

Status Terminology and the Social  
Structure of North American Indians

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## "The Classification of Corporate Unilinear Descent Groups"

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The criteria of corporate unilinear descent groups:

1. unilineality
2. corporation
3. Descent (a) demonstrated lineage  
(b) stipulated clans
4. ranking
5. stratification

1. OK

2. "A group is corporate if it maintains continuity of possession to an estate which consists of things, persons, or both."

3. a. The genealogical basis of all relationships within the group is specified explicit i.e. connecting links between tertiary or more distant kin are known and can be identified.

3b. Genealogical basis is implicit ... connecting links are assumed to have existed but are not identified, relationship being a categorical and not a genealogical function.

4. Ranking exists when the following conditions are simultaneously present: (a) there is a social limitation of the number of positions of high prestige, so that at any given time it is probable that there are more qualified persons than positions (b) the principles upon which statuses of high prestige are assigned to individuals are based upon criteria other than sex, age, and ephemeral personal attributes; though these criteria generally continue to operate in a supplementary way; (c) the resultant hierarchy of statuses is objective fact.

5. A group is stratified when its adult members of the same sex enjoy differential rights of access to strategic resources (those necessary to maintain subsistence).



## Basic Types of Corporate Unilinear Descent Groups

Ranking	Stratification	Demonstrated Descent	Group
-	-	-	Egalitarian Clan
+	-	-	Ranking clan
-	+	-	Stratified clan
+	+	-	Ranking and stratified clan
-	-	+	Egalitarian lineage
+	-	+	Ranking lineage
-	+	+	Stratified lineage
+	+	+	Ranking and stratified lineage
+	+	+	

Isimshan :

"Phratry" is not "corporate"

"clan" " " "

"house" is a ranking, (stratified?), lineage.