0. Untitled introduction
   A. Comparative political party systems at the national level
      1. One-party – Mexico for a long period; U.S. during Era of Good Feeling
      2. Two-party with minor parties & independent candidates – U.S. & U.K.
      3. Multi-party – much of the rest of the world’s representative democracies
   B. Comparative political party systems at the state level in the U.S.

I. The national party system
   A. Competitiveness at the national level, 1860-2004
      1. Presidential elections
         a. Great variation by era
            (1) 1860-1892:
               (a) The only 2 Republican landslides (victory margin > 10 %) came during the Civil War and Reconstruction – 1864 & ’72
               (b) After the end of Reconstruction in 1876 all 5 were competitive (victory margin < 10 %);
            (2) 1896-1928: most (5/9) were Republican landslides – 1904, ’08, ’20, ’24, ’28
            (3) 1932-1964: most were landslides (5/9)
               (a) 3 Democratic – 1932, ’36, ’64
               (b) 2 Republican – 1952 & ’56 – but unlike FDR, Ike didn’t have strong coattails
            (4) 1968-2000: most were competitive (7/9) – 2 were Republican landslides ’72, ’84
            (5) 2004: smallest victory margin by an incumbent president
         b. Some of closest in history have come in post-WWII era: 1960, 2000, 2004
         c. The last presidential-election landslide was in 1984
         d. Great variation by region
      2. House elections
         a. Do not always reflect presidential outcomes
         b. Usually more competitive (nationwide) than presidential outcomes
         c. Increasingly less competitive in individual races because of rise of safe seats through redistricting
         d. Great variation by region

II. The fifty American party systems
   A. Measuring state party competition
      1. Measure: Ranney index
      2. Findings
         a. 1945-1997
            (1) More states lean Democratic
            (2) More polarization – several one-party states for both parties – southern Democrats & northeastern & midwestern Republicans
         b. 1999-2003
            (1) More states lean Republican – especially since 1994 election
            (2) Less polarization – no one-party states
   B. Limits on competitiveness – incumbency in House races
      1. More than 3/4s of House seats are “safe” (victory margin ≥ 60 %)
      2. This trend is growing with many safe seats uncontested
      3. Advantages of incumbency:
         a. Name/media recognition
         b. Casework
         c. Fund raising
   C. Other reasons for declining competitiveness
      1. Use of computers in redistricting
      2. Residential mobility leading to more homogeneous district populations – “voluntary political segregation”
      3. Consequence of less competitiveness in House races – less responsiveness to disadvantaged voters
III. What causes a two-party system
   A. Institutional forces
      1. Type of elections (Maurice Duverger)  
         a. Single-member districts w/ plurality winners --> two-party systems
         b. Multi-member districts w/ proportional winners --> multi-party systems
      2. Type of governments
         a. Presidential (directly elected chief executive)
         b. Parliamentary (legislative-elected chief executive)
      3. Direct primary in one-party regions (Leon Epstein)
      4. Co-optation and absorption of protest movements by open parties
   B. Social consensus theories
      1. Duality of interests (V. O. Key, Jr.): [coast v. frontier; free v. slave; urban v. rural; have v. have-not] leads to a 2-party format
      2. Social/economic/geographic mobility (Frederick Jackson Turner) provides a safety valve
      3. Social pluralism v. feudal class system (James Madison) supports bargaining and compromise
      4. Democratic child rearing (Theodor Adorno) leads to democratic personalities
   C. Party self-protection: in controlling redistricting, ballot access, and campaign finance

IV. Exceptions to the two-party pattern
   A. Nonpartisan elections
      1. Where and when: since Progressive Era
         a. Some local elections
         b. Nebraska state elections
      2. Consequences
         a. Increase Republican and incumbent success
         b. Reduce turnout
   B. Pockets of one-party monopoly – local and regional
   C. Third parties  
      Box, p. 39; T 2.2, p. 38
      1. Differences in
         a. Impact
            (1) Seven carried at least one state
               a. 1832: Wirt, Anti-Masonic
               b. 1856: Fillmore, American (Know-Nothing)
               c. 1892: Weaver, People's (Populist)
               d. 1912: T. Roosevelt, Progressive (Bull Moose) – only one to run ahead of one of the major party candidates in either popular or electoral votes
               e. 1924: LaFollette, Progressive
               f. 1948: Thurmond, State's Rights (Dixiecrat)
               g. 1968: G. Wallace, American Independent
            (2) Won at least 10 percent of popular vote
               a. 1856: American (Know-Nothing) -- 22%
               b. 1912: Progressive (Bull Moose) -- 27%
               c. 1924: Progressive -- 17%
               d. 1968: American Independent -- 14%
               e. 1992: Perot -- 19% (1996 = 8%)
      2. Types
         a. Spoiler: Nader's vote total exceeded Bush's margin over Gore in Florida in 2000
         b. Single-issue: slavery – Liberty & Free Soil; Prohibition; Right to Life
         c. Ideological: Communist; Libertarian
         d. Economic/social reform: Greenback; Granger; Populist; Progressive
         e. Splinter: Gold Democrats; Bull Moose Progressives; Dixiecrats
   D. The rise of independent candidates
      1. 1992: Perot
      2. 2004: Nader

V. Will the two-party system continue?
   A. Yes, it is secure in the U.S.  
      F 22, p. 43
   B. Major-party competitiveness
      1. Increasing competitiveness at the national level
         a. Presidential contests
         b. Congressional seat totals
      2. Decreasing competitiveness in individual congressional and state races in many parts of the nation