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authoritative, *adj.*

Pronunciation: ² Brit. /ɔːˈθɒrɪtətɪv/, U.S. /ɔˈθɔrəˌteɪdɪv/, /əˈθɔrəˌteɪdɪv/, /ɑˈθɔrəˌteɪdɪv/

Forms: 1600s **authoritatiue**, 1600s **autoritative**, 1600s– **authoritative**.

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: Formed within English, by derivation. **Etymons:** AUTHORITY *n.*, -ACTIVE *suffix*.

Etymology: < AUTHORITY *n.*: see -ACTIVE *suffix*.

Compare post-classical Latin *auctoritativus* ...

1. Issued by a person or group in authority; proceeding from an official source and requiring compliance or obedience. Also: of the nature of authority.

- 1606 R. BROUGHTON *Iust & Moderate Answer* sig. L2^v I referre the Reader to Knoxe himselfe, to know what authoritatiue Sermons to the Religious..they vsed, in commaunding the Nobles vnder penaltie of excommunication to assist them.
- 1615 E. HOBY *Curry-combe* iv. 166 This was that Vmpier vnto whose authoritatiue sentence Constantine wished the Bishops to stand.
- 1659 J. PEARSON *Expos. Apostles Creed* 83 Gods authoritative or potestative power.
- 1673 R. L'ESTRANGE *Toleration Discuss'd* (ed. 2) xx. 197 Authoritative Laws, and Impositions for the time to come.
- 1707 J. TURNER *Vindic. Rights & Privileges Christian Church* i. 15 Every thing in the Christian Church was then Order'd, and Settled, and Established, not only by their prudential Perswasion and Advice, but indeed by their authoritative Sanctions and Constitutions.
- 1774 E. BURKE *Speeches Arrival at Bristol* 15 Authoritative instructions; Mandates issued, which the Member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for.
- 1812 J. J. HENRY *Accurate Acct. Campaign against Quebec* 54 No firing without authoritative permission.
- 1853 J. B. MARSDEN *Hist. Early Puritans* (ed. 2) 265 An authoritative declaration of pardon.
- 1951 *ABA Jnl.* May 380/2 The lack of any central government to whom the Commander in Chief could look for authoritative instructions and support.
- 2005 L. B. PASCOE *Church & Reform* ii. 85 Ecclesiastical matters which because of their importance were regarded by canon law as reserved to the pope alone for final and authoritative judgement.

2. Of a text, statement, institution, etc.: possessing due or acknowledged authority; widely accepted or respected; definitive.

- 1625 R. BROUGHTON *2nd Pt. Protestants Plea* 23 By S. Paule so many testimonies before, and the publicke and authoritatiue exposition of English Protestants.
- 1653 J. GAUDEN *Hieraspistes* Pref. sig. e4 An authoritative ministry.

- 1664 H. MORE *Modest Enq. Myst. Iniquity* 449 A number sufficient to constitute an Authoritative Church.
- 1780 J. BENTHAM *Introd. Princ. Morals & Legisl.* (1789) xix. §22 A Book of expository Jurisprudence is either authoritative or unauthoritative.
- 1790 J. WILLIAMS *Shrove Tuesday* 28 Authoritative Oafs combine to teize Unhappy Oaflings—undiploma'd Curs.
- 1833 I. TAYLOR *Fanaticism* viii. 301 A written and authoritative canon of faith.
- 1871 W. MARKBY *Elem. Law* §42 Opinions which are not in a forensic sense authoritative.
- 1880 J. MUIRHEAD *Inst. of Gaius & Rules of Ulpian* Table of Authorities p. xxii The authoritative edition is that of Mommsen.
- 1949 H. A. R. GIBB *Mohammedanism* iii. 50 First ten and then seven famous 'reciters' were recognized as authoritative teachers and all their 'readings' were accepted as orthodox.
- 1992 F. MCLYNN *Hearts of Darkness* I. iii. 70 Their half-baked assessment of the case is still regarded as authoritative by many eminent Africanists today.
- 2008 *New Yorker* 21 Jan. 55/3 The most authoritative document that the intelligence community produces.

3. Of a person, his or her attributes, appearance, behaviour, etc.:
conveying an impression of authority; characterized by an air of authority;
commanding and self-confident.

- 1638 T. JACKSON *Treat. Consecration Sonne of God* I. xi. 57 The authoritative manner of bestowing their blessings.
- 1744 R. NORTH & M. NORTH *Life Sir D. North & Rev. J. North* 162 He was diligent, and in acting, authoritative.
- 1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* VI. XVIII. iv. 196 The first Time Thwackum ever wrote in this authoritative Stile to Allworthy.
- 1838 *Times* 30 Aug. 5/6 He was suddenly accosted by a man of ruffian-like appearance, who pleaded want, but asked for charity in an authoritative tone.
- 1883 J. A. FROUDE *Short Stud.* IV. II. iii. 199 He was never condescending with us, never didactic or authoritative.
- 1959 E. CONNELL *Mrs. Bridge* ciii. 214 Mabel in her tailored suits and with her authoritative masculine manner had always seemed the very picture of confidence.
- 1986 G. BENFORD & D. BRIN *Heart of Comet* (1987) I. 66 Ould-Harriad's clipped, authoritative voice was unmistakable.
- 2005 *Pilot* Oct. 42/1 Alan is quietly authoritative, and shows a great deal of tact in a job which requires careful handling of students, employees and super-wealthy passengers.