

A distinction is to be made between the "defining characteristic" of a society and the society itself, as an enduring, ordered sequence of events or "states." "Society" is a more exact term than "sequence," because identifying a society does not depend upon identifying any of its particular members. A society is not simply an extensional class of events in a certain order. What identifies it as such is not its members, but the characteristic shared among them as members that is taken to define the society.

5 February 1998