

There is an interesting debate playing out between Tesla's boss (Musk) and the NY Times. A prominent NY Times reporter (Broder) took a Tesla electric vehicle for a spin and wrote a negative review. Anticipating the nasty PR consequences, Musk has gone nuclear. Here is [an article providing links](#).

In [my academic work](#) and [my blogging](#), I have often written about "greens" as "guinea pigs". California's AB32 can be viewed as an enormous field experiment. Progressive California has launched this experiment without a subsidy from anyone and the lessons learned will be public goods that benefit the rest of the world. Tesla is just one "green firm". Its cars are very expensive. To justify such a price premium requires offering a high quality experience. It would interest me if Musk is willing to engage in a "Cola Challenge" (similar to the blind Coke vs. Pepsi comparisons) to see whether drivers give his EV higher marks than a Nissan Leaf or another EV competitor.

UPDATE: I've now recorded [a YouTube Video \(Lecture #38\)](#) on this topic of "buzz" and green product competition.