

The gradual erosion of the car trip experience

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How will kids today learn to get along with their siblings? I just learned that another of the basic childhood conflict resolution scenarios has disappeared, thanks to the dual-screen DVD player and entertainment system for your car, so each kid can remain content without the burden of having to interact with their annoying brother or sister. The traditional car ride games will slowly fade away, replaced with questions like, “Grandma, where’s the Nintendo?”

Why stop there? Why not just equip the car with tranquilizing gas in the back seat? The kids go in, you knock them unconscious, and you wake them up when you arrive at the destination.

One of my friends told me that as a child, she objected that her brother was looking out her window, a degree of territoriality I was previously not aware of. Her parents naturally ridiculed her for making such a complaint, and I think she turned out okay.

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