1 INTRODUCTION

I’m walking along the waterfront, looking at the boats. I wonder, “Why does everyone call their boat S.S. something-or-other?”. I contemplate the question for a second, but then put it aside; I’m curious, but I’m busy on my walk right now and not going to try to figure it out. The next week though I win a boat in a contest and have to decide what to name it. Before I go with an ‘S.S.’ prefix, I want to actually figure out what ‘S.S.’ stands for. I search online and find out that it stands for ‘steam screw’, which is a kind of steamship. Since my boat is a canoe, I decide against the ‘S.S.’.

Here are some questions we can ask about this story: Should I have believed that ‘S.S.’ stands for ‘steam screw’ when I did? How certain should I have been? Was my evidence sufficient to justify my belief at that time? Does that belief amount to knowledge? Would it have been OK to just take a guess about what ‘S.S.’ stands for when the question first occurred to me and believe that? These sorts of questions — ones largely about belief and belief formation — are the sorts we regularly ask and answer in contemporary epistemology.

Here are some different questions we can ask about this story though: Was it OK to wonder about what ‘S.S.’ stands for when I did? Should I have started actively investigating that question right away rather than putting it on hold and continuing my walk? What’s the best strategy for figuring out what ‘S.S.’ stands for? Do I have to deploy this best strategy or is a less good one fine too? These are not the sorts of questions we regularly ask and answer in contemporary epistemology.

†Please ask if you want to cite though.
Are the questions in this second group even epistemic questions? Is it epistemology’s job to answer them? It’s certainly plausible that epistemic considerations bear on questions about when to be curious or wonder, or what counts as the best way to figure something out. Moreover, the following strikes me as an appealing general thought about epistemology: the rules or norms of epistemology are rules or norms for figuring things out. But if that thought is right, then the questions in the second group look just as epistemic as those in the first.

Even though it’s plausible that questions in that second group are questions for epistemology to answer, they are often ignored by the field. In this paper, I want to think about what epistemology would look like if those questions were not ignored — if epistemology spoke to the questions in that second group as well as those in the first. The questions in both groups are about whether I conducted my inquiry well, but the second group focuses on parts of our inquiries that our contemporary epistemic norms don’t usually bear on. What if epistemology included norms for the entire process of inquiry, from the initial curiosity or formulation of a question to the settling or resolving of that question? This is the possibility I’m going explore in this paper: the possibility of expanding epistemology to encompass inquiry in full.

In the next two sections, I’ll put together a schematic picture of inquiry and bring out some of the ways in which shifting focus to inquiry as a whole is going to push epistemology to cover more normative ground than it typically does. And in the section after that, I’ll argue that once we start taking the sorts of questions in the second group seriously, we’re going to have to go back and re-think some of our traditional answers to the sorts of questions in the first group. A set of norms focused on the question of how we should inquire is not always going to give the answers we’re used to to the question of what we should believe.

2 THE COURSE OF INQUIRY

At the start of the paper I described a simple (and typical) inquiry: I became curious about some question, then actively tried to figure out the answer, then did figure out the answer. Here is a generic timeline that reflects this sort of course of events with respect to some question $Q$: 

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\text{2 THE COURSE OF INQUIRY}
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The letters label key points/moments over the course of the sort of inquiry I’ve described. At point A, a subject S starts to think about or wonder about or become curious about $Q^1$. This is the time at which the question starts to be an object of thought or investigation for S. We can say that at point A, S ‘opens $Q^1$’ or ‘puts $Q^1$ on their research agenda’. At point B, S starts actively investigating $Q^1$. Point B is the point at which S starts genuinely working on resolving $Q^1$. At point C, S resolves $Q^1$ — they figure out the answer to $Q^1$ or settle $Q^1$. And the numbers above the line label the intervals of time between these key points: the stretch of time before $Q^1$ is on S’s research agenda (1), the stretch during which $Q^1$ is on S’s agenda, but S isn’t actively trying to figure out $Q^1$ (2), the stretch during which S is actively trying to figure out $Q^1$ (3), and the stretch during which $Q^1$ is settled for S (4).

There is no forced march from one end of INQUIRY to the other. There are many questions or issues for which we will never get beyond phase 1 — they will simply never cross our minds. And that $Q^1$ goes on a research agenda at some time does not tell us how long it will stay there. The way I’m thinking about opening questions or putting them on the agenda, becoming curious or starting to wonder is sufficient. But that we become curious about some $Q^1$ at $t_1$ does not entail or guarantee that we will be curious at $t_2$, whether $t_2$ is one year later, or just one minute. Even if a question does stay on one’s agenda, one’s future with that question does not need to unfold as INQUIRY does. That a question goes on a subject’s agenda is no guarantee that it will ever become an object of active investigation, active inquiries can end due to boredom or interruption or death, they don’t need to be settled, and so on. In general, many inquiries won’t look like INQUIRY. There may be little or no temporal gap at all between putting a question on the agenda and actively trying to figure it out, questions can be resolved without any active investigation (e.g., when an inquirer accidentally gets the answer without having put in any effort), and so on. So, INQUIRY represents one way subjects can end up relating to some question:
the sort according to which they do put it on the agenda, they do move to
active investigation, and they do settle. This is a fairly common course of
events.

My focus in this paper is on some of the norms that are relevant to this
sort of course of events, e.g., on questions about whether and when sub-
jects should or shouldn’t, and may or may not, and have some or no reason
to follow INQUIRY’s path. Let’s call the norms of inquiry ‘zetetic’ norms.
Laying INQUIRY out helps to bring all sorts of questions about zetetic nor-
mativity into view. For every labeled point and every labeled interval on
INQUIRY, we can ask a range of normative questions. Some very general
questions: Should S be the way they are with respect to \( Q \) during phase \( x \)?
Should S have done the thing they did with respect to \( Q \) at point \( y \)? For any
time \( t \) during INQUIRY, what should S do or be doing with respect to \( Q \)?

Our familiar, traditional epistemic norms speak to some of what S
should do over the course of INQUIRY. Though they seem to speak primarily
to a small span of INQUIRY: the space clustered around C. Our traditional
epistemic norms have something to say about when S should settle \( Q \) —
those norms bear on when S’s evidence is good enough to believe an answer
to \( Q \), whether S knows \( Q \), and so on. Our traditional epistemic norms are,
by and large, norms for belief.

I’m going to call this model or way of thinking of epistemic normativ-
ity and epistemic norms, the ‘doxastic paradigm’ in normative epistemol-
y. According to the doxastic paradigm, epistemic norms are norms that
bear almost exclusively on having, forming, revising, maintaining (etc.) be-
liefs and other belief-like attitudes, e.g., credences, knowledge.

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1Worth noting: an inquiry can be settled — in the sense at issue in this discussion —
without being successfully settled. For instance, an inquirer can settle their question (in
the relevant sense) by coming to believe a false answer to that question.

2The Greek adjective ‘ζητητικός’ means ‘disposed to inquire’. I’m using the word slightly
differently, to mean ‘related to inquiry’. Thanks to Harvey Lederman for suggesting the
term.

3For the sake of readability. I’ll often just use ‘should’ in thinking about the various nor-
mative questions that we can ask about a course of inquiry and the various zetetic norms
themselves, even though I think we can talk about all sorts of other normative modalities
as well, e.g., permissions, reasons, justification, and so on.

4If you don’t think that knowledge is a species of belief, then the name ‘doxastic
paradigm’ might be less than perfectly apt, but I hope it’s clear enough what’s intended.
While norms for settling inquiries and believing the answers to questions are (of course) extremely important, they are clearly not the only sorts of norms that bear on how to inquire. What I want to explore in this paper is a picture of normative epistemology that includes norms that bear on INQUIRY from start to finish, rather than just one small part of INQUIRY. If we start doing epistemology by asking what we should believe (or when we know) we've started too late to get the full scope of inquiry in view. So, if the norms of epistemology are going to fully speak to the question of how to inquire, then we'll want more than just norms for belief and believing — we'll want to move beyond the doxastic paradigm.

Let's call the new, more expansive picture of epistemology I want to explore, the 'zetetic paradigm' in normative epistemology. Sometimes I'll just call it 'zetetic epistemology'. Zetetic epistemology gives us norms for the whole of inquiry, from start to finish. Moving from the doxastic paradigm in epistemology to the zetetic paradigm — what I'll call (with apologies) 'taking the zetetic turn' — means moving to thinking of the norms of epistemology as speaking to the entire process of inquiry.

I am taking it as uncontroversial that there are norms that bear on all of the various points and stages of INQUIRY: there are norms for when to open questions, how best to proceed in active inquiry, which experiments to perform when, and so on. It is decidedly more controversial whether these sorts of norms can count as properly epistemic norms. I'm not going to spend too much time defending the claim that these new zetetic norms are epistemic, in part because of the somewhat conditional or experimental program of this paper: I'm exploring what normative epistemology would look like if we took the zetetic turn.

That said, part of the reason the experiment is worth running is that there's some plausibility to the thought that these other norms of inquiry

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5 Hookway (2006) also talks about a doxastic paradigm in epistemology and I think he and I are using the label in mostly the same way. He calls the competing inquiry-focused paradigm, "epistemology as a theory of inquiry". This paper is going to unfold very differently from Hookway's, but I nonetheless think that our general aims are largely in sync.

6 I want to be a bit more precise about what taking the zetetic turn amounts to. It doesn't require accepting the very strong claim that every zetetic norm is epistemic (although at the end of the day that may well be true). It does require accepting the claim that epistemic norms bear on parts of inquiry other than belief formation, and even that norms of inquiry are by and large or predominantly epistemic. Throughout, when I describe taking the zetetic turn as accepting that 'norms of inquiry are epistemic', this can be read as a generic claim and doesn't need to be thought of as an exceptionless generalization.
are epistemic norms. I want to make a few general comments about the
connection between the epistemic and the zetetic now, and later, once
more specific zetetic norms are discussed, I’ll make a few more specific
comments about their claims to being epistemic.

Epistemology already tells us what to do when evidence comes in. And
sometimes evidence does just happen to come in — a bird flies by, thunder
booms, someone tells you the big news, you smell coffee in the morning,
and so on. In these sorts of cases, there’s a sense in which we learn things
almost by accident or inadvertently: we simply take in information easily
available to us. But often we make efforts to have certain kinds of evidence
come in or to learn something new. If I want to know whether Jess is at
work today, I might go downstairs to her office, and if I want to figure out
whether this liquid is water or alcohol I might smell it or put a drop of it on
some plastic and see if it beads up, and so on. In these cases I do things
to make it that I end up with certain kinds of information — effectively, I
perform an experiment or ask a question (of the world, perhaps) and put
myself in the position to get an answer.\footnote{Jaakko Hintikka — in e.g., Hintikka \cite{Hintikka1981} — describes his interrogative model of sci-
tific inquiry as one according to which scientific inquiry centrally involves “putting ques-
tions to nature”. Hintikka claims to be borrowing the metaphor from Kant, who may have
been borrowing it from Francis Bacon.}

When we learn as the result of an
experiment that we design and execute, our learning is not accidental but
intentional or by design. The doxastic paradigm has had a lot to say about
accidental learning, but much less about learning by design.

In fact, insofar as the doxastic paradigm has been concerned with learn-
ing by design, it’s been largely concerned with the very end of that process,
when the subject believes an answer (this is point \textit{C} on \textit{INQUIRY} again). But
it’s not clear to me why only that last moment deserves epistemic scrutiny.
When we learn as the result of an inquiry or experiment, we do things in or-
der to end up with the information we want and need. Those acts, whether
mental or bodily, are acts aimed at getting knowledge or understanding.
Doesn’t that put them under the scope of epistemic evaluation? They are
acts or processes designed to leave us knowing more and understanding
better.

It’s also not obvious to me that accidental and intentional learning are
different in kind rather than largely continuous. For some inspiration on
But experience may be acquired in two ways: either, first, by noticing facts as they occur, without any attempt to influence the frequency of their occurrence, or to vary the circumstances under which they occur; this is observation; or, secondly, by putting in action causes and agents over which we have control, and purposely varying their combinations, and noticing what effects take place; this is experiment. To these two sources we must look as the fountains of all natural science. It is not intended, however, by thus distinguishing observation from experiment, to place them in any kind of contrast. Essentially they are much alike, and differ rather in degree than in kind; so that, perhaps, the terms passive and active observation might better express their distinction; but it is, nevertheless, highly important to mark the different states of mind in inquiries carried on by their respective aids, as well as their different effects in promoting the progress of science. In the former, we sit still and listen to a tale, told us, perhaps obscurely, piecemeal, and at long intervals of time, with our attention more or less awake. It is only by after-rumination that we gather its full import; and often, when the opportunity is gone by, we have to regret that our attention was not more particularly directed to some point which, at the time, appeared of little moment, but of which we at length appreciate the importance. In the latter, on the other hand, we cross-examine our witness, and by comparing one part of his evidence with the other, while he is yet before us, and reasoning upon it in his presence, are enabled to put pointed and searching questions, the answer to which may at once enable us to make up our minds. (Herschel (1831), pp. 76-7)

Following Herschel, we can think of the distinction between merely happening upon evidence on the one hand, and updating our beliefs in response to investigations and experiments on the other, as a distinction between passive and active updating or passive and active learning. With this sort of continuity it's hard to make a case that only one kind of learning or one kind of updating falls under the scope of epistemic evaluation.

All of this makes salient some of the theoretical appeal of thinking of norms of inquiry as epistemic norms (and so of taking the zetetic turn). In general, the norms of epistemology are the norms rational subjects in pursuit of knowledge and understanding are going to conform to. But that
also describes the norms of inquiry. There is a clear theoretical unity between the epistemic norms the doxastic paradigm already focuses on and the norms of good inquiry: they are the norms that rational subjects trying to know more and understand better are going to follow.

Given this, it's at least tempting to conceive of the norms of inquiry as epistemic norms. The rest of this paper looks at some aspects of the picture of epistemic normativity that results if we give in to this temptation. What will normative epistemology look like if we take the zetetic turn?

3 NEW NORMATIVE QUESTIONS

Inquiring is an activity that a subject engages in over an interval of time. INQUIRY represents a version of this sort of interval with canonical moments and sub-intervals picked out. While there are surely other moments or stretches of time over the course of inquiry that are worth reflecting on further, the ones I've chosen to bring to the fore will help us to organize some starting questions about some new sorts of epistemic norms the zetetic turn will bring. In particular, the three labeled points on INQUIRY represent three key occurrences over the course of inquiry: first, when a question is put on an inquirer's research agenda/opened in thought, next when an inquirer begins to actively investigate the question, and then when an inquirer settles the question. These points will help structure the discussion in this section. My plan is to raise a few of the new normative questions that arise around these key points and at least gesture in the direction of some answers to those questions.

3.1 OPENING QUESTIONS

There was a long stretch of my life during which I had never even considered what ‘S.S.’ stood for (phase 1 of INQUIRY). During this time that question was not on my research agenda and had never been. Was that OK? Should I have started thinking about that question sooner? And during phase 2, I had that question open or on the agenda, but I wasn't doing much of anything to resolve it. Was that OK? Should I have moved to active inquiry more quickly? Should I have even been curious or wondering about boat prefixing in the first place?
To start to answer these normative questions we’ll want a better sense of just what happens at point A, or just what it takes to have a question on one’s research agenda. In some of my other work, I’ve argued for a particular way of answering this question, and that answer can give us part of a framework for answering the normative questions about this early stage of inquiry that we’re interested in now. The framework puts suspension of judgment, and so by extension traditional epistemic concerns, front and centre. Let me briefly connect those dots.

So far, in describing the sort of attitude one has towards \( Q \) when \( Q \) is on one’s agenda or open in thought, I’ve been making reference to familiar folk psychological attitudes like being curious about \( Q \) or wondering about \( Q \). In Friedman (2017) and Friedman (2019a) I explored the broader class of attitudes that includes curiosity and wondering as central members. I called these the ‘interrogative attitudes’. Some key interrogative attitudes are curiosity, wondering, contemplating, deliberation, and pondering, but this list is not exhaustive. To understand what it takes to have a question on our agenda or to open a question in thought we need look no further than the interrogative attitudes. More specifically, I think we should say that \( Q \) is on one’s research agenda at \( t \) iff one has an interrogative attitude towards \( Q \) at \( t \).

It’s worth making clear why these attitudes can play this role. Interrogative attitudes are a kind of ‘question-directed attitude’ — a kind of attitude that has a question as its content or object. But not every question-directed attitude is an interrogative attitude. Compare wondering about \( Q \) and being curious about \( Q \) (both interrogative attitudes) with grasping \( Q \) and understanding \( Q \). When I’m wondering about \( Q \) or curious about \( Q \), I am questioning or asking \( Q \). When I’m wondering about what the weather tomorrow will be like or curious about what kind of flower that is, I (loosely speaking) want to know the answers to those questions.

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8See Friedman (2013) for an extensive discussion of question-directed attitudes. I am not the only (nor the first) one to have argued that some attitudes are question-directed in this way. For instance, Whitcomb (2010) argued that curiosity is directed at questions and Carruthers (2018) argued that questioning attitudes are among the foundations of human and animal minds.

9The ‘loosely speaking’ is important. I don’t think we want this sort of “questioning” attitude to literally be a meta-cognitive one, e.g., a desire to be in a certain kind of epistemic state. There are all sorts of reasons to think that gets the phenomenon we’re after here wrong. See Carruthers (2018) for a good discussion.
trast, grasping $Q^3$ or understanding $Q^3$ — which also seem like attitudes directed at $Q^3$ itself — don’t need to involve this sort of wanting to know or asking. That I understand the question, ‘What kind of flower is that?’ is entirely compatible with my not wanting to know the answer and with my already knowing the answer. Having an interrogative attitudes means having a question-directed attitude that additionally involves the relevant sort of “wanting to know” or “asking”.

When we come to have interrogative attitudes towards questions, we effectively ask those questions in thought. But this is exactly how we should be thinking about research agendas: a research agenda is a record of all the questions a subject has open in thought, all of the questions they want answers to. So, at point A on INQUIRY, S comes to have an interrogative attitude towards $Q^3$.

But, as I argued in Friedman (2017), having an interrogative attitude towards some question necessarily involves suspending judgment about that question. When we’re curious about $Q^3$ or wondering about $Q^3$ or contemplating $Q^3$ (etc.), we’re suspending judgment about $Q^3$. A subject who has an interrogative attitude towards $Q^3$ at $t$ is suspending judgment about $Q^3$ at $t$.

Altogether this gets us two claims: First, $Q^3$ is on one’s research agenda at $t$ iff one has an interrogative attitude towards $Q^3$ at $t$. Second, one has an interrogative attitude towards $Q^3$ at $t$ only if one is suspending judgment about $Q^3$ at $t$. Every question on one’s research agenda is a question about which one is suspending judgment. And putting a question on one’s research agenda necessarily involves suspending judgment about that question.

If all of this is right, then we have two important pieces of insight into what it is to have a question open in thought or on one’s research agenda:

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10In characterizing the interrogative attitudes as “askings”, I mean to be comparing them to the speech act. The central use of uttering an interrogative sentence is to try to get an answer to the question expressed by that interrogative sentence. We ask questions because we want answers. But these characterizations extend to attitudes like wondering and curiosity: these attitudes are expressions of our desire to know answers, and sometimes involve our trying to figure something out.

11I’ve only given a partial list of interrogative attitudes, but hopefully the general characterization makes the contours of the class sufficiently clear for now. Carruthers (2018) talks about a generic “questioning” attitude, which I think is also helpful for thinking about the relevant class here, as well as about the sort of attitude subjects have towards $Q^3$ when $Q^3$ is on their agenda.
first via the interrogative attitudes and second, via suspension of judgment. I think both can give us some guidance as to how to start to think about norms for opening questions. Many of the interrogative attitudes are entirely familiar and so we have some pre-theoretical insight into when attitudes like that may be appropriate and when they may not be. Should one be curious about a question whose answer one already knows? How about a question whose answer one knows one will never be able to know? Are there rational constraints on wondering? For instance, if you're wondering about whether Joe or Ali went to the party, then plausibly you should also be wondering about whether Joe went to the party or wondering about whether Ali went to the party (or wondering about both).

And beyond the interrogative attitudes, my framework puts suspension of judgment at the core of the sort of inquiry-theoretic question openness we're interested in. This makes suspension of judgment central to inquiry's start (and more if we think — as I do — that inquirers have questions open in thought across the whole of inquiry). Suspension of judgment is not a familiar folk psychological attitude, but it is one of the main doxastic attitudes that epistemologists think about (and that they have been thinking about through the ages). But now it looks as though norms for opening questions are — at least in part — norms for suspension of judgment. For instance, it now seems right that any case in which we shouldn't suspend judgment about \( Q \) is a case in which we shouldn't have \( Q \) on our research agendas. Moreover, that suspension of judgment is so central to this early stage of inquiry and question openness in general, makes something else quite clear: epistemic considerations are also going to be central.\(^{12}\)

Beyond the connections between the interrogative attitudes, suspension of judgment, and the relevant kind of openness, we should expect other familiar sorts of norms to extend to this early part of inquiry. For instance, just as our beliefs are subject to some coherence constraints, so too should open questions be. First, what one believes and knows should co-
here in various ways with the questions one has on one’s agenda. In other work I’ve articulated a couple of coherence constraints of this sort. In Friedman (2017) I argued for an ‘Ignorance Norm’ for knowledge and the interrogative attitudes: subjects shouldn’t both know \( Q \) at \( t \) and have an interrogative attitude towards \( Q \) at \( t \). And in Friedman (2019a) I argued for an analogous coherence norm for open questions and certain kinds of beliefs. There I argued that one should not have \( Q \) open in thought and believe a complete answer to \( Q \) at the same time. Of course, these norms just scratch the surface of how the things we know/believe and the things we ask should interact.

Second, we should expect that there will be coherence constraints on our research agendas themselves. We can find some guidance on the shape that some of these constraints might take in the extensive discussions on both the semantics of interrogatives and logics for questions\(^{13}\). Both of these literatures tell us something about the logical relations between questions, e.g., about question equivalence and entailment relations. And just as in the case of propositional logic, these logical relations are going to be closely connected to various inference rules and coherence constraints (but for interrogative attitudes now).

This is obviously only a start at what norms for having questions open will look like. So far though many of these sorts of norms have good claims to being epistemic norms. Might there be norms for opening questions that are sensitive to non-epistemic considerations? Might there be thoroughly practical or moral reasons or be curious? Perhaps. The sorts of considerations that encourage us to think that non-epistemic considerations are relevant to what to believe and when might well extend in interesting ways to what to question and when.\(^{14}\)

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\(^{13}\)For a nice overview of some of this, see, Groenendijk and Stokhof (1994).

\(^{14}\)Some recent examples: Moss (2018), Basu (2019), and Rinard (2019). It’s important to distinguish the question of whether there are non-epistemic reasons to open questions from the question of whether there are non-epistemic reasons to gather evidence on some matter. If my mother really wants me to gather evidence relevant to some question, that may well provide me with a (non-epistemic) reason to gather evidence. It’s not clear that it provides me with a reason to be curious about the question or anything like that though. Smith (2014) argues that we sometimes have a moral duty to gather information. This conclusion isn’t directly about opening or re-opening questions, although we might finds ways to extend it in that direction.
3.2 ACTIVE INVESTIGATION

When does an inquiry start? Where on INQUIRY should we place the start of inquiry? Is it at point A, when S first becomes curious about a question? Or point B, when they start acting in the service of the question they are curious about, when they actually begin trying to resolve that question? Might it come even earlier than A, before S has even really formulated the question they want to answer and is just poking around somewhat more aimlessly? I'm not sure there's a clear answer. With respect to point A versus point B: On the one hand, in some sense of ‘inquiring’ I can be curious about a question but not be inquiring into that question. On the other, that I’m curious about $Q^3$ seems to make $Q^3$ an object of inquiry for me in some, at least minimal, sense. What is more clear, I think, is that there can be all sorts of questions on a subject’s research agenda at a time that they aren’t actively investigating or inquiring into at that time. They may be curious about these questions, or even wondering about them, but they aren’t doing anything to resolve them. One shifts to actively inquiring into a question when one shifts to genuinely trying to figure out the answer to that question.

This notion of active inquiry is obviously itself vague. What is required of a subject that they count as trying to figure something out? I assume this sort of active inquiry is fairly continuous with the more passive or minimal notion of inquiry I’ve mentioned. In both cases, subjects want answers to questions and have some sort of epistemic aim or goal. Subjects who are actively inquiring though are doing things — performing mental and bodily actions — in attempts to answer their questions. Even if it's not clear exactly where the line between active and more passive inquiry should go (or if there even is a line), active inquiry is something entirely familiar. When I sift through the papers on my desk to try to find that bill, or try to work out what 34°C is in °F, or ask the waiter whether some dish is vegetarian, or watch a video about how to disassemble my fan, and so on (and so on), I’m actively inquiring in the sense at issue.

If one's having even mild curiosity about $Q^7$ at $t$ is sufficient to make it that $Q^7$ is on one's research agenda at $t$, then it looks as though a typical research agenda is fairly populous. Our research agendas are records of all of the things we (even faintly) want or need to know at a time: from
our long-term research projects and life's great mysteries to the hyper-local questions that we need to answer to navigate the physical spaces we're in and our truly idle and trifling curiosities, as well as everything in between.

Whichever way we conceive of active investigation, I am assuming that we cannot actively investigate all of the questions on our research agendas at the same time. Perhaps we can actively investigate more than one question at a time, but there are fairly strict limits here given how much attention and effort active inquiry requires. This means there's something of a bottleneck at point B on INQUIRY. Under what conditions should we take up the task of genuinely trying to figure out the answer to some question on our agenda?

The answer here strikes me as being a function of a complex cluster of considerations. The questions on a research agenda can be ordered in a variety of ways at a given time: by intensity of the subject's curiosity, by the intensity of a more general need to know, by the value of getting or having answers, by the value of undertaking investigation, by the likelihood of getting an answer, by the ease/difficulty of investigation, and so on. I take it that all of these (and more), as well as the subject's beliefs about all of these, are going to be relevant to norms for which questions should move through the bottleneck and become objects of active investigation.

Once a question does become an object of active investigation new sorts of norms become relevant. A lot can happen over a period of active inquiry. If I'm investigating why my computer stopped working, that could be an extended project during which I have to gather a lot of information and perform a number of tests. It could take hours or days. Over the course of this inquiry I am likely to perform a range of actions: mental actions like drawing inferences, making judgments, and focusing my attention, as well as regular old bodily actions. To figure out what's going on with my computer I might do some Google searches, talk to people, take my computer to the Apple Store, unscrew and unplug things, and much more.

Clearly, there are all sorts of norms that bind inquirers as they actively inquire: at any given time over such a stretch there will be some things it

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15The situation is slightly trickier than this. Should the mere fact that a question makes it through the bottleneck mean that the norms of active inquiry kick in with respect to that question? Even if it's not at all the question that should have made it through? For now, we can leave these sorts of questions aside although they surely need to be addressed eventually.
would be best (or at least better) to do given what one is trying to figure out, and others it would be completely unreasonable to do, and lots in between. If I'm trying to figure out what's wrong with my computer, I can take it to the Apple Store. I can also throw it out my window. Other things equal, one of these actions is far more likely to result in my figuring out what's wrong with my computer, which is highly relevant to which I should do.

In this sense, one key class of zetetic norms are 'strategic' norms: they are norms that speak to which of the various courses of action you should be taking if you want to figure out $Q$. If you want to know whether you turned the stove off when you're sitting in the living room, one option is to get up, walk to the kitchen and have a look. Another is to leave the house, drive to the office, from there call your neighbour who has a key to your house, ask the neighbour to look at your stove, and then have them write the answer down in a letter and mail that to you at the office. Another is to work on building some sort of x-ray device that can see through the wall to your kitchen. And this list of strategies for figuring out whether your stove is on can keep going. The norms of inquiry will tell us that some of these courses of action are better than others and why, as well as which courses of action we should take and why.

These sorts of strategic norms are obviously not our typical epistemic norms. First, proceeding in inquiry often involves performing bodily actions and so these strategic norms will sometimes tell us which bodily actions we should perform when. Second, our standard epistemic norms aren't typically comparative in the way that these strategic norms are. Which judgment I should make or inference I should draw at a time aren't usually questions epistemologists answer with reference to which others I

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16What it takes for some strategy, or course of action, or individual action to be better than some other in this context is itself not a straightforward matter. It certainly seems as though efficiency matters (and see Kelly (2004, 2007) for some discussion about how to think about “truth-finding” efficiency), but other features may matter as well, e.g., loveliness, relaxing-ness, etc.

17I take it that most readers will be comfortable with the thought that there are epistemic norms for all sorts of mental actions — coming to believe, suspending judgment, inferring, and so on. The claim that there are epistemic norms for bodily action is more controversial. Certainly, there's a conservative line of thought in epistemology that draws a sharp line between mental and bodily action, claiming that the former, but not the latter can be epistemically evaluated. Some of the language in Feldman (2000) and Kelly (2003) seems to support this conservative line of thought. I don't subscribe to the conservative view; hopefully this paper brings out some of why. For some recent debate about epistemic norms for action see: Booth (2006, 2009), Rowbottom (2008), and Simion (2018).
could make or draw instead or what else I could be doing at that moment. But it does look as though these sorts of (contrast) considerations are going to be normatively relevant now.

That said, I think these strategic norms are also plausibly epistemic. The actions that we perform over the course of our inquiries are (in the good case, at least) tools for figuring things out. If I’m in the car and I want to know whether the fabric on the ceiling is wet, I might raise my arm and feel the fabric with my hand. This simple action is a kind of experiment — it’s an action designed to get me information or evidence. When I want to figure out why my computer stopped working, I might try plugging it in to a different outlet. Again, this is a test designed to help me figure something out (Is it the outlet? No). But if actions done in the service of trying to figure something out can be thought of as experiments, then it looks as though they can (and should) be epistemically evaluated: Was the action/experiment well designed? Did it result in knowledge? Was it a reliable method for figuring the relevant thing out? How efficient was it (and is that efficient enough)? Did it yield the right sort of information? And so on.  

So far we’ve thought a bit about points A and B and phases 1 - 3 along INQUIRY. I’ve sketched out some of the sorts of norms that are going to be relevant to these parts of inquiry and pointed out the plausibility of those norms being epistemic norms. Taking the zetetic turn will mean including the sorts of norms I’ve been discussing in the domain of epistemic normativity.

3.3 CLOSING QUESTIONS

Inquiries can end in a variety of ways. I can fall out of love with some question or find pursuing it too taxing. I can also end my inquiry if I (take myself to) have answered the question I’m investigating. In this latter sort of case, I settle or close my question. In Friedman (2019a), I argued that believing a complete answer to Q? is a way of settling Q?. If that’s right, then norms for settling are already epistemologists’ bread and butter. Whether S should

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18 Also on this: “collecting evidence” is one of the primary actions an inquirer performs. But one does not collect evidence without acquiring evidence, and acquiring evidence necessarily involves acquiring information or knowledge or making some sort of changes to one’s doxastic or epistemic state. So “collecting evidence” is, in this sense, a hybrid action essentially involving epistemic updates. Doesn’t that make it worthy of epistemic evaluation?
settle or close $Q^3$ is going to be a function of things like: whether S is in a position to know the answer to $Q^3$, whether S's evidence is sufficiently good to justify believing an answer to $Q^3$, and so on. These are our traditional epistemic questions and concerns.

Since epistemologists have already had so much to say about when we should believe and what we're in a position to know, I'm not going to spend more time thinking about this stage of inquiry here. This is not to say that there's not more to say here, nor that thinking about our traditional epistemic concerns through a zetetic lens, won't help shed new light on them.

At this point, it might look as though taking the zetetic turn is a fairly straightforward expansion project. Recipe: take our familiar epistemic norms for belief and belief revision, add some norms for other sorts of acts and states that are also central to our inquiries, and we're done. I don't think the zetetic turn is quite this straightforward though.

Here is my worry. There is fairly widespread agreement among those working within the doxastic paradigm about what some of the central norms for belief and belief revision look like, e.g., basing a belief in good evidence will leave that belief justified. But the new norms we're thinking about adding to epistemology don't harmonize all that well with these central norms for belief and belief revision. As I said earlier, focusing on the question of how to inquire may force us to rethink some of our traditional answers to the question of what to believe.

4 OLD NORMATIVE ANSWERS?

Once we start thinking about expanding epistemology in the ways I've suggested, we naturally start to think about how well the new epistemic norms fit with our old ones. The way I structured the discussion in the last section might give the impression that the new norms aren't even going to interact all that much with our older ones: the new norms appear to be norms for different parts of inquiry than our old norms were.

While I think that's to some extent accurate (and does reflect the structure of the last section), it doesn't quite capture the reach of our traditional epistemic norms. We can go back to INQUIRY to see this. INQUIRY represents an interval of time. While some canonical moments were highlighted on INQUIRY, that hardly tells us everything that happened to/with S over
that interval. For instance, if \textit{INQUIRY} represents my boat prefixing inquiry, the stretch of time between point A and point C might be a few days. Over that stretch of days a great deal of information and evidence was available to me. I wasn't in a sensory deprivation tank during those days, but was out in the world where there was lots of knowledge to be had. So, all sorts of information — information not at all relevant to my boat prefixing inquiry, e.g., all of the information in front of my eyes while I was on my walk, and back at home, when I went to work and the gym, and so on — was available to me at most times throughout those few days between A and C; any time at which I was awake, we can assume. But norms for belief and belief revision are relevant whenever information is available. And that means that there's a sense in which our old epistemic norms have normative relevance across much of \textit{INQUIRY} (and inquiry).

This makes the risk of disharmony between our new epistemic norms and the old ones greater. Could there be tension at various points, with our old epistemic norms telling inquirers one thing and our new epistemic norms telling them another? I imagine this could happen at a number of spots over the course of inquiry, but in this section I want to briefly bring out one place at which I think it will happen regularly.\footnote{For a much more detailed discussion of the sort of tension I'm going to draw out in the rest of this section, see Friedman (2019b).}

Recall, some of the norms that are relevant in active inquiry (phase 3 on \textit{INQUIRY}) are what I called ‘strategic’ norms. In active inquiry we are actively trying to resolve some question. Take some time $t$ during phase 3. There may be all sorts of things S (our inquirer) can do at $t$. Some of those things may be means to S's resolving their question, and others may not. And among the available means, some may be clearly much better than others.

So, at $t$ there is a lot S can do. And this ‘do’ doesn't only range over bodily action, like talking to people or looking under the rug or typing something into a computer. It also ranges over mental action like drawing inferences, making judgments/forming beliefs, coming to know, searching memory, and so on. Let's say that $\mathcal{A}$ is the set of all the things S is in a position to do at $t$ (again, some arbitrary time in phase 3). The strategic norms for active inquiry are going to tell us which acts in $\mathcal{A}$ S is allowed to do and which they
are not allowed to do.\textsuperscript{20} There is room for discussion about what this “permissibility partition” of \( A \) will look like: there might be only one optimal permissible act or many permissible acts. If we assume that S should take some means to their end of figuring out \( Q^7 \) at \( t \) (rather than doing something that’s not a means at all), then I think we should at least say that there will be many acts in \( A \) that S is not permitted to do at \( t \). This is simply because many of the things S can do at a typical time are not going to be means to their figuring out \( Q^7 \).

Now let’s focus on a subset of \( A, B \): the set of all the beliefs that S is in a position to form at \( t \). Some of our old epistemic norms partition \( B \) in a familiar way: some of those acts of belief formation are permissible — those that are based in the right kind of evidence, or involve deploying reliable methods, or result in S knowing — and the rest are impermissible. So, our old epistemic norms induce a permissibility bipartition or split on \( B \).

The question now is whether our new, strategic epistemic norms induce the same permissibility split on \( B \). If S comes to believe \( p \) at \( t \), will our old epistemic norms and our new epistemic norms always agree on whether that act of belief formation was epistemically permissible? There is no reason to assume at the outset that they will. Our new epistemic norms split \( B \) according to which are (good, best) means to S’s end of figuring out \( Q^7 \) at \( t \), and our old epistemic norms split \( B \) according to (say) which beliefs fit S’s evidence at \( t \). We cannot assume those permissibility partitions coincide.

And we have reason to think that they don’t. Although I cannot go into all the detail I would like to here, I want to sketch out why I think not only that these two splits will not coincide, but why that lack of coincidence will be fairly significant.

First — and very briefly — we should expect that there will be cases in which some judgments that are impermissible according to our old epistemic norms are permissible according to our new ones. For instance, Firth-style cases seem to extend easily to inquiring. Plausibly, S is more likely to succeed in their inquiry into \( Q^7 \) if they believe they will be able to figure out \( Q^7 \), whether or not the evidence supports such a belief. If \( Q^7 = \text{‘Are the mind and body identical?’} \), then S’s evidence makes it look

\textsuperscript{20}By ‘acts’ here I just mean that these are things we do. I don’t mean to take a stand on whether the act of forming a belief is an intentionally or metaphysically robust action.
fairly unlikely that they will be the one to properly settle $Q^i$. But if that's what S is working on then plausibly they should think they have a decent chance. Other sorts of questions might also make it that some judgments that our old epistemic norms won't permit are permissible according to our new ones. For example, if S is trying to figure out whether they can make a completely unreasonable judgment, then aren't they allowed to try to do that?

These cases are interesting and do show that our old and new permissibility partitions of $B$ will not coincide perfectly. These sorts of cases strike me as somewhat rarefied and marginal though. For some very specific kinds of questions, or some very specific kinds of beliefs about our success in inquiry, we can find some divergence. More interesting, and both much more general and much more widespread, is a different kind of normative divergence. To get the sketch of this divergence out let's call the permissibility bipartition induced on $B$ by our old epistemic norms $B_o$ and the one induced by our new strategic epistemic norms $B_n$. And by 'judging' I mean nothing more (or less) than 'coming to believe'.

What I want to think about now are the judgments on the impermissible side of $B_n$. And here we don't need to think about any special kinds of questions, a generic $Q^j$ will do. So, all we need to consider now is a typical inquirer (S), inquiring into any old $Q^j$ at a typical time ($t$) during active inquiry. What's the shape of $B_o$ and $B_n$ there? If $t$ is a typical time during active inquiry, when S is awake and alert, then there will be a huge number of judgments S can make at $t$. Let's focus on the ones on the permissible side of $B_o$: these are judgments that are based on good evidence, or are reasonable, or result in knowledge (and the like). Many of these available judgments will have nothing at all to do with $Q^j$ though. If this is a typical inquiry, then, as I've already noted, S will be actively inquiring out in the world where all sorts of information is readily available. So, for a generic $Q^j$ and generic $t$ during active inquiry, we can isolate a set of judgments that are epistemically impeccable judgments according to our old epistemic norms, but are judgments not at all relevant to $Q^j$ or to S's resolving $Q^j$. Let's call this set of judgments, $K_{\bar{q}}$. To be clear, $K_{\bar{q}}$ is a subset of $B$, and $B$ is the set of all of the judgments S is in a position to make or can make or is able to make at $t$. Were S to make any judgment in $K_{\bar{q}}$, that
judgment would be both epistemically impeccable (according to our old epistemic norms) and not relevant to $Q^j$ or resolving $Q^j$.

We can assume that for most any judgment in $K_{\bar{q}}$, $S$'s making that judgment at $t$ will not count as $S$'s taking a means to resolving $Q^j$ at $t$ at all. It's not just that $S$'s making these judgments won't amount to $S$'s taking the best means they can to resolving $Q^j$ at $t$, but that $S$'s making those judgments at $t$ will not count as their taking any sort of means at all to their resolving $Q^j$. Given this, so long as we assume that if $S$ is actively trying to resolve $Q^j$ at $t$ they should take a means — any at all — to resolving $Q^j$ at $t$, then $S$'s making a judgment in $K_{\bar{q}}$ will not be permissible according to our new epistemic norms. So, while $K_{\bar{q}}$ is on the permissible side of $B_o$, it's on the impermissible side of $B_n$.

It's important to be clear about how to think about what's going to be in $K_{\bar{q}}$. A typical active inquiry happens in an environment absolutely rife with available knowledge, most of which is not going to be at all relevant to that inquiry. First, inquiries typically take place out in the world where all sort of perceptual information is being presented to inquirers. And second, typical inquirers begin their inquiries with vast bodies of knowledge already in place — the knowledge they've acquired over their lifetimes — and those bodies of knowledge can be extended inferentially at a typical time as well. So at $t$, our generic time during active inquiry, $S$ can easily come to know a lot. But very little of that knowledge needs to be relevant to $S$'s inquiry into $Q^j$. Say I call you to find out what 'S.S.' stands for, and you tell me the answer. Over the course of that phone call, there is tons I can come to know perceptually and inferentially that has absolutely nothing to do with boats, prefixes, my inquiry, and so on. Whether I'm calling from the park or my house or my office there will be plenty of perceptual information available that is not at all relevant to my inquiry; and the same is true for the overwhelming majority of the ways in which I can inferentially extend my knowledge at that time. In general now: at $t$ there is a huge amount that $S$ is in a position to (say) know by perception and inference. Many (and perhaps even all) of these judgments are in $K_{\bar{q}}$ and so are judgments it's not permissible for $S$ to make according to our new strategic epistemic norms.

This brings out at least one way in which $B_o$ and $B_n$ are going to be very different. Huge swaths of judgments that are on the permissible side
of $B_o$ are going to be on the impermissible side of $B_n$. So, we have our old epistemic norms saying that this huge swath of judgments are all perfectly epistemically permissible judgments for $S$ to make at $t$ — they are based in excellent evidence and/or amount to knowledge — but our new strategic epistemic norms saying that $S$'s making those judgments at $t$ is not epistemically permissible (given that they are not means to $S$'s resolving $Q^*$ at all). A zetetic epistemology that simply builds on and expands the scope of doxastic epistemology looks somewhat incoherent. Is it epistemically permissible or not for $S$ to make those judgments at $t$?

Of course, there is a lot more to say about what basically amounts to a sketch of an argument for this disconnect or even discord between our old epistemic norms and the new epistemic norms we'll get if we take the zetetic turn. To move beyond this mere sketch we'd need to hear more about means and ends, what counts as relevance to $Q^*$, what information is available to an inquirer at a time, rational constrains on temporally extended activities, and more. Obviously that sort of discussion is beyond the scope of this paper. I hope the contours are clear, at least. In effect, our new strategic epistemic norms are going to tell us what we should do at a given time in active inquiry by comparing the various things we are in a position to do at that time according to the extent to which those things are means to our inquiry-theoretic ends. But one kind of thing we can do at most times during active inquiry is make all sorts of judgments. Many of those judgments will be both epistemically impeccable — in our old sense (e.g., result in our knowing something) — and not at all means to our inquiry-theoretic ends, which unfortunately means that they are not epistemically impeccable in our new sense.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Where does this leave us? The task of this paper was to explore a more inquiry-driven epistemology. And while that exploration was somewhat experimental, we have excellent reason to want epistemology to speak to all of inquiry — to tell us not just what to believe but how to inquire more generally. Even this cursory glance at where the zetetic turn will take us makes clear that it will expand the purview of the epistemic in a variety of ways. That said, shifting from our more traditional doxastic paradigm in episte-
mology to this new zetetic paradigm might not be a straightforward expansion project. Some answers we'll want to give to some of the new questions that arise about how to inquire don't harmonize perfectly well with some of the old answers we've been giving to the question of what to believe.

Moreover, part of the source of this discord might itself be hard to stomach. Part of the reason the strategic epistemic norms are in tension with our traditional epistemic norms is that the strategic norms are declaring that the making of certain traditionally impeccable judgments is not permitted. According to those new epistemic norms, it can easily be the case that our coming to know or our forming some belief in response to excellent evidence is not permitted. And that 'not permitted' is thoroughly epistemic once we take the zetetic turn. But could it really turn out epistemically impermissible to come to know $p$? Or epistemically impermissible to judge $p$ based on excellent evidence for $p$? So, beyond the fact that these sorts of epistemic verdicts are in conflict with our more traditional ones, they are somewhat troubling on their own terms.

Does all of this mean that we should abandon the zetetic paradigm? Not yet. We have good reason to take the zetetic turn and the fact that it seems to bump up against some old epistemic intuitions doesn't yet make it that we need to jump ship rather than more carefully investigate and explore the interaction between the epistemic and the zetetic. Besides, it's not clear how much of a reprieve we'd actually get by deciding against the zetetic turn. Here's a way to see this. Are our traditional epistemic norms norms of inquiry? If they are, then we'll have to say that the norms of inquiry fail to harmonize. And if they aren't then it becomes hard to see what epistemology is or what it's for. If our traditional epistemic norms are not the sorts norms we ought to conform to in order to successfully figure things out, then why should we conform to them at all?‡

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