**Shapiro On Authority:**

* **Criticism:** submission to authority is both irrational and hostile to autonomy
  + **Irrational:** when you submit to an authority, you are doing something that is contrary to the balance of reasons of which you are aware, which is irrational
    - You have allowed authority to usurp your **reasoning process**
    - **Rationality: : the idea that an agent should act in accordance to the balance of reasons of which the agent is aware**
      * I.e. I am going to stop at the stop sign because my balance of reasons tells me I should do so
      * Submission to authority usurps this process
  + **Autonomy:** the ability to think for oneself, and reason through what one ought to do…
    - Submission to authority replaces that because one no longer reasons through what one should do; he/she just **does**
    - **Issue:** perhaps there’s no obligation to be autonomous…?
  + **Shapiro’s Understanding of Autonomy:** an autonomous agent only recognizes content-dependent reasons for action, because these reasons for action are the only ones that morality would allow
    - If an authority existed, it would be able to create a moral reason to X simply by saying X and to create a moral reason to not X simply by saying not X – such a power over moral reasons for action seems impossible and someone who took an authority that had such power would not be behaving autonomously, in the relevant sense
    - That this is a different criticism from the rationality criticism can be seen by considering promises
    - Someone who does what someone else says because he has promised to do what that person says is behaving rationally in the relevant sense, because he is acting on the balance of reasons of which he is aware – but there would still be a problem with autonomy in such a case, because of the content independent nature of the obligation
  + a third problem with authority
    - 1. Everyone agrees that authority is limited: under certain circumstances one is justified in disobeying the authority
      2. But in order to determine whether one should disobey the authority, it appears that one must consider the balance of reasons of which one is aware
      3. But if one is considering the balance of reasons one cannot be submitting to the authority
         1. You cannot engage in reasoning about whether you ought to do what the authority said
      4. Thus, anyone who submits to the authority would apparently have to do so absolutely, without considering the possibility of disobedience
         1. Since absolute submission to an authority is unjustified, authority therefore must be impossible
* How to solve the puzzle – perhaps we should understand authority differently
* **Ladenson’s Theory:** legitimate authorities issue directives that do not themselves provide reasons for action; what provides the reasons for action is the probability of punishment – under Ladenson’s theory a legitimate authority is simply one who may permissibly punish
  + Thus, under this theory, autonomy and rationality are kept intact
  + **Shapiro’s Counter-argument:** the authority feels permitted to punish violations only because it thinks the orders themselves create duties
* Raz’s Theory on Authority:

Dependence Thesis: The authority sums up some reasons for action, not just sending out random orders

Normal Justification Thesis: The authority provides a service or aiding to normal people, that they are more likely to satisfy the reasons for action the authority took into account by obeying the authority than by acting on their own reasoning.

Preemption thesis: The authority’s directive preempts the reasons that the authority took into account. If you considered the reasons the authority took into account again that would be double counting

1. The authority cannot give orders like “you have to do the right thing”, because that would require people to use their own reasoning to decide what is the right thing to do. The authority’s order would not provide assistance to people.
2. Solves the Irrationality Problem:
   1. Submission to the authority is itself a reasoned decision that makes it more likely to satisfy one’s reasons for action
3. Autonomy Problem:
   1. The authority does not claim an arbitrary power to make wrong things right or right things wrong - The authority is sensitive to the pre-existing reasons for action
4. If the authority is not reasonable (corrupted or…) and not aiding you in your reasoning - It is not an authority at all.  
   You don’t need to do whatever it says.
   * 1. Thus, Raz is able to explain why authorities can be legitimately disobeyed
     2. You are not supposed to figure out whether the authority is wrong when determining whether to follow its direction.
        1. Otherwise you would be considering the preexisting reasons for action and not submitting to the authority
     3. But if the authority’s directive is *clearly wrong*, you can tell that the authority is not sensitive to the pre-existing reasons for action.
        1. In this process, you do not need to actually weigh your reasons for action
5. An authority is not usually an authority about everything, but about a **particular** thing
   1. Doctor: “Take this pill.” - Preempting medical reasons for action
   2. If the patient has religious problem with the pill, he could override the doctor’s advice because the doctor’s authority only preempting some reasons for action - Not including religious reasons