

Cassies 2007 Cases

Brand/Case: Brita

**Winner: Packaged Goods Food/Other—Gold
Best Insight—Gold**

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Crossover Notes: All winning cases contain lessons that cross over from one case to another. David Rutherford has been identifying these as Crossover Notes since Cassies 1997. The full set for Cassies 2007 can be downloaded from the Case Library section at www.cassies.ca

- Crossover Note 6.** Should the product be improved?
- Crossover Note 11.** The Eureka Insight.
- Crossover Note 18.** Keeping it Simple.
- Crossover Note 25.** Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear).

To see creative, go to the Case Library Index and click on the additional links beside the case.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business Results Period (consecutive months): March 2006 to February 2007
Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: April 10, 2006
Base Period for Comparison: March 2005 to February 2006

In 2006, Brita, well-known for its pitcher water filtration system was at a standstill. After explosive growth in the 1990s the brand had started to decline in 2001 due to the growing popularity of bottled water and the rise of in-line water filtration systems. In addition, we were dealing with a target that was largely satisfied with tap water. The Canadian brand team decided to focus all resources on the lesser-known and significantly underdeveloped faucet-mounted filtration system (FM) to drive the business.

We needed a hard hitting campaign that made our target reconsider, and then change their long standing habits. At the heart of the campaign was an insight that not did this—it dramatically drove purchase. Total FM shipments for the Results Period were up 57%.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Brita launched in 1991 in Canada. It quickly became the leading player of in-home water filtration products—based on the simple concept that impurities need to be removed to create healthier and better tasting water. However by early 2000, the decade-long explosive rise in bottled water consumption had put a significant dent in Brita’s growth. In addition, our target thought that tap water was perfectly fine to drink.

As the leader in the category, Brita needed to look at a different angle to grow its business. The faucet-mount segment became the answer; the convenience of the product went head to head with bottled water and addressed some of the shortfalls of the pitcher. **Crossover Note 6. (In this case the product did not need to be improved.)**

The team set the objective of growing the FM brand by 14%. The annual national English media budget for the March 2006 to February 2007 period was \$2.59 million. (Brita was the only active player in the category and had a dominant share of voice.)

STRATEGY & INSIGHT

To connect with satisfied tap water drinkers, we had to create a need for filtered water by somehow motivating them to question their drinking choices. We needed an insight that was going to stop them in their tracks—making a significant purchase and changing their habits on an on-going basis. To get to this insight we explored the target’s water usage and uncovered some facts that we felt might make them see tap water in a new light. Facts like: toilet water, the water you use to mop your floors, and the water that goes on your lawn, all come from the same source as the water you drink. **Crossover Note 11.**

The thought that the tap water we drink is the same water that is in our toilets was the insight we needed.

It was a provocative way to get people to reconsider their choice of drinking water and open them up to the benefits of a filtration device.

CREATIVE EXECUTION

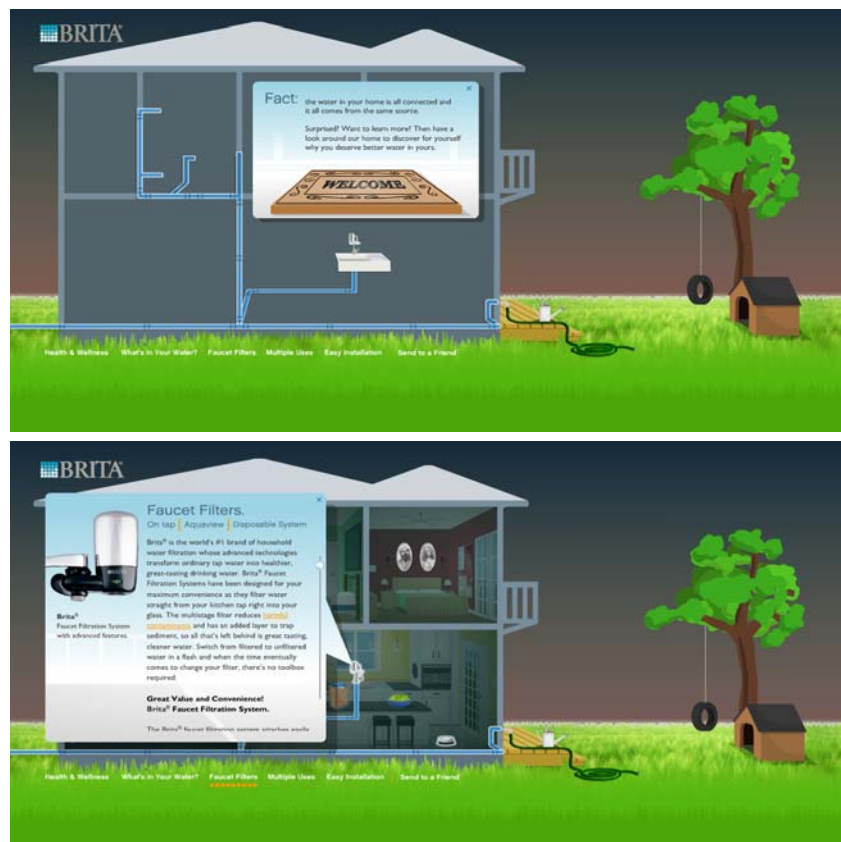
Under the campaign idea “You Deserve Better,” we drew a line between utilitarian water and water for drinking. The national thirty-second TV spot “Glass” compares the water in a glass to the water in a toilet bowl using the copy line “Tap and toilet water come from the same source. Don’t you deserve better?” [Crossover Notes 18 and 25](#).



Two print ads, “Mop” and “Beard,” further supported the campaign notion by showing in one case a woman with hair like a mop, and copy “You deserve better water than you mop with,” and in the other a man with a beard made of grass and the line “You deserve better water than your lawn.”



The campaign micro site, www.youdeservebetter.ca, shows the inside of a house with pipes interconnecting each room and water source, i.e. shower, kitchen sink, toilet. As you scroll on various water sources, facts are revealed about water as well as product information, an installation video, and where-to-buy details.



MEDIA EXECUTION

We took an integrated approach to the campaign, aiming to hit as many consumers with the ‘you deserve better’ message as was affordable. We launched with one :30 second TV spot on April 10, airing nationally to a slightly female skewed target. The next month, we added 2 Full Page, 4/C Print ads in magazines like Chatelaine and House & Home. They drove consumers to www.youdeservebetter.ca, which also launched in April. This staggered approach was designed to make the campaign feel bigger and keep consumers interested.

BUSINESS RESULTS

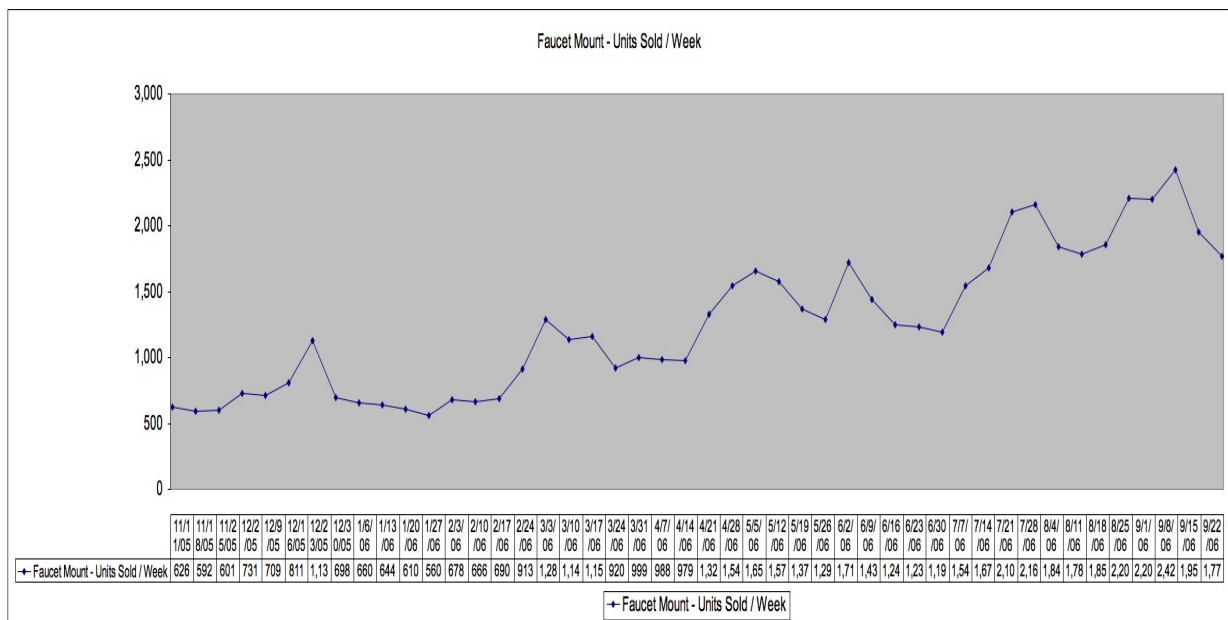
The result was a campaign that not only got everyone talking, but blew away the Clorox sales goals in the first month.

In the words of Douglas MacFarlane, VP General Manager of Clorox Canada, “I have never seen such great results so directly related to advertising in my 20+ year career. In my view, the “Glass” TV spot is the perfect ad.”

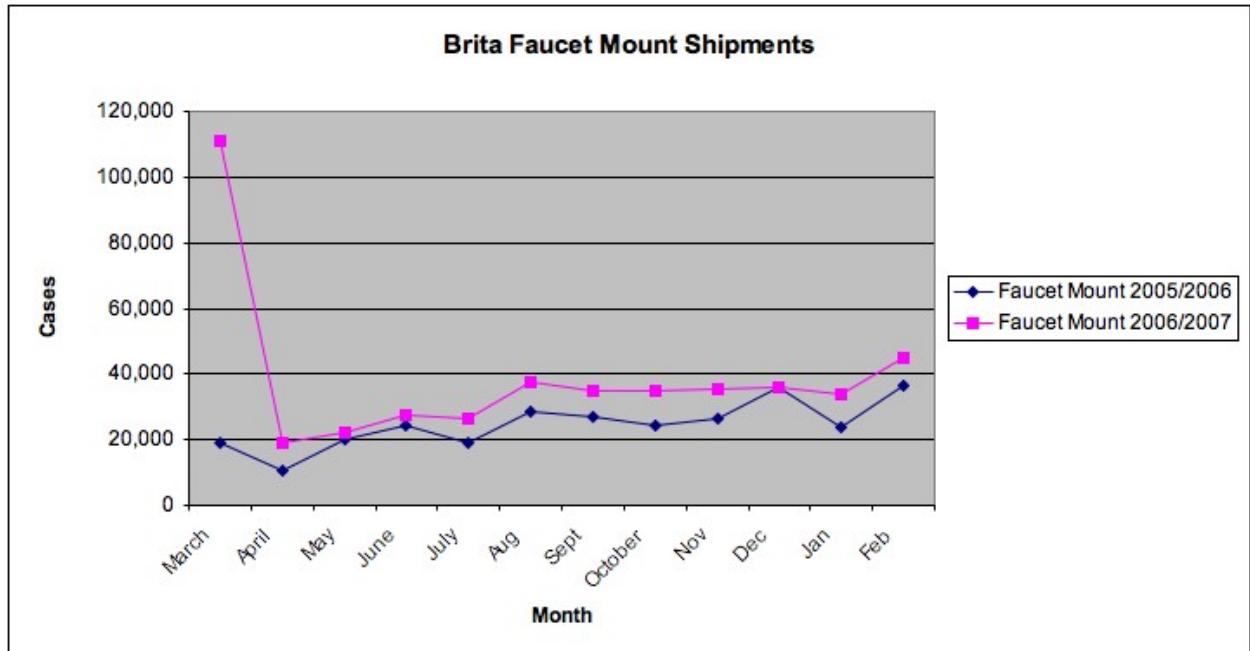
During the first 4 weeks of TV support, average weekly FM sales grew 133% vs. the 13 week pre-launch period (pre Feb 6).

Back on air for a second flight, FM system sales at major retailers grew 163% - an all time high in the 30 weeks previous.

When the print kicked in for the third month of advertising, Brita had a record sales week at two major retailers. There was also a halo effect on the pitcher and filters.



Total 12 month shipments for March 2006 to February 2007 increased by 57% versus the previous year, as demonstrated in the chart. This includes a pre-campaign national price promotion, which accounts partly for the dramatic lift in shipments in March. However, if we remove this period there is still a 30% increase in shipments.



CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

How directly correlated was the advertising to the sales results? During the 2 week advertising hiatus (May 8 to 21), sales were down 12% and then up 163% when back on air (May 22 to June 4).

Also, the faucet mount segment was supported in the past with similar levels of media investments but the previous effort did not grow the segment.

INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2007

[For Brita]

Each year I update these Crossover Notes. If you've read this cover note before, you can skip it. If not, it's worth a quick read.

My career started with a seven year sentence in brand management at Procter & Gamble. Then I clambered up the ladder at O&M, becoming President and later Vice Chairman, all of this in Toronto. Then I set up as a consultant.

P&G and O&M were passionate about "lessons learned" from advertising effort, and so was I. All the Cassies cases have great lessons in them, though at the pace we work today these lessons are not necessarily easy to find.

I was thinking about this as I was editing Cassies 1997, and I had the idea for Crossover Notes. They started as bite-sized footnotes pointing out lessons that "cross over" from one case to another. Then, as time had gone by, they've evolved to what we have today.

You can use Crossover Notes in two ways. Although they weren't designed as a crash course in advertising, they are worth reading as a whole. You can also dip into them selectively. The headings on the next page will help you choose.

I've tried to be even-handed on controversial issues, but here and there you will sense my point of view. For this I thank the Cassies for not editing their Editor.

We now have close to 200 published cases. And I hope I've helped pass some of the learning on.

David Rutherford

Toronto: January 2008.

For more on brand-building see *Excellence in Brand Communication*—by leading Canadians from across the marketing and advertising spectrum. See also *Vulcans. Earthlings and Marketing ROI*, commissioned by the ICA, and published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

See www.ica.adbeast.com.

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The Notes for this case are marked ✓ and come next.

Note: Cassies uses “advertising” in its broad sense. It not only stands for advertising through the main media of broadcast, print, out of home etc. Where appropriate, it also stands for Direct Marketing, PR, Interactive Marketing, Buzz Marketing, Event Marketing, Product Placement etc.

BRITA CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2007

- 6. Should the product be improved?** Some years ago it was an axiom that your product, functionally, had to have an advantage over competitors. In packaged goods, it was considered foolish to launch a new brand unless it was a blind test winner over its major competitor—ideally overall, and at least for a desirable benefit.¹

That thinking has shifted, and it's commonly said today that it's impossible to sustain a functional advantage for very long; that competition can match you in a matter of weeks or months—or even days with some technological products.

This has had a paradoxical effect. Some people are almost frenzied in their desire to keep their product (or service) improving, fearing that if they don't, they will be left behind. Others go into a slipstream mode—letting others tackle the headwinds, then matching what they do.

John Philip Jones (the Professor of Communication at Syracuse University) is vocal in saying that we do *not* live in a parity world—that imitators may try to match the innovators, but they often don't quite succeed. His view (and I share it) is that it is dangerously complacent to assume that functional parity is the way of the world.

Another danger is the belief that “marketing” can compensate for a weak product. This led to the debacle a decade or two ago when North America systematically under-invested in product. The Japanese, and later the Europeans and others, did exactly the opposite—and carved out the market shares we see today.

There's no question that the cost to upgrade can be daunting. Nevertheless, many cases reflect the investment. For example:

- Listerine in Quebec in Cassies II, with an improved taste.
- Chrysler with the NS Minivan, and Pontiac Sunfire in Cassies III.
- St Hubert in Cassies 99, upgrading their entire operation.
- Sunlight in Cassies 99, with improved cleaning.
- Home Furnace and Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002.
- Irving Mainway Coffee, Source Yogurt, MINI and Motrin in Cassies 2003.
- VodKice in Cassies 2003, remodelling the Boomerang portfolio.
- Cirque du Soleil in Cassies 2004, by adding Zumanity to their portfolio.
- Kit Kat in Cassies 2004, keeping Original the same, but launching Chunky.
- Toyota Sienna in Cassies 2004, with multiple upgrades.
- Coricidin II in Cassies 2005. (Re-launching after the original brand had been withdrawn.)
- Penaten, Hubba Bubba, Stouffer's Bistro, & Juicy Fruit line extensions in Cassies 2005.
- Wonderbread and Trident in Cassies 2006.

Still others achieve their gains with no change—though the existing product is in all cases good, and sometimes better than the competition. These cases include:

- Crispy Crunch and Pepsi Quebec in Cassies I.
- Oh Henry! in Cassies II.
- Buckley's, Dove, and Philadelphia Cream Cheese in Cassies III.

¹ There was always the “pre-emptive” possibility i.e. staking out a convincing claim for a parity benefit before anyone else did. But, in general, having a product edge was seen as important

- Eggs, becel, and Wonderbread in Cassies 99.
- Kraft Dinner and Lipton Chicken Noodle in Cassies 2001.
- Campbell's, Diet Pepsi, Listerine, and Pro•Line in Cassies 2002.
- All the major beer winners over the years.
- Aero, Dodge SX 2.0, Familiprix, Super 7, in Cassies 2003.
- Cottonelle and Milk in Cassies 2004.
- Crescendo, Jergens Ultra Care, Whiskas, Twix, Energizer Lithium, Moores, and Familiprix in Cassies 2005.
- Chocolate Milk, Gatorade, Listerine, Baileys in 2006.
- Brita in 2007.

Technology cases usually have improvements. Services usually improve as part of the "total brand experience." Some cases (e.g. Clearnet in 2001 and Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002) say that if your functional advantage is going to be matched, you'd better develop an advantage through brand personality/character/equity.

11. The Eureka Insight. These feature in many cases. Some examples:

- Oh Henry! Gut-fillers had tried to own hunger. Cassies II and *Crossover Note 7*.
- Buckley's. Rather than side-step their bad taste, Buckley's relished it. Cassies III.
- Chrysler. Used *emotion* as the key to an immensely successful launch. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. Creating "permission to indulge." Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. Creating the "Humungous Bank." Cassies III.
- Eggs. (See also *12. Changing the Goalposts*.) Farmers brought "natural" to life.
- Sunlight. Getting dirty is fun. This is diametrically opposed to the conventional wisdom, dominated by Tide, that clean is good and dirt is bad. Cassies 99.
- Fido in Cassies 99. In an echo of Apple vs. IBM, Fido saw that consumers needed the human touch. See also Clearnet and "the future is friendly" in Cassies 2001.
- Diet Pepsi in Cassies 2002. The "forever young" campaign.
- Listerine in Cassies 2002. Healthy gums, after a century of bad breath.
- Pro•Line in Cassies 2002. Appealed to non-experts with "Anyone can win."
- Aero. Saw the power of "melting" in Cassies 2003.
- Super 7. Ignored the political correctness of being tasteful. Cassies 2003.
- Quebec Milk. Saw the obvious. Asked people to drink more. Cassies 2004 and 2005.
- Toyota Sienna. Realized that the answer lay not in what SUV buyers do. Cassies 2004.
- Irving's Cruisin' to Win. Saw the power of *small* prizes. Cassies 2005.
- Crescendo. Like Oh Henry! saw unoccupied high ground. Cassies 2005.
- Butter. Saw a way to use "natural" to connote taste and health. Cassies 2005.
- Anti-Smoking. Saw the power of "Stupid." Cassies 2005.
- Jergens Ultra Care. Saw a way to reposition skin. Cassies 2005.
- Whiskas. Saw things from the *cat's* point of view. Cassies 2005.
- Moores. Used the fact that their target audience hates shopping. Cassies 2005.
- Harvey's. Realized the significance of The Grill. Cassies 2005
- Quebec Lotto 6/49. Realized that 6/49 winners are generous, so be nice to them.
- United Way. Saw power in the Hand icon. Cassies 2005
- CIBC Run for the Cure. Saw the power in the Pinnie idea. Cassies 2005
- Juicy Fruit. Saw how to build a new image by destroying the old one. Cassies 2005
- Yaris. Realized that you *could* use aspiration in the sub-compact category. Cassies 2006.
- WestJet saw the power in the "owners" idea. Cassies 2006 and 2007.
- Monster saw the power in the "best boss" idea. Cassies 2006.
- Dove. Saw the leverage in the Self-Esteem Fund. Cassies 2007.

- Brita. Changed how we think about tap water for ever.
- SpongeTowels. Brought absorbency to life, almost literally.
- Benylin. Realized what we really want to do!
- Newfoundland. Realized that the problem was the opportunity.
- Plus virtually all the cases in *Crossover Note 10*.

18. Keeping it Simple. We've all been to a presentation that was so complicated that nothing registered. In other words, we know that KISS works. But when it comes time to approve a creative strategy a lot of people get overtaken by the urge to cram everything in. This has to be resisted. P&G say that you have to "feel the pain of leaving things out." Trout & Ries give similar advice.

Scott Bedbury (of Nike and Starbucks, and himself a client) blames clients for the habit. He points out that it's hard to see what's wrong with adding another benefit or copy point. I can add from personal experience that the agency advice to leave things out unfortunately does not have much traction against a client who says, "let's leave it in." A pity.

There's a sub-set of this problem when a brand has an emotional benefit *and* a rational claim. Examples are (1) Philly in Cassies III with "permission to indulge" and "60% less fat." (2) Scotiabank in Cassies 2002, wanting to sell individual services while improving overall image (3) Campbell's Soup in Cassies 2002, wanting to modernize its image, while getting nutrition facts across.

This is where expectations have to be realistic. The more points there are, the lower the impact of each. This is where experienced research companies can help. They have evidence about the trade-offs involved.

The points so far have been at the Creative Strategy level, but the execution should also be simple—or, said better, *simple for the audience to take in*.² The danger is that we know what we are trying to say, and so may not realize that an ad is unclear. I've also seen directors complicate commercials, in an effort to make them more interesting. Overall, though, virtually all Cassies advertising is simple.

25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear). How often do we hear, "I saw this great ad last night...but I can't remember what it was for." This is a brand linkage problem, and it's two-edged. Highly engaging advertising can drown out the brand identity (we used to call it "video vampire"). But advertising that sells crudely runs the risk of being physically or mentally zapped.

When you assess advertising, your mental model will affect your attitude to brand linkage. But there are no simple answers. Some executions with seemingly bullet-proof linkage don't work. Some with seemingly minimal i.d. hook the brand into the consumer's mind. The challenge is to be relevant *and* different at the same time. Relevant, by the way, is *not* the same as familiar. Something can be relevant, but be

² Simplicity is not as simple as it used to be. Direct Marketing and Websites relish multiple copy points, provided they have selling power. Also, the "visual landscape" has changed, and people raised on music videos and video games can absorb a plethora of images that leave older baby boomers bewildered. Finally, the notion of "the brand" is often more complex than it was in the days of Volvo = Safety and Tide = Clean.. That said, a piece of communication must still be easy to take in.

expressed in a totally new way. If “familiar” is part of your mental model you run the risk that you will only approving advertising that has been seen before.

One of the (supposed) ways to ensure brand linkage is to say/show the brand name “early and often.” This idea seems to have taken hold in the 60s.³ However, a great many Cassies winners do *not* reflect this, e.g. Chrysler NS Minivan, Dove, Imperial Margarine, Molson Canadian, Budweiser, Claritin, Pontiac Sunfire, Richmond Savings, Metro Toronto Zoo, Goodwill, Sunlight, becel, St-Hubert, Clearnet, Clarica, Manitoba Telecom, Lipton Chicken Noodle, i-wireless, Pro●Line, Pine-Sol, Bank of Montreal, Scotiabank, Aero, Cottonelle, Prairie Milk, Réno Dépôt, Crescendo, Harvey’s, K&G Stores, Energizer Lithium, Quebec Lotto 6/49, United Way, Moores, Familiprix, Chocolate Milk, Yaris, Eterna, Monster.ca, and Holiday Inn.

Some very successful advertising puts the brand name front and centre, of course, but it’s possible in today’s over-hyped world that “early and often” is a turn-off for some consumers. Each situation has to be assessed on its merits. But it’s time that an unthinking belief in “early and often” came to an end.

³ This belief came out of Day-After-Recall testing. The technique has since been largely discredited, but debates continue about the role of recall, recognition, and the like. See *Crossover Note 13*.