Kinship
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- Culturally defined relationship established by blood ties or marriage
- Related by blood = Consanguineal
- Related by marriage = Affinal
- Kinship System includes all relatives that link people through rights and obligations
Functions of Kinship

- Continuity between generations
- Transition of property and social position
  - Inheritance = transfer of property
  - Succession = transfer of social position
- Group for dependence
Descent

- Culturally defined!
- Affiliation with one or both parents

Importance
- Organization of domestic life
- Enculturation of children
- Transfer of property
- Spreading of religion
- Settle disputes
- Political Organization
- Warfare
Types of Descent

- **Unilineal** - membership in a descent group is based on either the father’s or mother’s line
  - Patrilineal - father’s line - a person of kin is related through males
  - Matrilineal - mother’s line - a person of kin is related through females
- **Bilateral** - individuals are equally members of their fathers’ and mothers’ descent groups
Unilineal Descent

- Lineage - group of kin who trace descent from a common ancestor
  - Patrilineages
  - Matrilineages
  - [Double Descent]
- Clan - descent group with a common ancestor that cannot be traced
- Phratry - descent groups made up of clans
- Totem - an animal, plant, or other natural aspect that has a close tie with members of a group
Kinship Diagrams
Matrilineal Descent

Example - Hopi of Southwest US
Patrilineal Descent

Example: Nuer of Sudan
Nonunilineal Kinship Systems

- [Cognatic – equal claims from mother’s and father’s side]
- Kindred – network of relations made up of all the people related to a specific individual
  - Not a group, a network
  - Everyone has different groups (except siblings)
- Bilateral v. Ambilineal [individual chooses]
Classification

“One of the most important regulators of behavior in most societies”

Classified by...
- Generation – ascends and descends from ego
- Relative Age
- Lineal [blood relations linked through descent ~ mother-ego-daughter]
- Collateral [descendants from a common ancestor ~ siblings and cousins]
Classification (cont.)

Classified by…

- Gender
- Consanguineal v. Affinal
- Side of the Family – bifurcation
- Sex of Linking Relative
  - Parallel Cousins [same sex sibling – mother’s sister’s children]
  - Cross Cousins [opposite sex sibling – mother’s brother’s children]
Looking at Cultures

- Hawaiian
- Eskimo
- Iroquois
- Omaha
- Crow
- Sudanese

183-185 in your book