literature and violence. However, closer analysis of how U.S. citizens oppressed Catholics through *political* means offers exceptional insight into the nation's religious identity. Fears of the Roman Church's authority seeped into notable politicians' speeches and eventually escalated into an explicitly anti-Catholic national political party that equated patriotism with nativism. Similarly, the U.S.'s connection with Protestantism is demonstrated through religion's role in public schools and modern presidential elections.

Many American expressed their Protestant religious identity through political means, as demonstrated by the powerful nativist movement in the 1800s. Despite the fact that the U.S. was founded by immigrants, many U.S. citizens ironically rejected all immigrants, fervently promoting policies that favored current U.S. citizens. Nativist statements generally coincided with anti-Catholicism, especially since the U.S. feared that Catholics' allegiance to their Roman Pope clashed with a democratic society. The influx of Catholic immigrants in the 1800s appeared to some U.S. citizens as an invasion. This perceived threat of a Roman papal takeover motivated many anti-Catholic fears, as illustrated in John Adams' declaration that "a free government and the Roman Catholic religion can never exist together in any nation or Country" (as cited in Farnham, 1961, p. 51). Adams' assertion that Catholics are fundamentally undemocratic was echoed throughout the 1800s, most recognizably by the Know Nothing political party.

A key facet of the nativist movement was the infamous Order of the Star Spangled Banner political party. The Order was popularly referred to as the Know Nothing party, since members took secrecy oaths and famously replied that they "knew nothing" when confronted by media. This party's main goal was to "reform" immigration by limiting it and imposing stricter citizenship laws, such as a twenty-one year residency requirement for U.S. citizenship (Anbinder, 1997). The demographics of the Know Nothing party reveal some of the causes of anti-Catholicism, as native-born, working-class, young men composed most of the group. These men most often experienced fierce job competition with Catholic immigrants, and blamed their economic instability on these foreigners (Holt, 1973). Looking for a way to channel their anti-foreign angst,

many of these lower-class men became increasingly impatient with the traditional politics of their time, which shied away from blatant anti-Catholicism, and joined the unconventional Know Nothing party (Holt, 1973). However, the Know Nothings also had the support of several prominent politicians, including Ulysses S. Grant, who temporarily joined the party in the 1850s (Anbinder, 1997). Grant's nativist political outlook is reflected in a key component of his presidential agenda: solving the "School Question" of the mid-1800s in Protestants' favor (Anbinder, 1997, p. 132).

The most significant disagreement between nineteenth century Protestants and Catholics was this school question, which concerned the role of religion in the nation's recently developed public school system. National identity was tied to public education, since schools not only educated children, but also taught them how to be citizens. Thus, schools were heavily associated with patriotism, and teachers had a crucial role in guiding the transition of the nation's children to democratic citizens. Catholic nuns who taught in public schools were often accused of not adequately representing normal American life because of their religious clothing. Some critics went as far as accusing nuns of undermining schools' mission of teaching democratic values, citing the nuns' veils, which represented the privacy and separateness of their lives, as clashing with the nation's normal identity of the American female, who married and raised children (Holscher, 2012).

Though religious clothing in public schools caused considerable dispute, use of the Protestant Bible, "the symbol of Protestant identification with Americanism" (Lannie, 1970, p. 520), created the greatest amount of tension between Catholics and Protestants in the 1800s. Though both sides had much in common--that is, both promoted the teaching of Christian values—the conflict emerged out of different opinions as to how these values should be taught. Interestingly, most Catholics did not oppose reading of Protestant Bibles in schools, and only asked that their children be exempt from it. However, politicians took this opposition to the extreme, and because the nation associated itself so intimately with Protestantism, perceived any opposition to the teaching of Protestant values as an attack on the nation itself. The overreaction to Catholics'