

## Isms lead to misinterpretations of moderate concepts

### “Anarchism”

is a contradiction in terms because an anarchist has to hide her activities from the public, however the ism-ending forces her to take a public stance concerning her anarchist attitude.

### “Skepticism”

is a contradiction in terms because a skeptic refuses to take up a position, however the ism-ending forces her to take a stance.

### “Relativism”

is a contradiction in terms because a person holding a relative point of view, i.e. a view she does not want to generalize (expressing it by saying “in my point of view”), however the ism-ending forces her to generalize it.

### Tasks:

- Continue this game! Why are “individualism” and “solipsism” contradictions in terms?
- Can you find more ism-terms that are contradictions in terms?
- What do you have to look for when looking for isms that are contradictions in terms? Hint: ism-endings raise certain claims that some terms are not able to fulfil. What claims are these?

### Topic for discussion:

- How does general use of isms change discussions between human beings? Are we still able to express all our opinions when we are forced to express them in the form of isms?

### Practical philosophical game (to be played in the classroom):

- Two pupils discuss a rather private topic in front of the other pupils. Despite the private character of their arguments they have to shout them as loudly as they can. How do they feel afterwards? How do the listeners feel? (Remark: I am not serious about this game. However, you can imagine to play it.)

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**Talk:** Helmut Hofbauer: „Isms lead to misinterpretations of moderate concepts and frame debates“, pdf document containing the text of the talk in the form of notes.