recognize that a proposal to legalize marijuana is irrelevant to the question of whether gambling should be legalized—the two proposals do not compete. The lack of competitiveness is demonstrated by the fact that we could easily do both; we could both legalize gambling and legalize the sale of marijuana.

The *advantage* requirement of the counterplan means that the counterplan must be shown to be superior to the plan in some way. If the counterplan merely offers the same level of advantage as the plan, then there is no compelling reason to reject the plan in favor of the counterplan. The counterplan might be superior because it better solves the harm cited by the affirmative. It might be superior because it avoids the disadvantages that the negative team has shown will apply to the affirmative plan. The counterplan might be superior because it has advantages that outweigh the advantages of the affirmative plan.

STANDARDS FOR COMPETITIVENESS

The two widely accepted standards for counterplan competitiveness are *mutual exclusivity* and *net benefits*. Both competitiveness standards answer the question "Why not do both the plan and the counterplan?" Mutual exclusivity says that the plan and counterplan "can not" coexist—it claims that it would be logically impossible to do both the plan and the counterplan. Net benefits say that the plan and counterplan "should not" coexist—it claims that joint adoption of the plan and counterplan would be less advantageous than the counterplan alone.

The mutual exclusivity standard shows some way in which the plan and counterplan are internally contradictory. Consider our earlier example of an affirmative plan proposing to substantially increase federal funding of secondary education and a negative counterplan proposing to ban all federal funding of secondary education. The negative team would argue that the counterplan forces choice because it is logically impossible to increase federal education funding *and* to ban all such funding.

Most counterplans, however, are not mutually exclusive with an affirmative plan. Consider the counterplan to increase state funding for secondary education; this proposal is not mutually exclusive with increasing federal education funding because it would certainly be possible to increase funding at both levels. Similarly, a proposal to increase funding for elementary education is not mutually exclusive with a proposal to increase funding for secondary education.

The most widely used standard for counterplan competition is net benefits. The net benefits standard claims that adoption of the counterplan alone is more advantageous than the adoption of both the plan and counterplan. Why not make this simpler? Why not