The work and insights of the contemporary critical theorist, Jurgen Habermas, have been applied to fields as diverse as religious education (Groome, 1980), ethics (Lovat, 2004) and theology (Adams, 2006; Douglas, 2006). Apart from its many other utilities, Habermas’s work assists in responding to issues of difference between members of the purportedly same tradition and provides a modus operandi for modern people to participate in dialogue where there are rival views and dissonant voices (Adams, 2006: 1). In this paper, Habermas’s insights are
applied to theological debate specifically around Anglican eucharistic theology in order to facilitate a dialogue approach within the Anglican tradition, and potentially more broadly within and among the theologies of different religious traditions.

**Introduction: The Many Voices of Anglican Eucharistic Theology**

Cocksworth (1991) and Douglas (2006) argue that Anglican eucharistic theology is characterized by multiformity, that is, a multiplicity of views with many voices actually competing against each other. Some of these voices come from various church parties within Anglicanism, including Anglican Catholics (c.f. Macquarrie, 1997) and Anglican Evangelicals (c.f. Cocksworth, 1993). At times, these voices are so strident they claim more of the ‘truth’ for particular party traditions or interests than others (e.g. Silk, 1995/2002 as an Anglican Catholic, and Doyle, 1996 as an Anglican Evangelical). Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the Anglican Communion, has said “… it is true that witness to what is passionately believed to be the truth sometimes appears a higher value than unity.” (Williams, 2006: 2)

Others have observed that these dissociated voices may actually represent a struggle for political power on the part of their adherents, rather than being necessarily all about doctrine (c.f. Kaye, 2003). Williams (2006) has stated that “… what our Communion lacks is a set of adequately developed structures which is able to cope with the diversity of views that will inevitably arise in a world of rapid global communication and huge cultural variety.” (p. 3) In this context, Habermas’s insights hold out potential for finding the structures of which the Archbishop speaks, through what Habermas describes as different ‘ways of knowing’ (Habermas, 1971 and 1973) and a dialogue based on ‘communicative action’ (Habermas, 1984 and 1989). This potential may be useful to the Anglican Communion and its theological education and will be explored in this article.

**Habermasian ‘Ways of Knowing’**

Habermas’s primary concern is framed in the opening section of one of his earliest works in the words: “How is reliable knowledge possible?” (Habermas, 1971: 3) This led him to explore the apparent divisions in knowledge, divisions that he defined under three headings as ‘empirical-analytic’, ‘historical-hermeneutic’ and ‘self-reflective’. He explained these apparent divisions by reference to the notion of ‘cognitive interest’. Particular cognitive interests impelled different ways of knowing. The cognitive interest in control led to an ‘empirical-analytic’ (or ‘technical’) way of knowing where the goal was to store up essential facts and figures in order to be able to manage one’s world. The cognitive interest in meaning impelled a ‘historical-hermeneutic’ (or ‘interpretive’) way of knowing where the goal was to understand one’s world. Finally, the cognitive interest in being free (emancipated) issued in a ‘self-reflective’ (or ‘critical’) way of knowing where the goal was to understand one’s world. As Lovat and Smith (2003) comment:
For Habermas, it is only when we have reached the third level that we are guaranteed true knowledge because true knowledge demands that we be free. At the first two levels, we are still liable to be controlled, to be insulated from critiques that are outside our immediate frame of reference. The so-called ‘truth’ that we receive at these levels can be the result of ideology or ‘unreflective action’. (p. 89).

Habermas’s third way of knowing alerts us to the power of overturning unreflective action in favour of an approach encompassed by the notion of ‘critical theory’. As Lovat and Smith (2003) comment:

Without the third level of reflection, any learning does little more than offer information about data which is outside and apart from ourselves. It is critical theory, implicit in the third level of reflection, which forces us to scrutinize and appraise the adequacy of this information and to evaluate its meaning for ourselves. Without critical theory, the information which comes from any subject can become a means of bondage, rather than emancipation, a way of oppressing people or keeping them in straitjackets. (p. 90).

Applying Habermasian ‘Ways of Knowing’ to Anglican Eucharistic Theology

Unreflective action often functions within Anglican theological education, taking the form of the ideology of a particular technical or hermeneutic interest of a species of the Anglican tradition (Catholic or Evangelical) and in turn prohibiting any critique from without on the grounds of its privileged or ‘sacred’ status.

Where technical and hermeneutic approaches to knowledge dominate in this way, one will likely find Anglican eucharistic theology being taught within narrow boundaries. First, a technical approach might well produce an educational process with a singular focus. That is, a particular group within Anglicanism might see education primarily as a means of control and so only its own version of Anglican eucharistic theology should be studied. Here, the relevance of studying other versions is at best marginal and at worst seen as a threat to control. Second, a hermeneutic approach might impel an educational process that is welcoming of a variety of focuses. That is, a group that sees education being primarily about exploration and communication will be happy to have a selection of eucharistic theologies made available for students. The relevance of studying other traditions is important but, Habermas would caution, it is still possible for subtle forms of control to abide amidst what appears to be a liberal agenda, and indeed for students to become a little lost in a sea of instances. Exploration and communication are good educational means but not necessarily sound educational ends.

It is in the interest in being free, emancipated and owning one’s own knowledge that a truly critical and self-reflective educational approach is born. This approach will not only ensure an adequate array of instances for the focus study but will ensure that the student is dealing robustly with these instances. Here, the goal is not merely one of exploration and communication, nor even of comparison and contrast.
but, rather, of authentic dialogue aimed at ascertaining the extent to which one has reliable knowledge of any version of Anglican eucharistic theology. The process will involve stripping away the layers of that accrued knowing that comes from one’s own heritage and tradition, as well as one’s own dispositions and preferred knowing, that which is most comfortable and fits with one’s natural community and, perhaps, even with one’s deep-seated blind spots and prejudices. Stripping away these layers is essential to the goal of finally knowing that what one knows is truly one’s own knowing, ultimately the only authentically reliable knowledge in Habermasian terms. This is at the heart of what Habermas means by ‘critical theory’.

Habermas’s critical theory, when applied to Anglican eucharistic theology, suggests that critical reflection on the essences of the eucharistic tradition as a whole should lead to less dependence on and dominance by technical and hermeneutic interests and that this, in turn, should allow for the emancipation of the tradition from the bondage of these narrow interests. Critical theory leads, in effect, to a dialogical approach being taken to theological debate.

The dialogical approach to theological debate involves a moving beyond the purely technical interests of what happens at the Eucharist (e.g. ‘How Christ is present in the Eucharist?’ and ‘How does Christ’s sacrifice relate to the Eucharist?’). It also involves a moving beyond the various hermeneutic interests that characterize the theological parties within Anglicanism (e.g. Evangelical Anglicans and Catholic Anglicans and their particular views) to allow for a sharing of meaning among all participants in the wider Anglican eucharistic tradition.

This broader goal of theological education is recognized as involving much more than the mere appropriation of technical knowledge or even the hermeneutic interests of a particular church party. Rather, the goal is the ability to reflect critically, not only on the knowledge of the tradition as a whole but on interactions in which participants engage with others in the sharing of differing and complementary views, ideas, traditions and interests. Such an approach places value on the experiences of the participants who are seeking shared understanding as well as on the specific knowledge of the tradition. It is this critical interest that distinguishes a dialogical approach from the often adversarial and acrimonious debate involved in the defence of party positions that has become all too much a characteristic of Anglican theological debate.

Party positions, often closely associated with the ownership of knowledge and the sacred nature of that knowledge, tend to close down the sharing of information, idealize one or other hermeneutic interest and so emphasize the appropriation of one or other established tradition. On the other hand, a dialogical approach tends to encourage the stepping outside of a tradition, critical reflection on the various hermeneutic interests of the tradition and hence the sharing of understanding as an overarching goal. It is this shared understanding that conforms with the essential goal of Habermas’s ‘communicative action’.
Habermasian ‘Communicative Action’

In *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984 and 1989), Habermas speaks of the importance of ‘interactions’ among speakers and hearers rather than ‘actions’ by particular groups or individuals. It is this emphasis on the experience of people and the sharing of that experience with others that moves dialogue and communicative action beyond what McCarthy (1984: xxvi), in introducing Habermas, describes as ‘hermeneutic idealism’. Hermeneutic idealism is that conceptualizing of reality that is totally dependent on one’s own (or one’s communal groups’) beliefs, values and interpretations, whilst at the same time remaining blind to their causes, background and those wider connections that would contextualize them and help those holding them to see that they are in fact just one set of beliefs, values and interpretations in a sea of related and unrelated sets. Habermas sees hermeneutic idealism as a particular feature of post-Enlightenment times and he explains why this is so.

Habermas acknowledges that, since the beginning of the modern Enlightenment era, Western thought has often taken the view that science and technology hold out the promise of limitless advances, with accompanying moral and political improvement (Habermas, 1984 and 1989). Habermas also sees why this view has so often disappointed and confused modern people who still suffer many of the same burdens of humanity that have characterized it since its inception. At the same time, he acknowledges that modernity has in fact produced many significant advances. In a compromise, therefore, he does not advocate the total abandonment of the Enlightenment project, arguing rather for its redirection. This he does in his two volume work, *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas, 1984 and 1989). Herein, he puts the case that reason can be defended only by way of a critique of reason. In so doing, his concept of rationality is one that is no longer tied to and limited by subjectivistic and individualistic premises, but rather argues for an integration of what he calls the ‘lifeworld’ and ‘system’ paradigms. He regards the current perceived failure of the Enlightenment project to rest on the fact that individual lifeworlds (ie. those conceptual frames that contain the beliefs, values and concerns of individuals) have not been integrated effectively with the ever-increasing systems of thought, technology and structure that characterize the post-Enlightenment world. Connecting the two conceptual strategies of ‘lifeworld’ and ‘system’ is the most urgent issue for any social theory claiming contemporary relevance, according to Habermas (1989: 151f.).

Habermas (1989) goes on to spell out the problem by juxtaposing the fundamentally different natures of ‘system’ and ‘lifeworld’. For him, systems are characterized by their steering of society in powerfully persistent ways with universal significance, whereas lifeworlds are often characterized by the randomness of individuals and/or like-minded communities and their idiosyncratic ways of connecting with their surrounding societies and cultures. Lifeworlds differ most from systems in that they are most often associated with particular individuals or groups of people and the traditions they hold to be sacred, in some cases regardless of the ‘hard’ evidence. Systems, on the other hand, are supposedly based on universal claims replete with evidence and regardless of individuals and perceptions of the ‘sacred’. They point beyond the circle of those immediately involved and have claims valid for outside interpreters as well, whereas ‘lifeworlds’ are seen as being already substantially interpreted and, as such, often prevent those within from stepping outside. As such, lifeworlds have potential to
become for individuals and like-minded groups the unquestioned ground of everything given in their experience and the unquestionable frame in which all the problems that have to be dealt with are located. Lifeworlds can become so intuitively present, familiar and seemingly transparent to individuals and like-minded groups that the vast and incalculable web of presuppositions and beliefs that underpin them become opaque to those individuals and groups. As such, lifeworlds belong to the ‘taken for granted’, maintaining themselves beyond the threshold of criticizable convictions. In a word, their critical interest is limited by the bounds of their hermeneutic idealism.

In pre-Enlightenment times, when social systems were more inclined to be based on dominant religious lifeworlds, there was a harmony for many individuals and like-minded communities that has been shattered in modern times. Habermas implies that many post-Enlightenment folk suffer from a kind of schizophrenia where they inhabit both their individual and communal lifeworld(s) as well as those inescapable wider systems that hold their societies and cultures together, systems that have become in many cases less and less dominated by the beliefs and values of religious lifeworlds and more and more dominated by the cold demands and objectivities of science and technology. While most learn to balance the demands of each, there remains nonetheless an inevitable tension and even dislocation that all suffer to some extent, and this applies particularly to those who hold fast to beliefs and values of religious lifeworlds that have been left without reappraisal for a modern era. In extreme cases, this can lead to the alienation that comes from one who feels one’s social systems are totally alien to the beliefs and values of one’s lifeworld(s) and yet are inevitably dominant over them. This alienation can lead to despair and hopelessness. At the other extreme, individuals and communities that share a lifeworld may react to the potential alienation by imposing their lifeworld on their surrounding social system or, in a sense, creating their own alternative social system that survives in cocoon-like fashion impervious to everything else around it. Such a reaction is implied by Habermas to account for the apparently unusual fact that our high age of scientific and technological truth has spawned such an array of unyielding fundamentalisms and fanaticisms. Habermas (1984) describes this feature of modernity as a decline in the paradigm of consciousness.

Habermas’s response to this decline in the paradigm of consciousness, where a person is prevented by the very constraints of their lifeworld from stepping out of their lifeworld and engaging with world-concepts, is to propose an explicit shift to the paradigm of language. This is not a shift to language as a syntactic or semantic system, but to what he calls ‘language-in-use’ or ‘speech acts’ or ‘communicative action’ (McCarthy, 1984: ix). Habermas (1984) says:

… the concept of communicative action refers to the interaction of at least two subjects capable of speech and action who establish interpersonal relations (whether by verbal or by extra-verbal means). The actors seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their actions by way of agreement. The central concept of interpretation refers in the first instance to negotiating definitions of the situations which admit of consensus. … Language is given a prominent place in this model. (p. 86).
Communicative action therefore points beyond the particular to the more universal aspects of society or, in other words, has potential to provide a bridge between individual and communal lifeworlds, on the one hand, and wider systems of thought and structure, on the other hand. Habermas (1984) casts its potential for this in the following way:

… the aspects of the rationality of action we found in communicative action should now permit us to grasp processes of societal rationalization across the whole-breadth, and no longer solely from the selective viewpoint of purposive rational action. (p. 335).

Communicative action involves a shift of focus from the teleological to the communicative dimension where the analysis of language as social action is the basic medium of communication. The teleological aspect refers to the realizing of one’s aims or the carrying out of one’s plan of action, whereas the communicative aspect refers to the interpretation of a situation and arriving at some agreement. For Habermas, rationality therefore “ … has less to do with the possession of knowledge than with how speaking and acting subjects acquire and use knowledge” (Habermas, 1984: 8). Habermas’s earlier thesis on ways of knowing underpins his theory of communicative action because this thesis provides the rationale around the role that cognitive interests play in determining both forms of knowledge and their concomitant actions. For Habermas, it is the interest in being free in one’s own knowing, knowing that what one ‘knows’ is validated and authentic knowledge, that impels an inter-subjective approach to the processes by which one comes to know. This suggests that the means of reaching understanding are important matters to be considered in any process of education and, for Habermas, this involves inter-subjective recognition of the various validity claims made by others, including those who may hold very different positions from one’s own. In this vein, Habermas (1984) argues:

In communicative action, the very outcome of interaction is even made to depend on whether the participants can come to an agreement among themselves on an inter-subjectively valid appraisal of their relations to the world. On this model of action, an interaction can succeed only if those involved arrive at a consensus among themselves, a consensus that depends on yes/no responses to claims potentially based on grounds. (p. 106).

Habermas argues that it is possible to reach agreement about differing and disputed positions by means of argument and shared insights that do not depend on force, but rather on reasons and grounds (or ‘evidence’). It is this process of critique and argumentation that allows communicative action and rationality to proceed. Agreement between parties then rests on the sharing of common convictions, so functioning as communicatively shared inter-subjectivity where reflection on one’s own affective and practical nature means that people act in a self-critical way. Habermas (1984) says:

… this concept of communicative rationality carries with it connotations based ultimately on the central experience of the unconstrained, unifying, consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech, in which different participants overcome their merely subjective views and, owing to the mutuality of rationally motivated conviction, assure themselves of both the unity of the objective world and the inter-subjectivity of their lifeworlds. (p. 10).
Not only does this result in mutual convictions, but also “… in coordinating their actions by way of inter-subjectively recognizing criticizable validity claims, they are at once relying on membership in social groups and strengthening the integration of those same groups.” (Habermas, 1989: 137) There are important benefits therefore to be derived from communicative action, not only for mutual understanding but also for group integration and harmony within a tradition as a whole.

This way of acting implies, however, that, in order to adopt a critical interest and engage in communicative action, people need to objectify their lifeworld as a boundary-maintaining system rather than assuming that their lifeworld is ‘the’ system and the way things ‘are’ in a universal sense. Here, Habermas (1984) distinguishes between ‘instrumental mastery’ and ‘communicative action’, such that instrumental mastery is that which is employed in the appropriation of a hermeneutic where communicative action maintains a critical focus. This means that “… an interpreter can go beyond this subjectively purposive-rational orientation and compare the actual course of action with the constructed case of a corresponding objectively purposive-rational course of action.” (Habermas, 1984: 102) Communicative action, or communicative rationality, Habermas argues, pays attention to the seams between system and lifeworld, since it is the seams that hold the potential for emancipation from the power of particular hermeneutic interests as well as resistance to more self-critical attitudes. These ‘seams’ are the points of intersection where there can be both harmony and conflict, and it is these seams that form the basis for the dialogue of communicative action and rationality.

Applying Habermasian ‘Communicative Action’ to Anglican Eucharistic Theology

Habermas’s theory of communicative action would seem to have potential to enable theology to resolve questions of access by all its players because that work is based essentially on the interaction implied by effective communication. Garrigan (2004) says the following of Habermas’s contribution in this regard:

(It) has been to shift it from the ‘work’ model of activity to one based on communicative action. Prior to Habermas, the essence of philosophy of the subject was that the subject was defined by his or her ‘work’; after Habermas, philosophy is required to explore the ramifications of a theory of the subject wherein it is the subject-subject relation, not the subject-object relation, that gives the point of access to the subject. (p. 73)

Garrigan’s analysis of Habermas points the way to an emphasis in any one area of intellectual endeavour, such as Anglican eucharistic theology, where the importance of interactions between speakers and hearers (subject-subject) is emphasized rather than the work of individual thinkers and their particular ideologies (subject-object). It is in this sense that Habermas’s insights have particular relevance for the Anglican eucharistic tradition, and for Anglican theological education generally, since they highlight the value of dialogue and interaction (subject-subject) as opposed to the division and acrimony that often occurs when there is too much concentration on the subject-object nexus characteristic of particular hermeneutic interests. Habermas’s suggestion
that reason be transformed, rather than abandoned, implies that rationality can no longer be tied to and limited by the subjective and individual hermeneutic interests of church parties and the particular theologians and theological views that inform those interests. As Garrigan points out, there is a distinction here between ‘communication’ and ‘communicative action’. This distinction rests on the idea of “… speech acts as bringing about an understanding (through ‘communicative action’) rather than presuming, or even necessarily arriving at the point of understanding (‘communication’).” (Garrigan, 2004: 76)

Anglicanism and, in turn, Anglican theological education generally, seems to suffer from what McCarthy (1984) described as ‘hermeneutic idealism’, where particular parties want to conceptualize Anglican theology, such as eucharistic theology, solely from the perspective of particular participants and their various parties of thought, or hermeneutic interests (be they Anglican Evangelicals or Anglican Catholics), without sufficient reference to the tradition or system as a whole. In addition, hermeneutic idealism often leads to the assumption that the appropriation of a particular hermeneutic interest should be the focus of theological education and this, in turn, limits critical interest. Appropriation of a particular hermeneutic interest can idealize the knowledge and interests of that hermeneutic and so exclude the knowledge and interests of other hermeneutics by privileging particular hermeneutic knowledge and interests over the knowledge and interests of other hermeneutics. If this is the case, then it may mean that a tradition as a whole remains unreflective and education within that tradition consequently becomes impoverished and fetishized through its concentration on the supposed purity (ie. ‘sacredness’) of particular technical and hermeneutic interests and the exclusion of any alternative interests.

There is a case then to be made for viewing the whole Anglican eucharistic tradition as a system paradigm rather than viewing it in terms of its component lifeworld parts. These lifeworlds are often distinct from system paradigms since they are substantially determined and interpreted by historical and theological circumstances, perhaps even hermetically sealed and so lacking in critical interest. In order to become a true ‘communicative community’, theological education in the Anglican tradition needs to recognize that lifeworlds really function as boundary-maintaining devices whose importance is in defining a hermeneutic, but that none of them in themselves comprises the whole system paradigm of Anglican eucharistic theology. Douglas (2006) supplies extensive evidence to show that the system paradigm of the Anglican eucharistic tradition is not equivalent to the lifeworlds of either Anglican Evangelicals or Anglican Catholics. The evidence of the case studies and the extracted essences of the Anglican eucharistic tradition cited by Douglas (2006: 168-265) suggest that the basis of the Anglican eucharistic tradition’s system paradigm is a multiformity of eucharistic theologies and that the system paradigm or world-concepts revolve around this multiformity. The case studies suggest that this multiformity is pervasive throughout the Anglican eucharistic tradition, not only historically but also across the various theological and philosophical assumptions, and that uniformity is not a characteristic essence of the Anglican eucharistic tradition, despite the efforts of some to argue for one lifeworld.

A consideration of the work of Habermas, when applied to the multiformity of the Anglican eucharistic tradition, leads to the conclusion that there is not just one lifeworld for the tradition. This suggests that, unless Anglican eucharistic theology is characterized by a willingness to concede that a multiformity of views lies at the heart of the tradition, then the benefits of communicative action will not be accessible to the
Anglican tradition as a whole and for its theological education. While hermeneutic idealism persists in the Anglican eucharistic tradition, the critical interest of the tradition and its theological education will be impoverished and fetishized.

Habermas’s work also implies that if a process of communicative action is to be part of the Anglican eucharistic tradition and associated theological education programs, then the seams between the lifeworld of particular hermeneutic interests and the system need to be explored and acknowledged more fully, both in terms of their intersections and their conflicts. Habermas takes what has been described as a middle path which focuses on the process of truth-making or rational discourse rather than on the idea of truth as an outcome (Garrigan, 2004). In a word, this suggests that truth is a process rather than an outcome. Following this line of argument, it can be said that good sacramental theology is more about a process of interpretation, negotiated between speakers and hearers, than arriving at a set of instrumental outcomes to be adopted by various parties. This is what Williams (2000) seems to mean when he says, “... we make signs, and make ourselves through signs.” (pp.199-200) This suggests a dynamic process of interaction between participants rather than the mere appropriation of various party lines. Without this level of nuanced and sophisticated philosophical reflection, Anglican eucharistic theology is doomed to remain at the purportedly narrow and fractious levels of debate impelled by technical and hermeneutic interests.

Habermas’s work suggests that if ownership of particular hermeneutic interests is the focus of Anglicanism, its eucharistic tradition and its theological education generally, then the society that is Anglicanism will continue to deform and atrophy. On the other hand, Habermas’s work also suggests that if communicative action becomes the modus operandi for internal theological debate, its eucharistic tradition and theological education generally will be characterized by dialogue amidst that difference that is inevitable in a multiform system. Herein, the liveliness of critical interest will replace deformity and atrophy as the focus and force of Anglicanism. Critical interest will be manifested in people talking to one another in dialogue, and seeking shared meaning as an ideal communicative community rather than adversarial exchange springing from the ownership of the closed knowledge that derives from hermeneutic interest underpinned by the presumption of a privileged status.

Moving beyond the current deformed position requires that people be prepared to re-position from the subjective and narrow communal opinion characteristic of one’s lifeworld towards a preparedness to listen and learn about the other opinions and beliefs of their entire system. The recognition of the need for a communicative rather than teleological stance requires a person to be prepared to step outside their own lifeworld and to reflect critically on it, as well as on the lifeworlds of others. This does not mean that a person needs to dismiss their lifeworld. Indeed, a strength of the Habermasian perspective is in its recognition of how deeply ingrained and important are the lifeworlds of individuals and communities of like-minded people. The theory of communicative action is designed to address just such a reality and to forge communicative potential for such individuals and communities otherwise locked away from each other even when they purport to be part of the same multiform system. Furthermore, the benefit of a Habermasian perspective is that it not only holds potential for individual and communal lifeworlds to be maintained and strengthened but for the multiform system that overarches them to be enriched rather than destroyed by the difference implied by multiformity.

Conclusion
In this article, it is argued that Anglican eucharistic theology is best understood as a multiform system, and therefore composed of more than one particular lifeworld, or technical or hermeneutic interest. There is no one store of holy or sacred knowledge and no privileged position for any one hermeneutic interest. In Habermasian terms, there is no one position that should be allowed the privilege of being hermetically sealed within its own solipsism and so denied the potential for inter-subjective understanding (cf. Habermas, 1984). Where this privileging does occur, critical interest is limited in the Anglican eucharistic tradition and the tradition itself, or whole system, becomes impoverished and fetishized by exclusive commitments to particular technical and hermeneutic interests.

Habermas’s work leads to the conclusion that if Anglicanism is to become an ideal communicative community then what is needed is a rationality of shared understanding instead of what is becoming a customary acrimony of lifeworlds’ stand-off. This is a redirection of reason and not its abandonment. The shared understanding is in accepting the idea that the system paradigm of Anglicanism is not uniform but multiform. As such, no one lifeworld or hermeneutic interest is privileged but each instead becomes part of the complex commonality that characterizes Anglicanism. At no point does this mean that any particular hermeneutic tradition or lifeworld needs to surrender its own presuppositions or propositional content, but it does mean that each of the lifeworlds needs to acknowledge the existence of other lifeworlds and their presuppositions and propositional content. It is in this process of communicative action, dialogue and shared understanding that the system paradigm of the Anglican eucharistic tradition can be emancipated not only from the acrimony of party politics but from the deformity of outdated, impoverished and fetishized theologies.

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Holy Communion, Sydney: The Standing Committee of General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia.


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