

Some libertarians responded to this video (Video 9) by saying that I constructed a strawman. I understand why they might think that, and I probably could have been clearer.

I did *not* mean to suggest that the argument I critiqued is the *best* argument for “Taxation is theft”, or even the most common one.

All I meant was that the argument seems to represent the reasoning of libertarians who think the claim, “Taxation is theft”, is obvious or true by definition and doesn’t require any controversial moral assumptions.

In all of the cases I mentioned, the taking by force wasn’t theft because you were taking something that you *did* have a right to take.

So, taking by force is only theft when you take something that you have *no* right to take.

The point is, the argument for taxation is theft can’t only be about force—it must also be about rights. It needs to make the assumption that the government has no right to collect tax revenue and use it to fund various things.

And this is a controversial moral assumption. Non-libertarians certainly don’t accept this assumption, and so if you’re trying to convince us, you need to defend it.

And this assumption can only be defended by defending libertarian property rights.