

What would Epicurus say about the fallacy of a "False Dilemma"?

Post by "Kalosyni" of August 23, 2025 at 11:41 AM

It often appears that discussions flow from an "either/or" standpoint. Recent discussion anti-natalist vs natalist had some aspects of an "either/or", but it seems that there have been other discussions with dichotomies (and do Cicero & Plutarch use this?)

Wikipedia says:

"A **false dilemma**, also referred to as **false dichotomy** or **false binary**, is an [informal fallacy](#) based on a premise that erroneously limits what options are available. The source of the fallacy lies not in an invalid form of inference but in a false premise. This premise has the form of a [disjunctive claim](#): it asserts that one among a number of alternatives must be true. This disjunction is problematic because it oversimplifies the choice by excluding viable alternatives, presenting the viewer with only two absolute choices when, in fact, there could be many." -- [Source](#)

Is there anything in the Letter to Pythocles that could be applied? Or what would Epicurus say?

Post by "Cassius" of August 23, 2025 at 3:00 PM

I'd say Epicurus identifies some very important situations where there are only two choices, so all binaries are not false:

- atoms and void
- pleasure and pain