

(This video references Video 40.)

In this video (Video 40), I argued that paying progressive taxes is voluntary based on this principle:

(V) Your action is voluntary iff you had reasonable alternatives to doing it.

Someone proposed a potential counterexample to V that's worth addressing: Suppose there's a part of town where you know muggings are common, and you don't really need to go there, but you go anyway, and you get mugged. Did you give up your wallet voluntarily?

Well, it seems not. And yet, one might argue you had reasonable alternatives to giving your wallet to a mugger: don't go to that part of town. And if so, this is a counterexample to V.

However, we should reject the claim that you DID have reasonable alternatives in this case. I'd argue that avoiding a certain part of town just so you don't get mugged is NOT a reasonable alternative.

But then, the libertarian can argue by analogy against progressive taxation, and say that refraining from earning or owning more than a certain amount, just so you don't have to pay taxes on it, is not a reasonable alternative (and hence paying taxes is not voluntary).

However, I'd argue that these cases are disanalogous. Here's a more analogous case: If there's a certain place where safety and upkeep is funded by an entry fee, and you don't need to go there, then refraining from going there because you don't want to pay the entry fee IS a reasonable alternative. And so: if you DO go and they enforce the entry fee, you DO pay it voluntarily.