

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES

Communism: An economic or political system based on the sharing of all work and property by the whole community and of communal ownership of all property.

Socialism: A system based on public ownership of the means of production and distribution of wealth by collectively controlling the means of production (industry).

Conservatism is a major political philosophy supporting traditional values or an established social order; advocating the preservation of the best in society and opposing radical changes.

Liberalism is an ideology which strives to maximize individual liberty through rights under law: favours progress and reform; an economic theory advocating free competition and a self-regulating market.

Fascism is a movement emphasizing national and racial superiority and a centralized, autocratic government (stringent social and economic control) headed by a dictator who allows no opposition, promoting an aggressive nationalism and often racism.

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

Totalitarianism -a form of government in which the political authority exercises absolute and centralized control over all aspects of life (eg. Nazi Germany, Communist China); a centralized government that does not tolerate parties of differing opinion and that exercises dictatorial control over many aspects of life.

Democracy -government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives (eg. Canada, Japan); government by the people or by their elected representatives; the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who can elect people to represent them.

“-ISMS”

- Socialism:** You have two cows. Give one cow to your neighbour.
- Communism:** You have two cows. Give both cows to the government and they may give you some of the milk.
- Fascism:** You have two cows. You give all of the milk to the government, and the government sells it.
- Nazism:** You have two cows. The government shoots you and takes both cows.
- Anarchism:** You have two cows. Keep both of the cows, shoot the government agent, and steal another cow.
- Capitalism:** You have two cows. Sell one cow and buy a bull.
- Surrealism:** You have two giraffes. The government makes you take harmonica lessons. 😊
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Look up the definitions for socialism and communism.

Do the “fun” definitions above help you to better understand the concepts?

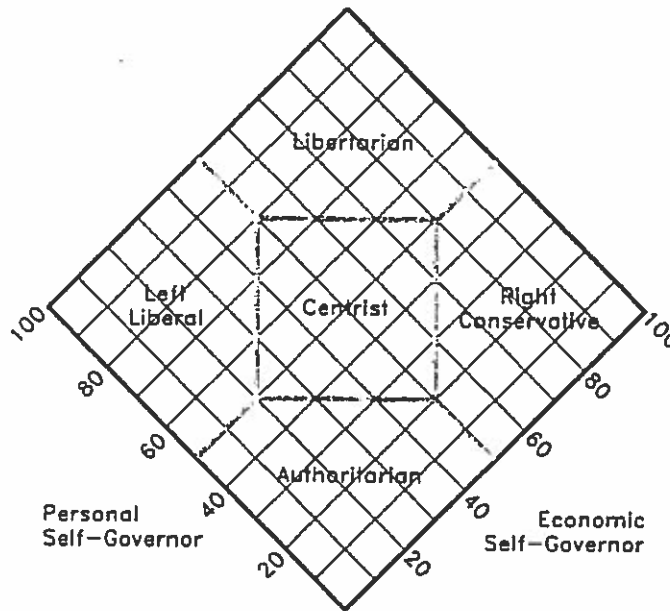
Why/why not?

Examine the following 10 statements.
Respond with Y if you agree, M for maybe or sometimes, and N if you disagree.

Personal Issues	Y	M	N
Military service should be voluntary (no draft).			
Government should not control radio, TV, the press, or the Internet.			
Repeal regulations on sex for consenting adults.			
Drug laws do more harm than good. Repeal them.			
Let peaceful people cross borders freely.			

Economic Issues	Y	M	N
Businesses and farms should operate without government subsidies.			
People are better off with free trade than with tariffs.			
Minimum wage laws cause unemployment. Repeal them.			
End taxes. Pay for services with user fees.			
All foreign aid should be privately funded.			

For the personal issues, figure 20 points for each Y answer, 10 points for each M, and 0 points for each N.
Figure a separate score for the economic issues (20 for each Y, 10 for each M and 0 for each N).
Using your two scores as indications of your level of self-government in personal and economic issues, find your location in the political grid below.



Centrists favor selective government intervention and emphasize practical solutions to current problems. They tend to keep an open mind on new issues. Many centrists feel that government serves as a check on excessive liberty.

Right-conservatives prefer self-government on economic issues, but want official standards in personal matters. They want the government to defend the community from threats to its moral fiber.

Libertarians are self-governors in both personal and economic matters. They believe government's only purpose is to protect people from coercion and violence. They value individual responsibility, and tolerate economic and social diversity.

Authoritarians want government to advance society and individuals through expert central planning. They often doubt whether self-government is practical. Left-authoritarians are also called socialists, while fascists are right-authoritarians.

Left-Liberals prefer self-government in personal matters and central decision-making on economics. They want government to serve the disadvantaged in the name of fairness. Leftists tolerate social diversity, but work for economic equality.

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The Political Spectrum Activity

Read each of the statements below. Plot the number of each statement on the political spectrum line where it is best suited. Refer to the Political Spectrum Chart to help you.



1. A person who believes that convicted murderers should be hanged.
2. A person who believes that the school strap should be abolished.
3. A person who is racist.
4. A person who believes in a higher minimum wage.
5. A person who believes that the police should be able to wiretap telephones.
6. A person who believes that Canada should restrict immigration.
7. A person who believes that the Canadian military should acquire more sophisticated weaponry.
8. A person who believes that Canada should send aid to Third World countries.
9. A person who believes that women should stay home and be mothers.
10. A person who believes that First Nations should have self-government.
11. A person who believes that all major industries should be owned by the state.