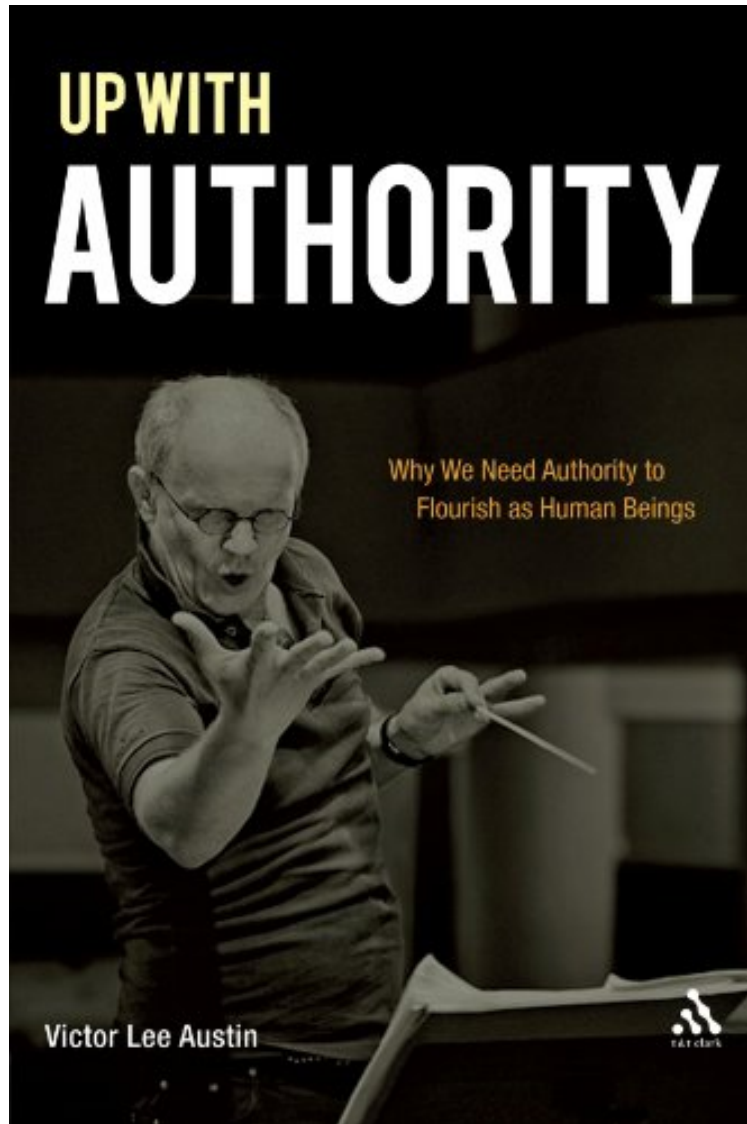


Up with Authority: Why We Need Authority to Flourish as Human Beings

Victor Lee Austin

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Victor Lee Austin : Up with Authority: Why We Need Authority to Flourish as Human Beings before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Up with Authority: Why We Need Authority to Flourish as Human Beings:

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"authority" or "leadership" in human society; is it necessity or are "free" people correct in rejecting authority. The author, Victor Austin, a teacher, theologian, and Episcopal priest, argues that "authority" is a human necessity deriving from the fact that men and women live in social communities by nature and choice and never have lived otherwise. Whether seen as authority, direction, leadership, and these terms do have different meanings and the author often uses "authority" in its various connotations, his point is that for individuals to flourish and be the best that they can be, maximizing their individual talents they must, paradoxically, have authoritative direction. At the same time, he shows that authority itself is not flawless (since it is human) and therefore to be questioned. This book is excellent corrective to the current popular thinking. The author clearly has given this matter great thought calling upon resources and writings over the centuries. His argument is clearly presented and while this book is clearly not for those looking for a little light reading before bedtime, the reading will be well rewarded.

A very topical contribution to the question of whether authority is needed and what it is good for.

His account is in no way naive. Indeed, his reflections on how 'we live with fallible authority' which would always be in season, are particularly timely just now.--National Our postmodern era views authority as something to be grimly endured -- or simply overthrown. Victor Austin writes against this antinomian sensibility. His clear, accessible and convincing analysis shows how moral, political, and religious authority brings order to society and beauty to the soul. --R. R. Reno, Department of Theology, Creighton University
Father Austin's style is energetic and engaging, his thought enriched by decades as priest, teacher, and theologian, and his thesis compels attention: social beings require authority to flourish, and we are social beings from the beginning of this life to beyond its end. We need not accept all of his premises to benefit from this wide-ranging essay, fortunately so, since the author at times plays the smiling contrarian who invites us all to revisit our assumptions. For readers who have taken social order as rooted in either persuasion or compulsion, and so assumed that authority is derivative, transient, postlapsarian, the dead hand of the past, or the polite mask of force, this book offers a clear-headed alternative. Austin explores the ineliminable centrality of fallible authority in our social, epistemic, political, and ecclesial communal lives, and discerns structures of authority in the Trinity and the paradisaical life of friends living together. In part Christian theology, in part humane anthropology, in part philosophical reflection, this is altogether a galvanizing book. --Ronald Mawby, Whitney Young School of Honors and Liberal Studies, Kentucky State University
Austin displays an impressive range of learning. ... The result is a rich, extended essay that wholly eschews utopianism and instead offers a sustained meditation upon concrete communal existence.--The Living Church
Our postmodern era views authority as something to be grimly endured -- or simply overthrown. Victor Austin writes against this antinomian sensibility. His clear, accessible and convincing analysis shows how moral, political, and religious authority brings order to society and beauty to the soul.--R. R. Reno, Department of Theology, Creighton University, Omaha, NE, USA. !-- /* Style Definitions */
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About the Author
The Reverend Victor Lee Austin, Ph.D., is Theologian-in-residence at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue in New York City. He is the author of scholarly articles in political theology, ecclesiology, and social ethics, as well as two volumes of theological reflections on everyday life: "A Priest's Journal," and more recently, "Priest in New York: Church, Street, and Theology."