

Response to the Diocese of the Anglican Diocese of the Living Word: The False Dilemma Fallacy and the Catholic Argument Against Women's Ordination



The Logical Fallacy of the False Dilemma has a number of other names: the false dichotomy fallacy, the either-or-fallacy, the fallacy of false alternatives, the fallacy of exhaustive hypotheses. The fallacy presumes that a particular situation or problem has only two exhaustive solutions or possible options, and that one must choose between them. The fallacy is endemic to political discussion: Either build a wall or be in favor of open borders! Allow no restrictions on the ownership of firearms or risk imminent death by home invasion, mass shooters, or government tyranny! If you don't approve of gay marriage, you're homophobic! If you allow "special rights" for gays, you'll destroy the traditional family!

In theology, the fallacy of the false dichotomy has often been

accompanied by conflation. In the case of the choice between the three options of historic Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, or Liberal Protestantism, advocates of each position have reduced the theological alternatives to only two options. For all his brilliance otherwise, Karl Barth infamously claimed that "natural theology" was the inevitable link between Roman Catholicism and liberal Protestantism, and that "natural theology" eventually led to the Third Reich. (Embrace the Reformation and reject "natural theology" or be a Nazi!) John Henry Newman claimed that "private judgment" was the common link between Protestantism and liberal theology, and that without a magisterium, one inevitably led to the other. (Accept the papacy or end up with subjectivity uncertainty!) In book after book, liberal Episcopal Bishop John Spong has repeatedly claimed that "fundamentalism" is the common link between historic Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. (Embrace liberal Protestantism or be a Fundamentalist!)

In the previous essay, I pointed out that the writers who wrote the *Response* endorsed a complementarian hermeneutic. In this essay, I will make the case that they also engage in the fallacy of the false dichotomy, and that this is illustrated by repeated conflation of alternative positions concerning women's ordination.

In our original essay, Bishop Grant LeMarquand and myself distinguished between four positions concerning women's ordination: (1) the historic position based on an ontology of inequality between men and women, and three contemporary positions that departed from the traditional position in embracing women's equality: (2) egalitarianism, (3) Evangelical complementarianism, and (4) Roman Catholic sacramentalism.

We pointed out that all three of the contemporary positions depart from the historic position insofar as all three endorse equality between men and women; the second position also

departs insofar as it approves of women's ordination. The third and fourth positions do not ordain women, but they still depart from the traditional position insofar as they affirm ontological equality of the sexes. The two positions also are in tension with one another insofar as they reject women's ordination for different reasons: Evangelical complementarians continue to claim hierarchy and authority as the fundamental obstacles to women's ordination but not sacramental representation, while Catholics appeal to sacramental theology instead – a female priest cannot represent a male Christ – but do not endorse a fundamental hierarchy of authority between the sexes.

The *Response* conflated the original four positions by reducing them to two. The *Responders* insisted that positions (3) and (4) are *not* new positions because the historic reason for opposition to women's ordination was *not* based on inequality, and that (3) and (4) are really different versions of the same (complementarian) position. According to the *The Reponse*, the only new position is position (2), which is a departure from the historic position of the church, and which the *Responders* identified with the affirmation of a (post-modern) subjectivist epistemology and a rejection of the authority of Scripture, as well as a functionalist and individualist position on ordination. The *Response* thus responded to our claims by conflating positions (1), (3), and (4), and offering their complementarian position as the only viable alternative to position (2), which they conflated with post-modernism. Thus the stark alternative of the *Response*: (1) Accept the authority of Scripture, accept complementarianism as the correct interpretation of Scripture and the historic position of the church, and reject women's ordination, or else: (2) Endorse women's ordination, reject the authority of Scripture and church tradition, and be a post-modern individualist subjectivist!

In a previous essay, I made the case that the *Response* was

mistaken in its claim that the traditional position was not based on the ontological inequality of women. It was. In this essay I will argue that the *Response* is equally mistaken in reducing the Catholic sacramental position to the complementarian position. In a future essay I will argue that the *Response* makes an even more radical error in reducing our own position to that of post-modernism subjectivist individualism.

The Response Gets the Catholic Position Wrong

In an essay on the "Tradition Challenge," I identified the traditional argument against women's ordination as follows:

(A) Women are less intelligent, more emotionally unstable, and more subject to temptation than men.

(B) Ordination necessitates exercising authority over others, particularly teaching and speaking in an authoritative manner. Women cannot be ordained because they are necessarily subordinate to men, and therefore cannot exercise authority in this manner.

(C) There is a direct correlation between (A) and (B). Because of ontological deficiency (A), women cannot exercise authority over or teach men (B), and so cannot be ordained (C).

The Complementarian position departs from the traditional position insofar as it affirms:

(A1) Women share an equal intellectual, moral, and spiritual capacity with men. They are not less intelligent, emotionally unstable, or more subject to temptation than men.

(B) Still affirmed.

(C1) Although (A1), women still cannot be ordained because God has created different "gender roles" rooted in "male headship."

The Catholic position departs from the traditional position insofar as it affirms:

(A1) Affirmed.

(B1) The argument from authority no longer applies. Women can exercise any role of teaching, exercising authority, and speaking, and even preaching within the church. (There are no “gender roles” rooted in “headship.”) The distinct function of ordination has to do with presiding at the sacraments. The presiding minister (the priest) represents Jesus Christ, that is, acts in the “person of Christ” (*in persona Christi*) when presiding at the sacraments. Because Jesus Christ is a male, only a male priest can represent a male Christ.

(C2) Because women do not resemble a male Christ, women cannot be ordained.

The above should make clear that both the Complementarian and Catholic positions are departures from the historic position, but also that they are odds with one another. The issues of hierarchy and authority that are so important to the Complementarian position do not appear in the Catholic position. The argument that the priest must resemble a male Christ in order to act *in persona Christi* does not appear in the Complementarian position.

However, in a manner similar to their challenge of the historic position, the *Response* challenged our summary of the Catholic position, and attempted to conflate it with the Complementarian position:

The authors [LeMarquand and Witt] especially misrepresent the Catholic position in their attempt to characterize it as novel. First, they overstate the contrast with the Protestant position, insisting that Catholics are not concerned with the same matters of authority and teaching. . . . As has already been demonstrated, the authors seriously misrepresent the Catholic argument against the ordination of women. . . . The

same concerns about pastoral and teaching authority that we see in Protestant practice are also shared in Roman Catholic practice. . . . the most important agreement of all is common to both. Women should not be ordained because the Bible teaches that women should not be ordained.

In what follows, I will show that our assessment of the Catholic position is correct, and that the *Response* position gets it wrong. First, however, I will show how they got it wrong.

How the Response Got the Catholic Position Wrong

As I demonstrated in my discussion of the *Response's* attempt to claim identity with the traditional argument against women's ordination, the authors had to admit that the tradition really does claim that women are less intelligent than men, more susceptible to temptation, and emotionally unstable. Since they were not able to deny this, the *Responders* attempted to distinguish between those parts of the tradition with which they disagreed and of which they disapproved (the inferiority of women), and those parts of which they approved because they were perceived as in agreement with the complementarian position (women should not be ordained combined with an appeal to a common proof-text), claiming that the disagreements are irrelevant to the traditional position, and only the agreements really matter. The problem with this attempt (as I demonstrated) is that the area of disagreement was actually crucial to the traditional position, while the agreements were incidental, and, on closer examination of how the tradition appealed to the common proof-texts as warrants were not actually agreements after all.

The authors of the *Response* use the same approach to conflate the Catholic position with the Complementarian position. They cannot deny the presence of sacramental representation (only a male priest can act *in persona Christi*) in the Catholic

argument, but *they do not actually agree with this position!* At one point, they try to downplay the disagreement: "It is true that Protestants prioritize issues of authority, but it is incorrect to claim that Protestants are unconcerned about sacramental theology and its implications . . . questions of how the sacraments should be administered in a biblical manner are very important concerns for such Protestants."

Whether Protestants are "concerned" about sacraments is not the point, however. As we wrote in our initial essay, "There are no traditional arguments against the ordination of women based on the inability of women to represent a male Christ when presiding at the Eucharist"; nor would this be the argument raised by those Protestants who are "concerned" about sacramental theology. The authors of the *Response* are clear that they themselves do not believe that the celebrant of the Eucharist represents a male Christ. They state: "Protestants reject the sacerdotal notions of the priesthood and deny that the presbyter acts *in persona Christi*."

The authors of the *Response* thus reject the main Catholic argument against the ordination of women! How then are they able to claim an essential agreement with the Catholic position?

First, as they did with their discussion of the traditional argument against women's ordination (inferiority), they make the claim that the *in persona Christi* sacramental argument is not actually central to the Catholic position: "[I]t is questionable whether or not the 'in persona Christ' argument is even treated as the most fundamental argument against the ordination of women in Catholic theology and practice. . . . the 'in persona Christi' argument is not the only argument, and is, arguably, not even the key Catholic argument."

Second, as they did with their discussion of the traditional patristic and medieval position, they point to Catholic appeals to Scripture and tradition and claim that these

represent *different* and *distinct* arguments against women's ordination. They note that "Catholics share many of the same objections raised by Protestants on exegetical grounds." For example, *Inter Insigniores* cites 1 Cor. 14:34-35 and 1 Tim. 2:12, the Complementarians' favorite proof-texts. They note that the Catholic position prioritizes "the historical argument that Jesus only called men to exercise sacramental *authority*." (My emphasis; note that the *Response* plays the focus of sacramental ministry on "authority"!)

Third, they try to conflate the Catholic and Complementarian positions by claiming that the real logic behind the Catholic position has to do with male authority over women: ". . . they overstate the contrast with the Protestant position, insisting that Catholics are not concerned with the same matters of authority and teaching. . . . The authors also inaccurately characterize the Catholic position as being relatively unconcerned about authority and teaching. That is not the case . . . The same concerns about pastoral and teaching authority that we see in Protestant practice [are] also shared in Roman Catholic practice."

It is perhaps not surprising that the writers of the *Response* would not be familiar with or sympathetic to Catholic position. Also, as noted above, the fallacy of false alternatives would tempt the writers to conflate the Catholic position with their own in order to preserve the fundamental either-or dichotomy. If there are only two positions in response to the question of women's ordination, and one position agrees with Scripture and church tradition, and is embraced by both Protestants and Catholics, and the other position rejects the "plain teaching of the Bible," the universal tradition of the church, and really gets its marching orders from secular post-modernism, the choice between the two alternatives is self-evident.

Unfortunately the writers of the *Response* are mistaken in all three of their claims as can be shown by an examination of key

Catholic texts on the subject.

Is the *in persona Christi* argument central to the Catholic position?

The *in persona Christi* argument is not only central to the anti-ordination Catholic position, it is the key argument. *Inter Insigniores*, the first Catholic document to address the question at length, breaks down into two clear sections. The first part of the document (sections 1-4) provides biblical and historical background leading up to the central theological claim. These constitute what I referred to in my previous essay on the traditional position as “warrants.” The actual theological claim comes in section 5: “The Church’s constant teaching, repeated and clarified by the Second Vatican Council and again recalled by the 1971 Synod of Bishops and by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in its Declaration of 24th. June 1973, declares that the bishop or the priest in the exercise of his ministry, does not act in his own name, *in persona propria*: he represents Christ . . . the priest, who alone has the power to perform it, then acts not only through the effective power conferred on him by Christ, but *in persona Christi*, taking the role of Christ, to the point of being his very image, when he pronounces the words of consecration.”

In *Mulieris Dignitatem* 26, Pope John Paul II wrote:

It is the Eucharist above all that expresses the redemptive act of Christ the Bridegroom towards the Church the Bride. This is clear and unambiguous when the sacramental ministry of the Eucharist, in which the priest acts “in persona Christi,” is performed by a man. This explanation confirms the teaching of the Declaration Inter Insigniores, published at the behest of Paul VI in response to the question concerning the admission of women to the ministerial priesthood.

As I noted in a previous essay, a mere appeal to Scripture or tradition alone will not resolve the question of women's ordination. One has to ask the "Why" question. Sara Butler, author of the definitive text on *The Catholic Priesthood and Women: A Guide to the Teaching of the Church* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2007) writes: "The answer to the question 'Why?' is bound up with the belief that Holy Orders is a sacrament instituted by Christ, that this intention for the priesthood is shown by way of the mission he gave to the Twelve, and that this office is passed on in apostolic succession" (3). She clarifies the answer to the question "Why?": "Christ chose men as his apostles because it is fitting for a man to take his part, the part of the Bridegroom, in the celebration of the Eucharist, the New Covenant into which he enters with his Bride, the Church" (83). (My emphasis)

Butler summarizes the Catholic position concisely: "The 'theological argument' advanced by the magisterium takes its force from the conviction that the priest *is an image of Christ* face to face with the Church, and this, preeminently in the celebration of the Eucharist, the sacrifice of the New Covenant" (90) (My emphasis). Note that "take his part" and "is an image of Christ" in the above quotations refer to the priest representing Christ the bridegroom by acting *in persona Christi*.

The *in persona Christi* argument is thus not only central to the Catholic position. It is the *fundamental* theological reason why Catholic opponents of women's ordination claim that women cannot be ordained. In celebrating the Eucharist, a male priest represents a male Christ by acting *in persona Christi*.

Do Catholic appeals to Scripture and tradition represent separate or additional arguments?

As noted in a previous essay, the claim that appeals to Scripture or to the tradition of the church are separate or

additional arguments (also used in the *Response's* discussion of the traditional position) misses the crucial difference between a warrant and a theological position. Yes, the Catholic position prioritizes "the historical argument that Jesus only called men to exercise sacramental authority." This is not, however, a separate and distinct argument from the *in persona Christi* argument, but the biblical and historical warrant used to justify that argument. This becomes especially clear in John Paul II's *Mulieris Dignitatem*. First, Christ called only male apostles: "Against the broad background of the 'great mystery' expressed in the spousal relationship between Christ and the Church, it is possible to understand adequately the calling of the 'Twelve.' In calling only men as his Apostles, Christ acted in a completely free and sovereign manner." Second, there is a direct connection between the office of apostle and the celebration of the Eucharist: "Since Christ, in instituting the Eucharist, linked it in such an explicit way to the priestly service of the Apostles, it is legitimate to conclude that he thereby wished to express the relationship between man and woman, between what is 'feminine' and what is 'masculine.'" Third, because the apostles were male, the priest must be male as well in order to represent Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist: "This is clear and unambiguous when the sacramental ministry of the Eucharist, in which the priest acts 'in persona Christi,' is performed by a man."

As Butler writes: "[T]he Church's traditional doctrine regarding Holy Orders . . . has its origin in *Christ's gift to the Twelve* and is handed on by apostolic succession . . . that the mission entrusted to the ordained includes that of *representing the Lord*" (14). (my emphasis)

The argument from the masculinity of the twelve apostles is not then a distinct argument from the *in persona Christi* argument. For the Catholic position, the first is warrant, the second is theological position, and the two are inseparably

linked.

Does the Catholic position agree with Complementarianism in affirming a hierarchical relationship between men and women rooted in authority?

The *Response* claims that the Catholic position agrees with complementarianism based on (1) an appeal to the favorite complementarian proof-text (1 Tim. 2:12) in *Inter Insigniores*, and (2) on two examples from canon law: a priest must be appointed to provide pastoral care of a church without a pastor. Deacons must be male although deacons do not celebrate the Eucharist.

The first objection again misses the crucial distinction between warrant and position. *Inter Insigniores* does have single mention of 1 Tim. 2:12, which states the “prohibition solely concerns the official function of teaching in the Christian assembly.” As stated above, however, this occurs in the first part of the document that provides “warrant,” not reason. The crucial theological sections of the document (5 & 6) focus exclusively on sacramental theology, and nowhere in this section is there a mention either of a hierarchy of men over women or of an authority of men over women. The word “authority” appears only three times in the document, only two of which are relevant. The first states that the sacrament of orders is not comparable to “modes of authority found in the States.” A footnote quotes Vatican II to state that priests “[E]xercising within the limits of their authority the function of Christ as Shepherd and Head . . . the minister of the altar represents the person of Christ as the Head, offering in the name of all his members.” The focus here is again the *in persona Christi* argument that the priest represents Christ in celebrating the Eucharist. It does not state that the priest’s authority is tied to a hierarchical authority of men over women. (The word “hierarchy” appears not even once in the document. Compare this to the number of references to “authority” and “hierarchy” in the *Response*.)

More revealing of the Catholic position is John Paul II's *Mulieris Dignitatem*, which endorses an egalitarian interpretation of the passages central to the complementarian case. The Pope points out that the woman's being taken from the side of the man (Gen. 2:18-25) points to "essential equality of man and woman from the point of view of their humanity." The woman is a "helper fit for the man" as a "mutual 'help,'" to which both are called. The Pope interprets Gen. 3: 16 ("Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you") as a "break" of original unity," which "indicates the disturbance and loss of the stability of that fundamental equality which the man and the woman possess in the 'unity of the two'," and a "violation" of an original "equality." In other words, the subordination of the woman to the man is viewed not as part of the creation order, but a consequence of original sin.

John Paul II interprets the commands for wives to submit to their husbands in Eph. 5:22 in light of 5:21 to refer to a "mutual submission out of reverence for Christ . . . However, whereas in the relationship between Christ and the Church the subjection is only on the part of the Church, in the relationship between husband and wife the "subjection" is not one-sided but mutual."

It is in the next few paragraphs that John Paul II then summarizes the Catholic argument for the ordination of men in terms of the sacramental *in persona Christi* argument. The notion of an authority of men over women appears nowhere in the argument, and would indeed violate the earlier statements about the subordination of women to men being a consequence of the fall and of "mutual submission" of husband and wife in marriage. Note that the Pope says that the relationship of Christ and the church is not entirely parallel to the relationship between husband and wife because that "subjection is only on the part of the Church," but subjection between husband and wife is "mutual."

Butler actually uses the expression “egalitarian understanding of marriage” to describe the current Catholic position. She states that the “the Pauline teaching of male headship and female subordination and New Testament texts such as Ephesians 5:21-23 “had to be reconsidered” (34). Referring to John Paul II’s discussion of Ephesians 5, she writes: “In Christ, the submission is not unilateral but mutual” (37).

Butler’s book makes clear that the current Catholic position has nothing to do with a hierarchy of men over women: “Women, as members of the Christian faithful, have acquired new opportunities to exercise leadership; they have access to virtually the same roles as non-ordained men, and on the same basis” (43). She acknowledges that “until quite recently Catholic theologians generally *did* explain the Church’s practice, at least in part, by appealing to the differences and the ‘hierarchical’ ordering of the sexes,” and that they appealed to the Pauline texts 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Tim. 2:12 (46). Butler refers to Aquinas’s position based on his interpretation of 1 Tim. 2:12, stating “Because the contemporary magisterium has abandoned the view that women are unilaterally subject to men, it obviously does not supply this as the reason women cannot be priests” (47) Concerning the new 1983 Code of Canon Law, she states, “For the most part, the new roles open to women after the Council are identical with the new roles open to non-ordained men . . .” (29) As a result of the revision of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, “women now have essentially the same juridical status as men in the Catholic Church . . . In fact, non-ordained women and men are now eligible to participate in diocesan synods . . . to serve as diocesan chancellors, professors of philosophy, theology, and canon law in seminaries . . . They can be deputed, in the case of genuine need and on a temporary basis, to supply certain tasks proper to the ordained such as preaching, administering Baptism, witnessing marriages, and assisting in the care of a parish” (31). The office of “Lay Ecclesial Minister” in the Roman Catholic Church performs many of the same functions that

ordained ministers would perform in Protestant Churches, and the majority of lay ecclesial ministers are women.

What then of the two restrictions mentioned in the *Response*? Theologically, given that deacons do not celebrate the Eucharist, there should be no reason in Roman Catholic theology that women could not be deacons. However, historically, the diaconate has always been a transitional stage to the presbyterate. Only in recent decades have married men who do not intend to advance to the priesthood been allowed to become deacons in the Roman Church. Significantly, Pope Francis has recently created a commission to study the question of the possibility of female deacons.

As to the Canon Law that stipulates that pastors of parishes must be priests, based on current Catholic theology of ordination this could *not be* because of a hierarchical understanding of *male* authority over women, since under the restriction, married *male* deacons cannot be pastors of parishes either. Clearly the restriction has to do with the centrality of the Eucharist in Catholic worship. Without a priest to celebrate the Eucharist, there would be no way to celebrate the central mystery of the Catholic liturgy. Anglican churches that ordain women would have the same canonical practice.

Do the Writers of the Response Actually Agree with the Catholic Position?

In light of the above, it should be clear that our own summary of the Catholic argument against women's ordination was correct, and that the writers of the *Response* were mistaken when they claimed that we "misrepresent the Catholic position" as "being relatively unconcerned about authority and teaching." If we were right, they claim, "a woman would be able to do everything a man can do, short of celebrating the Eucharist." But, as noted above, this is essentially what Sara Butler, the foremost advocate of the Catholic positions claims

to be the case: "For the most part, the new roles open to men after the Council are identical with the new roles open to non-ordained men" (29).

Moreover, the writers of the *Response* do not actually agree with the *central argument* of the Catholic position. Although the *in persona Christi* argument is the essential reason Roman Catholic opponents claim that women cannot be ordained, the writers of the *Response* reject a sacramental theology of the priest representing Christ as "sacerdotal."

The current Roman Catholic position on marriage and ministry is, in the words of Butler, "egalitarian." *Mulieris Dignitatem* states that the subordination of women is a consequence of original sin, that is, something to be overcome. To the contrary, the *Response* affirms the complementarian position that female subordination is a permanent "role" established in creation order. Pope John Paul II reads Ephesians 5 to be referring to a "mutual submission" of husband and wife, contrasting the one-sided submission of the Church to Christ with the mutual submission of husband and wife in marriage. The authors of the *Response* to the contrary see the parallel between Christ and the church and the husband and wife as *identical*: "Does Jesus submit to his Church? No. . . Does the Church submit to Jesus? Yes." The implied corollary: "Does the husband submit to his wife? No. Does the wife submit to her husband? Yes.

The initial claim of our essay was that there are actually four positions concerning women's ordination. The traditional argument against women's ordination was based on a notion of ontological inferiority: (A) above. Insofar as all current positions affirm the ontological equality of men and women and embrace (A1), all of the current positions are *new* positions. In addition, however, the *new* positions do not agree with one another; the Evangelical complementarian position endorses (A1),(B),(C1), while the Catholic position endorses (A1),(B1),C2). Thus, not only are the current arguments

against women's ordinations in conflict with the historical position insofar as they reject (A1), they are also in conflict with one another. The Catholic position rejects both (B) and (C1), while the Evangelical Complementarian position rejects (B1) and (C2). Both the Evangelical Complementarian Position and the Catholic Sacramentalist position are just as much innovations as the ordination of women that they oppose, but they disagree with each other as well.

Given what is clearly a discontinuity between the Complementarian position and not only the historic position, but also with the *new* Catholic position, why did the *Response* work so hard to erase the differences – to argue that traditional opposition to women's ordination was really not about the inferiority of women (it was) and that the current Catholic position in opposition to women is not primarily about sacramental representation (it is), but is really about the authority of men over women (it is not)? It seems clear that the primary factors here are not theological so much as rhetorical, and specifically tied to the fallacy of the false dilemma. If the complementarian position is simply *one* position among three contemporary alternatives (it is), if the complementarian position is in fundamental disagreement with the historical reason for ordaining women (it is), if complementarianism is just as much a novelty as is the argument in favor of ordaining women (it is), and if neither of the two contemporary arguments against ordaining women even agree with each other about their reasons for doing so (they don't), then where one comes down on the question of ordaining women is not so straightforward. One needs to engage in a genuine conversation. However, by conflating the three positions against ordaining women to a single position, by identifying that position with complementarianism, by characterizing the position in favor of ordaining women as the single *new* position, and then caricaturing that position as a rejection of the "plain teaching of the Bible," of reading 21st century notions of gender equality "into the Bible," and

of believing that an “authoritative interpretation” of texts is not possible, the *Response* is able to identify our own position with the epistemological uncertainties of post-modernism and, in their own words, “progressive theologians,” who “read “a dualistic, detrimentally hierarchical and patriarchal structure into the text.”

Rhetorically, the “fallacy of the false dilemma” lies close at hand. If, however, the choice is not between two false dilemmas, if neither the traditional position nor the Catholic position can be conflated with complementarianism, then perhaps neither can the argument for ordaining women be conflated with post-modern subjectivism after all. Perhaps there is an orthodox Evangelical Catholic argument for the ordination of women that is not a rejection of the “plain teaching of the Bible.” In a future essay, I will discuss an alternative to the false dilemma.