identity is also exemplified in presidential elections. Anti-Catholicism's decline is demonstrated in two key U.S. elections: 1960 and 2004, both of which include a Catholic candidate. In 1960, John F. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon and became the first Catholic president. It was far from an easy victory for Kennedy, however, as he constantly battled anti-Catholic sentiment that remained from the nineteenth century fears of Catholic immigrants. He acknowledged the nation's Protestant preference in a speech given at a Southern Baptist Conference during his campaign:

> **But if this election is decided on the basis that 40,000,000 Americans lost their chance of being President on the day they were baptized, then it is the whole nation that will be the loser in the eyes of Catholics and non-Catholics around the world, in the eyes of history, and in the eyes of our own people. (as cited in Robinson, 2010)**

In addition to acknowledging the nation's Protestant identity, Kennedy also assured voters that they could "safely vote for a Catholic" (Putnam & Campbell, 2010), as demonstrated in Kennedy's promise that "whatever issue may come before me as President. I will make my decision...in accordance with what my conscience tells me to be in the national interest, and without regard to outside religious pressure" (as cited in Robinson, 2010). Though Kennedy's religious identity as a Catholic initially was problematic, his victory signaled a more inclusive shift in the nation's identity.

This tolerant shift is illustrated in the 2004 presidential election, in which John F. Kerry, a Roman Catholic, was defeated by a Methodist, George W. Bush. Scholars Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde found that voting patterns were similar between the 2000 and 2004 presidential contest (2005). The 2000 election did not include a Catholic nominee, indicating that Kerry's Catholicism played a minor role in the highly similar 2004 election. Further, an analysis of voter demographics revealed that most Catholics actually voted for the non-Catholic nominee, Bush (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 2005). Thus, religious identity does not appear to have played a significant role in this modern election. However, conclusions about religious tolerance and equality cannot be drawn too broadly. Despite Roman Catholics' significant population of over 60 million U.S. members, Kerry is the only Roman Catholic who has run for president since Kennedy's victory in 1960 (Robinson, 2010). Though the reasons for this political underrepresentation of Catholics are unknown, it nonetheless serves as a reminder that the U.S. still has a distinctly Protestant religious identity.

Conclusion

Religious identity underlies a person's or group's most intimate beliefs about themselves, fundamentally affecting how they perceive the world. Religion is generally an emotional experience and inevitably involves moral judgments. Thus, one's religious identity shapes the way people construct morals, as reflected in nineteenth century Protestants' moral judgments about Catholic immigrants.