The Affective Preconditions of Inquiry: Hookway on Doubt, Altruism, and Self-confidence.

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ABSTRACT

One of the major contributions which Christopher Hookway has made to pragmatist epistemology is a critical exploration of the role that affective dispositions play in inquiry. According to Hookway, a well-functioning rational inquirer must rely upon a set of pre-reflective and affective dispositions which are not themselves fully available to rational evaluation. Despite their pre-reflective nature, on the pragmatist account these affective dispositions provide us with judgments and evaluations which are in many cases more reliable than those provided by explicit rational reflection.

This chapter presents and defends Hookway's account of the epistemic importance of our affective dispositions. The first section presents three roles which affective dispositions play within inquiry. The second section considers the concern that affective dispositions should be considered impositions upon our epistemic agency. In response, Hookway suggests that we must *identify* with our affective dispositions, and two interpretations of this claim are offered. The third section considers the possibility that the confidence we have in our affective dispositions might be appropriately shaken if we recognize that they are not shared by other inquirers. The chapter concludes by suggesting that Hookway's position can overcome this worry by developing his notion of *critical self-trust* in three distinct ways.

INTRODUCTION

I first met Chris Hookway when I was an MA student at Sheffield. Ostensibly, I had joined the Sheffield graduate community to study aesthetics, but Chris's course on American Pragmatism converted me, and I stayed on to work with him for my PhD. At the time, I thought of Chris only as a supportive and engaging teacher. His quiet humility and patience clashed with my idea of what a 'brilliant' philosopher should look like. He rarely spoke about his own work or assigned his own papers for reading. At conferences and workshops, Chris would quietly take in the conversation, before eventually asking thoughtful, measured questions which aimed to further a speaker's thought, and which never tried to trip them up or 'disprove' their position. Once, Chris looked genuinely embarrassed when I asked him what the topic of a conference he was attending was. "Well," he said, looking abashed, "umm, *me*, actually". Over time, I came to realize that Chris might not only be a good philosopher *despite* his humble character, but *because of* it. His philosophical work – meticulously careful and unfailingly generous to other thinkers – demonstrates this character.

A fixture in the Sheffield department for several decades, Chris's character came to be reflected in the institution of which he was a part. To a graduate student, compared to the seemingly harsh world of academic philosophy, Sheffield felt like a safe haven. Students, staff, and visiting scholars commented on the unusually friendly, supportive, and comfortable academic atmosphere of Sheffield. And by all accounts, Chris's influence was instrumental in creating this environment. We shouldn't find this too surprising. As well as being temperamentally inclined towards this kind of amiable attitude, Chris is also *philosophically* committed to it. A fellow graduate of Sheffield tells me that whenever they bumped into Chris in the corridor, he would entreat them to attend the pragmatism reading group. "It'll make you a better person," Chris always said. I have reason to suspect that Chris was being sincere. Pragmatism is committed to the idea that inquiry is a deeply *communal* activity, which can only take place within a community which is supportive, inclusive, and grounded in established moral norms. To meet the requirements of such a community, we must cultivate in ourselves altruistic sentiments, and a willingness to sacrifice our own narrow interests for the ongoing interests of this community.

Chris returns to these pragmatist themes throughout his written work, and it is the aim of this chapter to survey and comment upon them. The chapter explores the role that an inquirer's affective dispositions, sentiments, or emotional constitution play in guiding inquiry. In the first section, I outline three broad roles which affective dispositions play in supporting the community of inquiry and guiding the activities of individual inquirers (§1). In the second section, I consider Hookway's response to the *alienation problem*: the concern that – as such affective dispositions are not available to rational evaluation – we

should consider them impositions upon our epistemic activities. Hookway suggests that to have the required confidence in our affective dispositions we have to *identify* with them (§2). In the third section I consider a possible challenge to Hookway's position which I call the *Jamesian challenge*. This challenge suggests the confidence we have in our affective dispositions might be appropriately shaken if we recognize that they are not shared by other inquirers (§3). Finally, I suggest that Hookway's position can overcome this concern by developing his notion of *critical self-trust*, and by an emphasis on the inquirer's requirement to altruistically identify with the good of the community of inquiry (§4).

§1. The Epistemic Role of Affective Dispositions

One of the major contributions which Hookway has made to pragmatist epistemology concerns the importance that *affective dispositions* play in inquiry. Frequently, Hookway uses Peirce's language of "sentiments" (e.g., Hookway, 2000, p. 239) and sometimes "cognitive emotions" (e.g., Hookway, 1997, pp. 215–216) or "emotional attitudes" (Hookway, 2000, p. 241) to describe these affective dispositions. The features and role of these dispositions will be explored in more detail as we go forward but, to begin with, we should understand sentiments as – to use David Savan's terms – "enduring and ordered systems of emotions" (Savan, 1981, p. 331). A 'sentiment' doesn't refer to a fleeting or disconnected emotional state, but to an integrated pattern of affective responses. Hookway connects these sentiments with Peirce's notion of the *logica utens* (Hookway, 1998, pp. 213–4, 2000, p. 254). The *logica utens* represents a pre-reflective, fallible, and affectively grounded sense of what counts as good reasoning (e.g., Peirce, 1893, CP2.186). The pre-reflective and affective "instincts" of the *logica utens* provide us with evaluations, inferences, and judgments which are the foundation of many of our epistemic practices.

The role which pragmatism accords to affective dispositions is part of its distinctively anti-Cartesian epistemology. The two most recognized features of this anti-Cartesianism are pragmatism's rejection of both foundationalism and global scepticism. The idea that affective dispositions have a legitimate role to play within inquiry represents a third strand of anti-Cartesianism: the denial that every feature of our epistemic practices need to be available to and endorsed by rational reflection. The judgments and evaluations with which our affective dispositions provide us are not themselves necessarily available to evaluation or reflection by the inquirer who uses them. As Hookway puts it: "often we cannot explain or sometimes even describe the standards which guide our evaluations" (Hookway, 1998, p. 213). Nonetheless, this should not concern us. Hookway – with Peirce – denies that the ideal of epistemic rationality is to reach an explicit

formulation of all of the norms which guide our inquiries. Even if it were possible, explicit formulations of our vague pre-reflective and affectively grounded norms would be likely to "over-simplify and distort" them (Hookway, 1993, p. 167).[1] Indeed, a distinctive feature of pragmatist epistemology, according to Hookway, is the idea that our instinctive and affective judgements are, "in some cases at least [...] more trustworthy than [our] reflective considered ones" (Hookway, 1998, p. 221, 2000, p. 261).[2]

According to pragmatist epistemology, these affective dispositions ground our capacity for reasonable inquiry. "The inquiring self", as Hookway tells us, "is commanded by a stable system of emotional attitudes [...] which guide his or her reasoning and inquiries" (Hookway, 2000, p. 241). We can point to three major roles which such affective dispositions play within our inquiries. Firstly, they indicate legitimate starting and ending points for inquiry. Secondly, they are required in order for the inquirer to be properly motivated by the needs of the community of inquiry. Thirdly, they guide inquiry by shaping our interpretations of what is and is not salient. Let's take each of these roles in turn.

On a simple account of the pragmatist model of inquiry, inquiry always starts with *doubt.* Belief, for the pragmatist, is a habit of action, and doubt is the interruption or disruption of such a habit. Doubt as an interruption to our belief is characterized by a confusion about how to proceed in a given context, and this confusion motivates an inquiry to replace this doubt with a new settled belief. Pragmatists – and especially Peirce – tend to distinguish legitimate inquiry from pointless speculation on the basis of whether or not that inquiry is motivated by a *real* doubt (see, e.g., Peirce 1906, CP6.498). *Affectivity* is a key feature by which real doubt is distinguished from 'paper' or 'tin' doubts. Real doubt is an "uneasy and dissatisfied state from which we struggle to free ourselves" (Peirce, CP5.377). This affective discomfort is what motivates the activity of inquiry (Peirce, CP5.394). Inquiry proceeds until we replace the felt irritation of doubt with a new belief. This belief is also understood in affective terms – Peirce talks of a "feeling of believing" and describes belief as a "calm and satisfactory state which we do not wish to avoid" (Peirce, CP5.372).[3] Distinguishing between 'real' and 'paper' doubt is another anti-Cartesian feature of pragmatist epistemology. Insofar as the Cartesian method initiates inquiry by manufacturing intellectual doubts which are not affectively felt, it is illegitimate. We'll turn to why *real* doubt requires affectivity below.

Secondly, pragmatist epistemology emphasizes the role of the *community* of inquiry. The scientific method proceeds on the assumption that no one inquirer will obtain the absolute truth. An absolutely true belief, for the pragmatist, is one

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[1] See also (Hookway, 2000, pp. 254–255).

[2] See also (Hookway, 1998, pp. 207; 215, 2000, p. 250).

[3] For an accessible account of pragmatist inquiry, see (Hookway, 2013). Hookway provides a detailed overview of the role which doubt plays in inquiry in (Hookway, 2000, chap. 10). See also (Hookway, 1998, 2008).

which would never encounter a legitimate doubt (Peirce, 1878, W3: 274).[4] As no individual could have the breadth of experience required to verify a proposition in this way, truth is product of the indefinite *community* of inquiry.[5] As such, a rational inquirer must sacrifice their *own* interests in obtaining truth in favor of the *community's* interests in obtaining truth in the long-run of inquiry. For this reason, Peirce tells us that the properly rational inquirer should be governed by fundamentally *altruistic* sentiments. Any inquirer who "would not sacrifice [their] own soul to save the whole world" is, Peirce tells us, "illogical in all [their] inferences, collectively" (1878, W3: 284). Such altruistic sentiments are, according to Peirce, both "entirely unsupported by reasons" and "rigidly demanded by logic" (Peirce, 1868, W2:272; see 1878, W3:276-89 and Hookway, 2000, p. 229). We'll return to the connection between the individual's affective dispositions and the community of inquiry below (§4).

Thirdly, these affective dispositions guide individual inquirers throughout their epistemic projects. Affective dispositions are not value-neutral but involve taking an implicit evaluative stance towards a state of affairs. Within inquiry, these evaluations express themselves through presenting certain considerations or questions to be *salient*, in the sense that we immediately feel they *ought* to be considered or answered (Hookway, 1999, p. 388). To be effective inquirers, we need the "patterns of attention" and "patterns of immediate salience" which these affective dispositions provide:

> [T]hese capacities have to regulate what we notice and what we *attend* to [...] epistemic evaluation requires *emotional* or affective evaluations that present inferences, propositions and questions as immediately salient: and it requires patterns in these evaluations that enable us to inquire responsibly and effectively (Hookway, 2003, p. 92).

The reason such patterns of selective attention are required for inquiry is obvious. If *everything* within our experience presented itself as salient, then we would be overwhelmed by information. If irrelevant things routinely presented themselves as salient, then our inquiry would be impeded. So, our patterns of salience must be responsive to the right features of the environment to guide us correctly. For this reason, Hookway suggests that such patterns of salience "manifest traits of character that we can describe (loosely) as habits or virtues" (Hookway, 2003, p. 92). When inquiry is proceeding well, then the questions and considerations which appear to us as salient *are*, in fact, those which are relevant to the success of the inquiry: "[e]pistemic success requires that *salience tracks relevance*: what we find ourselves disposed to attend to should be what is relevant" (Hookway, 2008, p. 58). As we have no direct control over our affective dispositions, we also have no direct control over what appears to us as

[4] See also (James, 1909, MT: 117).

[5] See, e.g. (Peirce, 1868, W2:239). See also (Misak, 2013, p. 60).

salient. Our finding some consideration or question salient is a passive affair: "we *find ourselves* treating a question or proposition as salient, and salient questions and propositions will often just *occur* to us". However, if we are to continue in our inquiries we must have confidence that the features which appear to us as salient *are* those which we ought to consider (Hookway, 1999, pp. 388–389).

Even if we agree with the pragmatist about the roles which evaluative habits play within inquiry, there is still a question about the *affectivity* of these habits. Why must the habits which guide inquiry be grounded in *feeling*, or in what Hookway calls our "affective natures" (Hookway, 2000, p. 261)? Hookway points to at least four reasons for the necessity of affectivity: salience; immediacy; motivation; and spread.

Firstly, as we have seen, our epistemic habits must direct our attention towards salient features of the environment. Affective or emotional features of our mental lives operate in just this way. As de Sousa puts it:

> For a variable but always limited time, an emotion limits the range of information that the organism will take into account (de Sousa, 1987, p. 195).

Emotions operate by determining "patterns of salience among objects of attention, lines of inquiry, and inferential strategies" (de Sousa, 1987, p. 201). When such affective features of our mental lives "control salience" in ways which are useful for inquiry, Hookway argues, then they are "appropriate" (Hookway, 2008, p. 60).

Secondly, the judgments reported by affective dispositions are experienced as *immediate*. Though pragmatism is avowedly anti-foundationalist, in the sense that all beliefs are held to be fallible and subject to revision if a reason for (real) doubt is encountered, Hookway recognizes the need for some beliefs and evaluations to *appear* as immediately certain. Scientific inquiry requires us to have a kind of immediate certainty in fundamental commitments, inferences, and judgments without which we could not conduct scientific inquiry (Hookway, 2000, p. 234). Evaluations which are grounded in our affective dispositions involve exactly this kind of immediacy, in the sense that they are not experienced as resulting from explicit reasoning, argument, or deliberation (Hookway, 1993, p. 158). Without such affectively grounded certainty in these fundamental propositions, we would feel compelled to conduct a debilitating process of reasoning to justify them. As such, the sentiments which ground rational inquiry allow us to make immediate judgments and inferences about which we feel *certain*, that is, without feeling the need to rationally defend of justify them (Hookway, 2000, p. 239).

Hookway draws from a passage of William James's "Sentiment of Rationality" to make this point:

> The feeling of the sufficiency of the present moment, of its absoluteness – this absence of all need to explain it, to account for it, or justify it – is what I call the Sentiment of Rationality (James, 1896, WB: 58; quoted in Hookway, 1993, p. 162).

The 'sentiment of rationality' which James presents here is best understood as the *absence* of a negative feeling. Any thought which allows us to act in the world fluently and without impediment "seems to us *pro tanto* rational" (James, 1896, WB: 58). This fluency of thought and action is contrasted with the "distress" which occurs when we encounter an obstacle to this fluency, which in turn motivates us to "strive" for a return of the fluency (ibid). In short, this is a re-articulation of the pragmatist model of inquiry in which inquiry is instigated by doubt, understood as the interruption of a settled habit of action. Hookway suggests that this immediately felt certainty is constitutive of our finding a proposition rational:

> [w]hen we find a belief, conception or inference rational, we acknowledge no need to "explain it, to account for it, to justify it": our attitude towards it has a normative dimension, embodying an evaluation [...] the fluency with which I exploit the opinion in planning my conduct and inquiries, just is my finding the belief rational (Hookway, 1993, p. 163, quote from James).

However, James is quite clear that this feeling of rationality is something of a double-edged sword. Just because we *experience* something *as* rational, does not mean that it is, in fact, rational or justified. We shall return to this point below (§3).

This leads us to the third role that *affectivity* plays on Hookway's account. Affective states are inherently motivating.[6] There is a necessary connection between my affective evaluation of my epistemic situation, and my motivations to respond to it. Indeed, Hookway suggests that our evaluations of a given situation are "most directly expressed in the ways in which [we are] motivated to respond to it". Just as anxiety in a practical situation motivates me to act to avoid the object of my anxiety, so doubt "motivates us to remove the uncertainty that attaches to [a] proposition". Importantly, this motivation is *immediate* – "[t]hrough sensing the danger in my circumstances, I am *already* motivated to take precautions and avoiding acting if possible" (Hookway, 2000, pp. 260–261).

[6] Hookway denies the need for the pragmatist to adopt a Humean model in which *only* affective states are motivating (Hookway, 2008, p. 58).

Finally, the affectivity of certain evaluations explains their capacity to *spread* through our cognition. Our evaluations about one proposition are not isolated from our evaluations of others but exist in a network of commitments. When we endorse a proposition *p*, we are committed to endorsing those propositions which follow from *p*; and we are inclined to endorse propositions which *p* makes more likely. In a similar way "when I doubt a proposition, I am committed to reassessing my endorsement of beliefs and inferences which depend upon it" (Hookway, 1998, p. 216).[7] This is why *felt* doubt regulates inquiry better than merely abstract doubt. Without affectivity, doubting *p* will require us to consciously track commitments related to *p* and assess the impact of doubting *p* upon them. Contrastingly, the *felt* anxiety of our epistemic doubt will *automatically* spread through our cognitive network and lead us to doubt connected beliefs and inferences of which we may not even be consciously aware. Unless we "*really doubt* a proposition", Hookway tells us, we will not be properly suspect of connected propositions, and "our residual attachment to it will interfere with our deliberations" (Hookway, 1998, p. 212, 2000, p. 254).

Overall, then, Hookway presents a picture in which the rational inquirer is guided by a system of affective dispositions which are indispensable to their epistemic projects. Hookway sums this up best in his analogy of the hiker navigating potentially dangerous territory. The hiker uses her knowledge of the environment, her past experience, and her embodied sense of the riskiness of possible actions to guide her journey:

> It is natural to think of this as involving more than just a body of propositional knowledge. It involves a complex kind of skill which may be manifested in the walker's ability to feel anxiety or feel secure in different circumstances: she will listen to the judgements of her heart, trusting her habits of judgment and her ability to instinctively *read* the weather and the terrain. When she trusts her judgements on such matters, she is, in a sense, using her own cognitive habits as a reliable instrument for judging the riskiness of the situation, she accepts the testimony of her own affective nature' (Hookway, 2000, p. 259).

Analogously, a responsible inquirer will rely on their 'affective nature' to guide them in inquiry. Their affective dispositions will shape their assessment of risky propositions, make them sensitive to relevant considerations, and make them confident about certain courses of investigation and deliberation. A rational inquirer, then, must *trust* their affective dispositions to guide them in inquiry. It is to this notion of trust which we now turn.

[7] See also (Hookway, 1993, p. 171, 2003, p. 84).

§2. Confidence, Alienation, and Identification

In this section, there are two broad features of Hookway's pragmatist epistemology which I would like to focus on. The first is the importance which Hookway places on the *confidence* or *trust* which we should have in our affective dispositions. The second is the role that *identifying* with these affective dispositions plays in avoiding becoming alienated from them. I'll take these two points in turn. I'll then raise a Jamesian consideration which puts pressure on both points (§3).

As we have seen in the above (§1) our affective dispositions guide our inquiries. However, as Hookway frequently points out, these dispositions can only perform this function when we have *confidence* in them – that is to say, when we *trust* that they will guide us correctly. Consider the following passage:

> [We should] view the cognitive agent as someone who has confidence in his or her cognitive emotions. They are trusted to provide guidance about when to question assumptions and when to follow the argument where it leads. And the agent is confident that this trust in her emotional reactions will lead her to make the epistemic evaluations which rationality demands (Hookway, 2000, p. 240).[8]

In this passage, Hookway suggests that a well-functioning cognitive agent is one who has confidence in their affective natures. We also learn something of the nature of this trust. We trust in our affective dispositions to allow us to make the kinds of judgments which are *required by rationality*. This qualification is vague but, as we shall see, important for distinguishing legitimate self-trust from the epistemic vice of unreflective confidence.

In fact, Hookway often indicates that self-confidence – in the sense of confidence in our affective dispositions – is a requirement of rational inquiry. "Effective epistemic agency", according to Hookway, "*depends* on the possession of confidence in our intuitive judgments" (Hookway, 2001, p. 195, emphasis mine). Lack of confidence is crippling to an inquirer. Proper confidence in our affective dispositions consists in us giving "presumptive authority" to their testimony, even though we cannot provide a rational account of this authority. Were we to try and replace our trust in affective dispositions

[8] Hookway's "Sentiment and Self-Control" was first published in Jacqueline Brunning and Paul Forster's edited collection *The Rule of Reason* (1997), and later reprinted in his book *Truth, Rationality and Pragmatism* (2000). Though the versions are more or less identical, this passage is one of the few which differs. In the earlier version, as inquirers we trust our affective dispositions because "they put us into harmony with the good" and are expressive of the evaluations which "rationality depends upon" (Hookway, 1997, pp. 215–216). In the later version, this explicit reference to "the good" has been removed – we trust that our emotional dispositions enable us to "make the epistemic evaluations which rationality demands".

with explicit rules and principles, we would be doomed to a "crippling form of scepticism" (Hookway, 2000, p. 255). As such, our affective dispositions are required for responsibly conducted inquiry, and confidence in the authority of these affective dispositions is required for them to perform their epistemic function. "Self-trust", Hookway concludes, "is a necessary condition for responsible rationality" (Hookway, 1998, p. 215, 2000, p. 256).[9]

Considering this immediate confidence or self-trust in our habits of epistemic evaluation, we might reasonably ask: what justification can we provide of this self-trust? We have seen that affective dispositions operate without our being able to fully cognize, rationally assess, or directly control them. A sentiment, Hookway tells us, represents a kind of "knowing or thinking" but a kind "which is not embedded in a framework of reasons; it is not subject to rational self-control" (Hookway, 1993, p. 153). However, this gives rise to what we can call the *alienation* worry. Here's one way of expressing this worry. In most contexts, we would consider it an epistemic *failing* if an inquirer refused to consider certain considerations or questions due to an affective disposition which they were not able to rationally control. If I routinely experienced anger towards someone, was unable to rid myself of this anger, and was not even able to articulate to myself the *reasons* behind this anger, then we would think it to be an epistemic *vice* if we continued to act confidently on the basis of this anger. As Hookway puts it:

> If a habit or attitude of mine is not subject to self-control, then it becomes possible for me to feel alienated from it, seeing it as an obstacle to my living freely and rationally (Hookway, 2000, p. 214).

Why should we not consider unchosen and pre-reflective affective influence an *imposition* on and *impediment to* our epistemic agency? Surely, coming to learn that the affective evaluations with which we navigate inquiry are not subject to rational assessment would alienate us from those dispositions, and interrupt the self-confidence which is required for their functioning. In other words, shouldn't the realization that our beliefs are grounded in the operation of pre-reflective affective habits give rise to *real doubt*? And if we fail to feel such anxiety, shouldn't this lack of anxiety *itself* give rise to a reason to doubt, as it

[9] Along with the features mentioned above (§1) this confidence gives us another reason for the *affectivity* of our epistemic dispositions. Affectivity, as Hookway puts it, is the "vehicle of our confidence" in our instinctive inferences (Hookway, 2003, p. 82). By this I take him to mean that the attitude of confidence we adopt towards our epistemic evaluations is *also* immediate. We are not confident in our epistemic habits as a result of conscious or reasoned inference, but through a pre-reflective felt assurance they have and will continue to lead us correctly. We require a confidence in our instinctive evaluations which "only sentiments and their attendant emotions can sustain" (Hookway, 2000, p. 241).

indicates that our confidence in such affective habits is an epistemic vice rather than a virtue?[10]

Hookway's solution to the alienation problem usually involves an appeal to *identity*. Consider, for instance, the following passage:

> So long as we identify with our emotional evaluations, this quite properly produces doubt of most considerations that question them. Our confidence is untouched, and this is fully appropriate. If we accept that our immediate evaluations are carried by judgements of *emotional* salience, then (*ceteris paribus*) these abstract doubts about unreliability lack the salience to shake our confidence (Hookway, 2003, p. 90).

We are not – or should not be – alienated from our affective dispositions and the epistemic evaluations which they provide, despite our inability to subject them to rational self-control, because we *identify* with them. As such, doubts about the authority of these affective dispositions are rightly perceived as irrelevant, and as lacking the force required to shake our confidence. Now, there is a danger of a kind of vicious circle here. We identify with our emotional dispositions, and so – as a result of this identification – obtain a confidence to reject any challenges to the legitimacy of these dispositions *which is itself* grounded in our affective dispositions. Avoiding this vicious circle demands that we unpack the vague notion of 'identification'.

Hookway leaves the notion of identification vague, but in his appeal to identity we can determine two separate strategies. In places, Hookway suggests that we identify with our affective dispositions because they are responsive to the requirements of rationality (e.g., Hookway, 1993, pp. 153; 166, 2000, p. 240). In this sense, we identify with our affective dispositions because they represent a kind of "attunement to what is required of a rational agent" (Hookway, 1993, p. 168). The fact that our affective dispositions are responsive to the demands of rationality means that we identify with them *qua* rational inquirer, and do not experience them as external impositions on our rationality. Thus, we avoid feeling alienated from them.

In other places, however, Hookway suggests that we identify with these affective dispositions because they reflect our individual characters. Our affective dispositions are an "expression of one's own normative standards" (Hookway, 1999, p. 391) and their integration with other aspects of our character prevents us from seeing them as "an external imposition upon our reality" (Hookway,

[10] Hookway explicitly raises this concern: "what justifies our confidence in our practice? We might argue that unless we can give a justification of our trust in our emotional evaluations, we should feel anxiety about the ordinary beliefs that depend upon them. If we don't we can see that this is an epistemic failing – and we should thus feel anxiety about the fact that we feel no such anxieties" (Hookway, 2003: 90).

2000, p. 239).[11] Any potential alienation we might feel towards our habits of evaluation is, Hookway suggests, disarmed by the pleasure we feel when our habits of evaluation are operating, which affectively embodies the "self's acritical acknowledgement of its mental functioning" (Hookway, 2000, p. 239). Indeed, our affective dispositions, Hookway suggests, are partially *constitutive* of the self: "[o]ur sentimental reactions form a coherent and intelligible system which contributes to the unity of the self" (Hookway, 2000, p. 239). This is why Hookway often expresses the confidence required as a distinctive kind of "self-trust" (Hookway, 1998, p. 214, 2000, p. 256). The fact that our affective dispositions are reflective of – and partially constitutive of – our *selves* as the individual inquirers we are is why we do not experience them as external impositions on our rationality. Thus, we avoid feeling alienated from then.

So, we either identify with (and are as such not alienated from) our affective dispositions because they are responsive to standards of rationality independent of our individual selves, or we identify with (and are as such not alienated from) our affective habits because they are reflective of our individual character and the particular inquirer we are. These two strategies for avoiding the alienation problem are not mutually exclusive, but they would seem to require two different defenses.[12] This will be made evident by how the Jamesian challenge – presented in the next section (§3) – influences each.

§3. A JAMESIAN CHALLENGE

I now turn to considering a potential 'Jamesian' challenge to Hookway's position. The challenge stems from the observation that the affective dispositions with which we navigate inquiry differ widely between individual inquirers. Whilst I believe that there is a version of Hookway's position which can meet this challenge, presenting this version will involve making clear some under-developed aspects of Hookway's position (§4).

Along with other pragmatists, James holds that affective dispositions are required for epistemic inquiry. Consider, for instance, the following passage from *Pragmatism*:

> The history of philosophy is to a great extent that of a certain clash of human temperament ... Temperament is no conventionally

[11] Consider the following passage: "*[m]y* habits of inductive reasoning, *my* standards of plausibility and implausibility, *my* judgements of what stands in need of defence and what goes without saying, reflect and determine patterns in *my* systems of beliefs and *my* cognitive practice" (Hookway, 2000, p. 254, emphasis mine).

[12] Sometimes, Hookway presents both strategies at the same time: "[affective responses] reflect aspect of our characters and, rather than threatening rationality, they manifest dispositions which are required for it to be possible" (Hookway, 1993, p. 171).

> recognized reason, so [the philosopher] urges impersonal reasons only for his conclusions. Yet his temperament really gives him a stronger bias than any of his more strictly objective premises. It loads the evidence for him one way or the other ... He trusts his temperament (James, 1907 *P*: 11).

Like Hookway, James holds that inquirers rely on a store of affective dispositions – here referred to as their 'temperament' – to guide them in inquiry. These affective dispositions provide inquirers with immediately felt indications of the salience and plausibility of certain considerations, or a "dumb conviction that the truth might lie in one direction rather than another" (James, 1896, WB: 77-78). These convictions are delivered with an immediate sense of certainty: "[i]t *can't* be that, we feel; it *must* be this" (James, 1909, MT: 139). And we must *trust* our affective dispositions to guide us correctly. However, there is an important difference in the Jamesian account, highlighted by his choice of the word 'temperament'. Temperaments *are* sentiments, in Hookway's sense, but sentiments which differ between inquirers. Our temperament will present some propositions to us as immediately rational because they allow us to think and act fluently. But different inquirers – because they are in possession of different affective natures – will feel this sense of rationality in different contexts. This is why within inquiry "*personal* temperament will [...] make itself felt" (James, 1896, WB: 75, emphasis mine). In assessing the rationality of different positions, different inquirers will "find their minds more at home in very different fragments of the world" and as a result defend very different views (James, 1909, PU: 10).

I will assume in what follows that James is making psychologically plausible point: that individual inquirers have differences in their affective natures which will result in differences to their evaluative responses within inquiry. This is the clear difference between a Jamesian and Peircean model of affective inquiry – for Peirce, the instinctive affective dispositions which the rational inquirer relies upon are common across the community of inquiry. This commonality is key to the trust we place in these dispositions. Our store of affective dispositions are taken to be reliable precisely because "they result from an inchoate mass of experience collected over many generations" (Hookway, 2000, p. 212). If our store of affective evaluations is *not* uniform across the community of inquiry, this puts pressure on some of Hookway's ideas. For one, as James points out in the above passage, differences in affective dispositions can lead to clashes in inquiry. Worse, on Hookway's account, such affective dispositions are not cognitively accessible or subject to rational self-control by the inquirers themselves (Hookway, 1993, p. 158). As such, it would seem that such clashes are rationally irresolvable, as each inquirer will have a different set of propositions, epistemic norms, and considerations which they experience as

immediately certain and unavailable for doubt (Hookway, 1993, p. 160). This seems like a recipe for blocked inquiry.[13]

An awareness of such affective differences would seem to give rise to the very sense of *alienation* which Hookway is trying to avoid. If I feel affectively and immediately certain that a proposition (*p*) is rational, and you feel affectively and immediately certain that a conflicting proposition (¬*p*) is rational, and we cannot fully assess or defend the evaluations in favor of either *p* or ¬*p*, then we both seem have less reason to feel that *either* set of affective dispositions can be trusted. As such, encountering an inquirer who is just as epistemically well-positioned as we are, but who has conflicting affective evaluations concerning a mutual object of inquiry, would seem like a legitimate reason to entertain a *real doubt* about the confidence I place in my affective dispositions. Refusal to entertain such a doubt in this context would seem more like an epistemic failing than a virtue.

Part of what is at stake in the Jamesian challenge is our ability to tell the difference between neurotic, prejudicial, or otherwise irrational affective influences on inquiry, and those which we should (and must) trust to guide inquiry. In places, Hookway does recognize that certain affective dispositions – and their attendant evaluations, anxieties, and certainties – should be rejected as irrational. When inquirers are laboring under irrational evaluative habits – such as a fear of frogs – then they "should not listen to the testimony of the heart" and their "self-trust should be qualified" by an awareness of their irrationality. According to Hookway "[w]e may explain away such a case" because the feelings are "neurotic and should be ignored" (Hookway, 1998, pp. 220–221). However, there is little explicit explanation of *how* we can tell the difference between irrational and legitimate evaluative dispositions. Doing so seems difficult, seeing as both types of influence will be *phenomenologically* indistinguishable and not subject to full rational assessment and self-control.

One possible answer is instrumental: my irrational phobia of frogs should be ignored because this affective disposition is not responsive to epistemic norms and the requirements of rationality. However, this response is in danger of being viciously circular, as on Hookway's account what is felt to be responsive to the requirements of rationality is – at least in part – the result of the testimony of our affective dispositions. Of course, in the case of my irrational ranidaphobia, my lack of responsiveness to the demands of rationality is quite evident. But this is an easy case. When we consider the fact that I find proposition *p* plausible and you do not, we have no obvious way to tell which of us is more attuned to the demands of rationality. A second answer might be that irrational affective

[13] I have argued elsewhere that individual temperaments can play a legitimate role in philosophical inquiry (Williams, forthcoming). Here, my question is to what extent does the psychologically plausible idea that there are individual differences in our affective dispositions challenges Hookway's assertion that we can and should be *confident* in these dispositions.

dispositions would not be judged to be rational by other members of my community of inquiry. But here again the force of the Jamesian challenge will be felt. For if there is no common store of affective dispositions, then there will be no clear way of distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate affective dispositions on these grounds, as individual inquirers will have different senses of what is or is not more responsive to the demands of rationality.

It is worth noting that James – despite the common conception of him as a subjective thinker – explicitly brought attention to the *limitations* of an affective approach to inquiry. Just because we *feel* some proposition to be rational, does *not* by that fact mean that it *is pro tanto* rational. For instance, mere custom or familiarity with a proposition can give rise to a complacent sense that it is rational (see James, 1896, WB: 67). There is no immediate or infallible way of telling the difference between something which appears immediately plausible because it is responsive to the demands of rationality, and something which appears immediately plausible because it confirms some inherited prejudice, bias, or idiosyncratic preference.[14] It is for this reason that James frequently emphasizes the epistemic *risk* of relying on our personal sentiments. Consider, for instance, the following passage:

> [E]ach one of us is entitled either to doubt or to believe in the harmony between his [affective and cognitive] faculties and the truth; and that, whether he doubt or believe, he does it alike on his personal responsibility and risk (James, 1896, WB: 94).[15]

The risk of relying on our affective dispositions lies in the fact that future experience might prove us to be wrong (e.g., James, 1896, WB: 78). Nonetheless, we must rely on our own affective capacities to guide us towards truth. And we must *trust* them *despite* our awareness of this risk. At least *prima facie*, this seems different from the kind of attitude of self-confidence which Hookway advocates. What James calls for is an attitude of personal responsibility towards our affective dispositions, an attitude of trust tempered with an awareness of their vulnerability to being proven wrong, brought about by an awareness of their subjective source. What seems to be in order is a kind of self-aware or *critical* trust in our affective dispositions.

[14] James instead appeals to more pragmatic tests of rationality – such as the ability for a concept to accurately predict future experience (James, 1896, WB: 67-68).
[15] See also (James 1896, WB: 32; 52; 79).

§4. Critical Self-confidence

In the last section, we saw that the recognition that affective dispositions are not uniform across the community of inquiry calls into question the confidence we are required to have in such dispositions. A possible solution might be found in James's suggestion that the proper attitude towards our temperaments is trust tempered by an awareness of risk: or a kind of *critical self-trust*. Hookway himself suggests that a *defeasible* self-confidence or '[c]ritical self-trust' is the appropriate attitude to have towards the testimony of our affective natures (Hookway, 1998, p. 222). This is unsurprising as, for the pragmatist, all attitudes and beliefs must be considered fallible. But we still need a more explicit reason why the obvious differences between inquirers' sentimental responses does not by itself give us good reason to doubt our self-confidence in them, and an indication of how to tell virtuous confidence in our different affective natures from illegitimate confidence in prejudices, bias, and other irrational influences. Again, we cannot appeal solely to the demands of rationality, as each inquirer will experience the testimony of *their* affective natures as being responsive to these demands. Nor can we appeal to the *current* community of inquiry. The history of science – as James is fond of pointing out – is replete with individual inquirers who, as a result of a novel temperament or sensibility, went against the paradigm of their scientific community and were subsequently proved right. Scientific progress requires, at times, breaking from the consensus of the existing community of inquiry.

I suspect the solution to this problem lies in an appeal to the *ideal* community of inquiry. Consider the following passage from Hookway:

> Moreover, altruism and the other logical sentiments ... are aspects of love or *agape*, the fundamental logical sentiment: unless we possess this kind of identification of our own good with that of the community (and indeed with that of the Universe) we cannot possess the required confidence in our ability to control our emotional responses to beliefs, inferences, and inquiries (Hookway, 2000, p. 241).

There are several things to pull from this and similar passages of Hookway's work. Firstly, Hookway suggests here that altruism is a logical sentiment which is practically experienced as a willingness to identify our individual good with the good of the community as a whole. The second is an indication that we need to appeal to the good of the (ideal) community of inquiry in order to make sense of the confidence we have in our own affective dispositions. Exactly what this relationship is – and how it overcomes the Jamesian challenge – still needs unpacking.

It would be useful at this point to explicitly distinguish three different categories of affective disposition or sentiments which have been mentioned in this paper:

1. The altruistic sentiments we hold towards the *ideal* or *indefinite* community of inquiry;
2. The common sentiments which are shared across the *existent* community of inquiry;
3. The sentiments or *temperaments* which represent differences in sensitivities between particular inquirers.

These distinctions can help us overcome the problems which the 'Jamesian challenge' seems to pose. Trust is appropriate in the case of each category of sentiment, but in slightly different ways. And the problem of alienation is avoided in each case through our *identification* with our affective dispositions – though again, this will manifest differently in each of the above categories.

Let us first consider the sentiments related to the *ideal* community of inquiry. On a Peircean model of inquiry, truth can only be achieved within the experience of an indefinite community of inquiry. The rational inquirer will have to relinquish their *own* desire to possess true belief, and instead contribute to the ongoing progress which the indefinite *community* of inquiry makes towards truth. As the inquirer themselves will never experience the good towards which they labor, this is a fundamentally altruistic act. But it is also a fundamentally rational one, insofar as the aim of inquiry is truth, and truth can only be achieved within the indefinite community of inquiry. As such the rational inquirer, must *qua* inquirer, identify their good with the good of this community. This identification must be affective and is regulated through the altruistic sentiments. The inquirer's altruistic sentiments will motivate them correctly and will spread their attitude towards inquiry throughout their web of commitments and beliefs. Insofar as we identify with the good of this community of inquiry, then, our affective sentiments of altruism towards it are appropriate, and we do not experience alienation from them. Trust in our attitudes towards this community seems warranted in almost all situations, as it is required for rational inquiry to proceed. Abandoning our trust in the community of inquiry – and our altruistic sentiments – would essentially be *irrational* as well as selfish.

Sentiments of the second kind are those shared with the existing community of inquiry. They represent inherited and instinctive senses of plausibility, salience, and the application of epistemic norms. Such sentiments include what Peirce and Hookway call the *logica utens*. These sentiments represent the store of knowledge and experience we have inherited from the community of inquiry up to this point – and which we trust to guide us in inquiry. We must *identify* with such affective dispositions for two reasons. Firstly, because we *must* rely on them in order for inquiry to proceed. For the reasons explored above, inquiry

would grind to a halt if we had to rely solely on explicit formulations rather than inherited sensitivities towards what rationality demands. Secondly, because these affective dispositions are so inextricably imbedded in our epistemic agency it would be difficult to understand ourselves as inquirers without them: they help constitute our *epistemic character*. Through this identification, we avoid experiencing alienation from these affective dispositions. Trust in the testimony of these affective dispositions is warranted, in part, because they are shared by our community of inquiry. Nonetheless, the appropriate attitude is still *critical* self-trust for two reasons. Firstly, inherited dispositions tend to be less applicable and less useful the further we get from the context which they were originally responsive to (e.g., Peirce, c.1873, CP7.503). Secondly, our inherited dispositions may well be responsive to things other than the demands of reason. Prejudices and biases are also inherited. As such, we should be ready to call our self-confidence into question when we have good reason to believe that our sentiments are responsive not to the demands of rationality, but to inherited prejudice. When we encounter another inquirer or group of inquirers who have different dispositional responses to a subject matter, this is reason to adopt a critical attitude towards our dispositions – though not to abandon them entirely.

Finally, we have the *temperaments*, or affective dispositions which are different across the community of inquiry. These temperamental inclinations emerge out of an inquirer's *personal* character. We are not alienated from *these* affective dispositions precisely because they reflect not just our *epistemic* character, but also our wider personality. As such, we identity with the testimony of our temperaments because they are *ours*. This is critical *self*-trust, with an emphasis on the *self*. We trust our temperaments to guide us in inquiry, and this is often beneficial. Inquiry proceeds, in part, through the adoption of novel hypotheses and lines of investigation that emerge from individual epistemic sensitivities which are not shared by other members of the community of inquiry. To break new ground, an inquirer must be willing to trust their own nature – to go out on a limb when it seems right to do so, and to act on the "dumb convictions" which their individual temperament provides them with. But this trust is defeasible. When faced with enough conflicting evidence, or when given sufficient reason by other inquirers, we must drop this self-trust and re-evaluate our affective dispositions in this matter. There is no explicit guide for when our individual sentimental responses are out of kilter with the demands of rationality. But if we are given good evidence that our pet hypotheses or preferences for certain epistemic norms conflict with the aims of the ideal community, then we must reject the testimony of our individual affective temperaments.[16] Thus – to be a good inquirer – we must have a self-trust in our own affective dispositions which is *trumped* by an affectively grounded trust in the aims of the indefinite community of inquiry. We must be willing to sacrifice the demands of our own nature for the demands of the ideal community as a whole.

[16] See, for instance, James (1896, WB: 185)

There is no non-circular way to tell the difference between collective sentiments on the one hand, and inherited prejudices on the other; or between the testimony of epistemically useful temperaments and mere personal idiosyncrasies which have no epistemic benefit. Phenomenologically, each of these will likely be identical within the experience of individual inquirers. The nature of each type of affective influence will only be revealed in the course of inquiry – through relying on the experience of a diverse and indefinite community to correct and improve our affective dispositions. Our identification with this ideal community of inquiry is precisely what prevents us from being thrown into doubt when we recognize that different inquirers do not share the same affective dispositions that we do. It is in the interests of the community of inquiry to have a diversity of affective dispositions at any given point, and we trust that in the long-run of inquiry the experience of this community will determine which affective dispositions are to be trusted and which are to be rejected. This is – I take it – how we should interpret the latter half of the Hookway passage above. Identifying with and trusting the community of inquiry is the very thing which makes sense of our adopting a critical self-trust towards our more individual affective dispositions. Without trust in this ideal community, we would again become alienated from our affective dispositions were we to encounter an inquirer with different affective dispositions. We would have nothing external to these dispositions which we could appeal to in order to distinguish (now or in the indefinite future) illegitimate and idiosyncratic dispositions from those which serve inquiry. By identifying with and having confidence the community of inquiry, we trust that our individual dispositions will contribute to the ongoing inquiry *or* be amended in light of the future experience of such a community.

§5. CONCLUSION

There seems to be a tension in the requirement that we have confidence in our affective dispositions. One the one hand, Hookway tells us that part of what it is to have such affective dispositions is to experience them as *immediate* and *certain*, and as inappropriate candidates for real doubt. This is what it is to have an affectively grounded confidence in such dispositions. We are prevented from being alienated from such dispositions by recognizing the necessary role they play in rational inquiry, and by recognizing that they are reflective of our epistemic character. On the other hand, Hookway suggests that this confidence is *defeasible* and should be overturned in cases where such dispositions go against the demands of reason. But this admission of defeasibility seems to significantly limit the claim that we should trust such dispositions to give us immediate and certain epistemic guidance. This worry is made worse by the plausible psychological observation that there are differences in the affective

dispositions which guide different inquirers. Encountering an inquirer who is similarly epistemically positioned but who relies upon a different set of affective dispositions would seem to give us a legitimate reason to doubt our own self-confidence.

I have suggested that the solution to this tension is to make a distinction between different kinds of affective disposition – the logical sentiments which we have towards the community of inquiry; the sentiments which we share with our community; and our individual temperamental differences. We have a different kind of trust towards each of these types of disposition. Ultimately, we should adopt a critical attitude towards our dispositions when they conflict with the furtherance of inquiry as conducted by the indefinite community. As this community requires diversity at any given point in order for inquiry to proceed, differences of disposition are not at odds with the demands of rationality, nor with the altruistic demand to sacrifice our own interests for the interests of the indefinite community of inquiry. Nonetheless, we should be aware that relying on dispositions which are significantly at odds with our community is risky – we are liable to be shown wrong by experience in the long-run.[17]

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MT	The Meaning of Truth
P	Pragmatism
PU	Pluralistic Universe
WB	The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy

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