

1. In some cases, "authority" is used to refer to someone or something that *is* an authority. E.g., one can be an authority in a field of knowledge, or one can be an authority in public life—these being two different ways of being an authority.

2. In other cases, "authority" refers to something that someone or something *has*. E.g., a justice of the peace is vested with, and therefore possesses, authority to marry persons; or we can speak of "the authority of the Bible," meaning thereby the authority that the Bible possesses.

3. Any account must distinguish between the person or thing that either *is* an authority or *has* authority, on the one hand, and the authority that she, he, or it either is or has, on the other.

4. And, as was indicated already in § 1 above, a person may be an authority in at least two different ways: she or he may be an authority in a certain field of knowledge and/or skill; or she or he may occupy a certain office or position that carries with it certain rights or powers and certain responsibilities.

5. In general, we may say that the bearer *X* is a *de facto* authority for the subject *Y* if, for some reason (*R*), they stand in the relation of superior to inferior in a certain domain (*D*), and if, as a result of this relation, *Y* acts in response to *X* in certain specifiable and appropriate ways with respect to *D*.

6. Thus *X* is a *de facto* authority for *Y* in *D* by reason (*R*) of *X*'s knowledge and/or skill if *Y* believes what *X* says with respect to *D*, or holds it to be true with a greater degree of probability, simply because *X* says it—or, alternatively, if *Y* does what *X* does, or says to do, simply because *X* does it, or says to do it.

7. On the other hand, *X* is a *de facto* authority for *Y* by reason (*R*) of *X*'s office or position in *D* if *Y* does what *X* commands in *D* simply because *X* commands it.

8. In general, the distinction between an executive authority and a nonexecutive authority (such as an epistemic authority with respect to some field of knowledge) implies that an executive authority has the right or power to act on or for someone else, while a nonexecutive authority does not.

9. If there is any *X* who is a legitimate epistemic authority with respect to *D*, it must be possible to attain knowledge with respect to *D* independently of belief on the word of another; and there must therefore be some criterion or criteria by which *X*'s claims to knowledge can be tested.

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