

A Response to James Stacey Taylor's "Liberty or Autonomy?"

Abstract: James Stacey Taylor, in an essay "Liberty or Autonomy?", argues that libertarian arguments for freedom generally overlook coercion that compromises agency, proposing to introduce autonomy instead of liberty in libertarian discourse. On arguments presented from Hobbes, Berlin and Steiner, Taylor concludes that only coercion that succeeds in modifying an agent's behavior is a compromise of autonomy. On views expressed by Friedman, Rothbard and Leoni, I offer that coercion, whether successful or not, compromises agency, concluding that introducing autonomy does not necessarily strengthen the case against coercion compromising agency. Furthermore, I differ with his argument that opening a market for organ sales will preclude further organ donations. Nonetheless, I conclude that Taylor's drawing attention to compromises on agency is a valuable contribution to the discourse on liberty.

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