

### 3.6 Logical Fallacies: False Dilemma

*The scene is late afternoon in a doughnut shop. Zag and Zig sit at a table after school with a box of doughnuts between them. Their backpacks are open and resting on seats beside them, and both have notebooks out on the table. Zig is staring at his, a look of intense concentration on his face. Zag, holding up a jelly doughnut, sighs reverently. Zig continues to think...*

Zig: Hmmmmm... false dilemma... flawed logic... aagh, my head hurts –

Zag: *(adoringly, to the doughnut)* Hail to thee, Oh all-powerful, divine and deep-fried god of my taste-buds, oh wonderful digestive divinity. I worship your over-sweet and mystical awesomeness... *(noticing Zig is not paying attention)* Dude!

Zig: Wha—?

Zag: Are ya' with me, here?

Zig: With ya?

Zag: The Nutty Dough of the Jelly speaketh! And I heed the call!

Zig: And?

Zag: Jelly-Doughnut-ism dude, it's my new religion.

Zig: Yeah?

Zag: I'm a true believer, man; they're gonna save the world.

Zig: 'Sorry, dude. I'm stuck in Mr. Spooner's logical fallacy notes again:*(dramatically)* The false dilemma: the mistaken idea that because one statement is wrong, a second must be correct.

Zag: The false di-whatsis?

Zig: Dilemma. Dilemma. *(pause)* DI-LEM-MA!

Zag: *(hurt)* You don't have to shout, bud.

Zig: My bad. You were saying? *(pause)* Uh, before?

Zag: Oh! Yeah! The jelly doughnut, man! It's the shizz!

Zig: Huh?

Zag: Yeah. It has socio-LOG-ical power. No lie.



Zig: *(skeptical)* Okay, you'd better explain that one.

Zag: Well, remember what Mr. Spooner was saying about logic?

Zig: Some of it.

*(Pause: Zag looks at Zig)*

Zig: Okay, ... uh... not much of it. What're you talkin' about?

Zag: That the purpose of logic is to show that if one statement is true, then another statement is also true.

Zig: *(consulting notebook)* Uh, yeah, it's right here, next to the frappaccino stain in my notes.

Zag: Alrighty then. Check this logic: Statement one is that jelly doughnuts are popular. True?

Zig: Well, yeah, I'll go with you on that. And?

Zag: So, here is the big "therefore" statement: Either you like jelly doughnuts, or you won't have any friends! Logic-o-rama, no?

Zig: *(pondering)* Um...that does not compute, Master Luke.

Zag: Why not? It's perfect. This jelly doughnut inspired me. Mr. Spooner will eat it up. It'll be up on the board with the brown-nosers' stuff. It'll go down in history!

Zig: Look, Yoda, you don't make sense, because there are other possibilities – not just two.

Zag: How so?

Zig: Maybe you have other common interests with friends besides jelly doughnuts, or maybe your friends like you despite your obsession with J.D.'s, have other ... um ... hang-ups, uh ..., or ... what...? There could be other possibilities besides just the two.

Zag: 'Ya think?!

Zig: You can't say "either – or" when there many other choices besides just the two you mention! That's not logical.

Zag: Logical? I'm just trying to hang on to my friends, and make sense, at the same time! I like jelly doughnuts, so they should, too.

Zig: Why?

Zag: Since I, one important person, love jelly doughnuts, they should also be enamored of the sugary and useless comestible. Isn't that logical?

Zig: Nope. It sounds more like some kind of forced bad diet to me.

Zag: 'Kay, so it can't be true based on the two statements?

Zig: Right. Now let me concentrate. I'm still trying to get my doughnut-addled brain around the "false dilemma." What a concept.

Zag: *(again holding jelly doughnut aloft)* All praise to the great holy confection!

Zig: *(reading aloud)* ".the assumption that because a first statement is incorrect..."

Zag: *(eating)* Mmmmmmm...

Zig: "...a second statement must be true..."

*(Zag and Zig strive to look cool.)*

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