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Binds and Double Binds: The Ties that Bind in Competitive Forensics JEFFREY DALE HOBBS, JODEE HOBBS, and RICHARD E. PAINE

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This journal reflects the values of its supporting organization, *Pi Kappa Delta*, which is committed to promoting *"the art of persuasion, beautiful and just."* The journal seeks to promote serious scholarly discussion of issues connected to making competitive debate and individual events a powerful tool for teaching students the skills necessary for becoming articulate citizens. The journal seeks essays reflecting perspectives from all current debate and individual events forms, including, but not limited to: NDT, CEDA, NEDA, NPDA, Lincoln-Douglas debate, as well as NIET, NFA, and nontraditional individual events.

Reviews of books, activities, and other educational materials will be published periodically (as submitted), and those submissions are also sought. Potential authors should contact the Editor regarding the choice of materials for review.

All works must be original and not under review by other publishers. Submissions should conform to APA guidelines (5th edition). Authors should submit 3 print copies AND a PC-Compatible disk version (for editing purposes) or E-mail submissions are acceptable with prior permission from the editor provided they are in Word format with no specialized formatting. Manuscripts should not exceed 25 double-spaced typed pages, exclusive of tables and references; book reviews and educational materials should be 4-5 double-spaced pages. Submitted manuscripts will not be returned. The title page should include the title, author(s), correspondence address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers. The second page should include an abstract of 75-100 words. The text of the manuscript (including its title) should begin on the next page (with no reference to author), with the remaining pages numbered consecutively. Avoid self-identification in the text of the manuscript. Notes and references should be typed and double spaced on pages following the text of the manuscript. Tables should be clearly marked regarding their placement in the manuscript.

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## Binds and Double Binds: The Ties that Bind in Competitive Forensics

JEFFREY DALE HOBBS, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER; JODEE HOBBS, ANDOVER CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL; AND RICHARD E. PAINE, NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE

**Abstract:** Competitive forensics influences the self-esteem and lives of participants, and the comments judges make to competitors on ballots is a large part of this influence. Judges need to constantly evaluate their own comments to see if encouraging and educational messages are being sent. Ballots from the 2004-2005 school year were reviewed for content that illustrates how judges' comments can reinforce the concepts of masculine hegemony and double-binds in our culture. A rhetorical analysis of the ballots revealed that the binds associated with masculine hegemony that were reinforced were the need for physical force and control and the need for heterosexuality. The double binds reinforced by comments on ballots were womb/brain, sameness/difference, and femininity/competence, as defined within this article.

Competitive forensics influences the self-esteem and lives of those who participate in it. The comments judges make to competitors on ballots is a large part of this influence. Thus, judges need to constantly evaluate their own comments to see if encouraging and educational messages are being sent.

Two theories of communication that stress the role of language in reinforcing patriarchy are the theories of masculine hegemony and double binds. This article will briefly review the literature concerning these theories, provide a methodology for rhetorically analyzing ballots for evidence of masculine hegemony and double binds, and present examples of these concepts from ballots written during the 2004-2005 school year.

#### **Review of Literature**

#### Masculine Hegemony

Hanke (1990) explains, "Hegemonic masculinity . . . refers to the social ascendancy of a particular version or model of masculinity that,

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operating on the terrain of 'common sense' and conventional morality, defines 'what it means to be a man'" (p. 232). He continues, "It thereby secures the dominance of some men (and the subordination of women) within the sex/gender system" (p. 232). According to Foss (2004), "Hegemony is the privileging of the ideology of one group over that of other groups; it thus constitutes a kind of social control, a means of symbolic coercion, or a form of domination of the more powerful groups over the ideologies of those with less power" (p. 242). Trujillo (1991) maintains there are five distinctive characteristics of hegemonic masculinity: "(1) physical force and control, (2) occupational achievement, (3) familial patriarchy, (4) frontiersmanship, and (5) heterosexuality" (p. 291).

First, masculine power "... is defined in terms of physical force and control" (Trujillo, 1991, p.291). Professional athletes would be the embodiment of this concept as they use their physical strength to defeat others in competition. Second, masculine power is confirmed by success in one's career; however, the career must be one that is stereotypically masculine. According to Trujillo, "Work itself can be defined along gender lines" (p. 291). Third, masculine power is demonstrated by having patriarchal control over one's family. A hegemonic man is the unquestioned leader of his home. Fourth, masculine power is "... symbolized by the daring, romantic frontiersman of yesterday and of the present-day outdoorsman" (p. 291). The hegemonic man is self-sufficient; he does not need to depend on the assistance of women. Fifth, masculine power is confirmed in the sexual conquest of women. A hegemonic man is certainly not a homosexual or celibate. Baker (2001) clarifies, "Men, when depicted through the lens of hegemonic masculinity, are sexually aggressive in the heterosexual arena" (pp. 12-13).

Studies in the field of communication regarding hegemonic masculinity and related concepts are comprised of investigations of "thirtysomething" (Hanke, 1990, & Loeb, 1990), "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" (Dow, 1990), media portrayals of Nolan Ryan (Trujillo, 1991), "Designing Women" (Dow, 1992), discussions about reproductive technologies (Condit, 1994), Oprah Winfrey's biography (Cloud, 1996), "feminine style" in political rhetoric (Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles, 1996), "Shame" (Shugart, 1997), rape on prime-time television (Cuklanz, 1998), "Friends" (Baker, 2001), "Boys Don't Cry" (Cooper, 2002), and "Mr. Mom" (Vavrus, 2002). These studies underscore the power and pervasiveness of masculine hegemony in the popular culture of the United States.

The influence of masculine hegemony in competitive forensics has been previously noted by Hobbs, Hobbs, Veuleman and Redding (2003). They note:

While [the] "will to power" [associated with masculine hegemony] rarely comes to physical blows in the forensic community, ashamedly, heated arguments following the

revealing of a debate decision have led to shoving matches on rare occasions. We may be too proud of the fact that we use our words rather than our fists to settle our arguments. (p. 19)

Masculine hegemony puts men in a bind. They have only one "correct" choice to make to be seen as a "real" man in our culture. The next topic to be discussed is the theory of double binds. This theory demonstrates that women are not even offered one "correct" choice.

#### **Double Binds**

Kathleen Hall Jamieson (1995), in *Beyond the Double Bind: Women* and leadership, writes, ". . . the double bind is a strategy perennially used by those with power against those without. The overwhelming evidence shows that, historically, women are the usual quarry" (5). She defines a double bind as:

... a rhetorical construct that posits two and only two alternatives, one or both penalizing the person being offered them. In the history of humans, such choices have been constructed to deny women access to power and, when individuals manage to slip past their constraints, to undermine their exercise of whatever power they may achieve. The strategy defines something 'fundamental' to women as incompatible with something the woman seeks—be it education, the ballot, or access to the workplace. (p. 14)

There are five common double binds: womb/brain, silence/shame, sameness/difference, femininity/competence, and aging/invisibility.

The womb/brain bind asserts that a woman must use either her womb or her brain—she can not use both. Jamieson explains, "Women could use their brains only at the expense of their uteruses; if they did, they risked their essential womanhood" (p. 17). She continues, "Throughout history, women have been identified as bodies not minds, wombs not brains" (p. 53). Examples of the womb/brain bind include dumb blonde jokes, women being told they are "too smart" to be appealing to men, women being told they can not be a mother and have a career, and women being told that they are "irrational" because it is "that time of the month." This bind offers a nochoice-choice to women (p. 17).

The silence/shame bind, according to Jamieson, "... condemns women for failing to do something they are forbidden to do. So, for example, women are forbidden to speak and then condemned for failing to produce great oratory" (p. 17). She further explains, "Just as public speech by a woman invited inferences about promiscuity, so too her silence testified to her modesty" (p. 81). This bind creates a self-fulfilling prophecy (p. 17). Another example of the silence/shame bind is the dilemma women face when raped. If they remain silent, they are shamed for not reporting a crime. If they report the crime, they are shamed for having been raped. Jamieson explains the sameness/difference bind in this way: "In it, women are judged by a masculine standard, and by that standard they lose, whether they claim difference or similarity" (p. 18). This bind offers a no-win situation (p. 18). For example, if a woman chooses to use the masculine characteristic of assertiveness, she is seen as a "bitch." If she decides to use the more feminine approach of being nonassertive and passive, she is ignored.

In the femininity/competence bind, women ". . . still confront a bind that expects a woman to be feminine, then offers her a concept of femininity that ensures that as a feminine creature she cannot be mature or decisive" (p. 120). Femininity and competence are defined as opposites. This bind presents unrealizable expectations (p. 18). For example, it is feminine to cry, but crying is seen as incompetency—involving a loss of control. If a woman cries, she is seen as feminine but not competent. If a woman does not cry, she is seen as competent but not feminine.

According to the aging/invisibility bind, "As men age, they gain wisdom and power; as women age, they wrinkle and become super-fluous" (p. 16). This bind presents a double standard (p.18). This bind is clearly illustrated by the ability of Hollywood to cast aging leading men, but not aging leading women.

The influence of double binds in competitive forensics has been previously noted by Wilkins and Hobbs (1997). They observe that, "Three of the six double binds that Jamieson describes seem to especially apply to the field of intercollegiate debate: the womb/brain bind, the femininity/competence bind, and the silence/shame bind" (p. 63).

#### Methodology

This essay loosely uses the two-step process of feminist criticism explained by Foss (2004): "Feminist criticism involves two basic steps: (1) analysis of the construction of gender . . . in the artifact studied; and (2) exploration of what the artifact suggests about how the ideology of domination is constructed and maintained or how it can be challenged and transformed" (p. 158). First, when analyzing the artifact's construction of gender, the critic's ". . . concern is with discovering what the artifact presents as standard, normal, desirable, and appropriate behavior for women and men" (p. 158). In the second step, the feminist critic, according to Foss, has one of two options: "If [the] analysis of the artifact reveals that it depicts an ideology of domination, [the] next step is to use the analysis to discover how domination is constructed and maintained through rhetoric" (p. 159). She continues, "If [the] analysis of the artifact reveals that it departs from the acceptance of an ideology of domination and challenges the status quo or creates a different ideology in which to operate, [the critic] will use the analysis to contribute to an understanding of how individuals can use rhetoric to claim agency and engage in acts of self-

#### determination" (p. 159).

Thus, this project analyzed ballots from the 2004-2005 school year reviewing them for content that illustrates how judges' comments can reinforce the concepts of masculine hegemony and double-binds in our culture. Ballots were analyzed from three different schools: two colleges and one high school. Both individual event and debate ballots were reviewed.

#### Results

A total of 962 ballots were reviewed. Our analysis revealed that 88 of them contained comments which we believe reinforce binds and double binds.

Ballot Type	College IE	High School IE	College Debate	HS Debate	Total
Reinforcing	31	1	37	19	88
Total Number	250	79	452	181	962
Percentage	12.4%	1.3%	8.2%	10.5%	9.1%

The binds reinforced in masculine hegemony by comments on ballots were the need for physical force and control and the need for heterosexuality. The double binds reinforced by comments on ballots were the womb/brain, sameness/difference, and femininity/competence.

#### Masculine Hegemony

Comments from ballots that reinforced the need for physical force and control in men included advice for male debaters to be aggressive. Two such comments occurred on high school debate ballots: "Good aggressive cross-x," and "Be more aggressive . . . ."

When such aggressiveness was shown, it was rewarded. For example, one high school debate ballot read: "The Negative Team was able to destroy the opponents' case by focusing on key issues." This comment also highlights the use of war metaphors in debate ballots— metaphors which stress the need for physical force and control. Additional war metaphors include a college debate ballots' encouragements to "Stand your ground . . . ," "Attack more aggressively," "Hit all of the examples of the negative team," and "Sharpen your line of attack."

While there were much fewer instances, females—as part of a malefemale team—were also praised for being aggressive. One such comment was: "Blows opposition argument out of the water. Good."

Comments from ballots that reinforced the need for heterosexuality in men included the comments from a college debate round that the "... negative dragged affirmative into a sex debate, which was fun .... I'm saving this flow for my lady ... who would probably choose Johnny Depp." The negative was a male, the affirmative was a female. The cave man metaphor is clear.

#### **Double Binds**

Comments from ballots that presented women with the womb/brain bind include the comment to a woman on a college individual events ballot that hints at the idea that women need to use sex appeal to communicate effectively: "Put on some mascara—it will help your eyes pop out and communicate to us better." Another college individual events ballot said, "Very cute style but arguments are a little off." Apparently, cute and smart do not go together.

Comments from ballots that presented women with the sameness/difference bind include mixed messages about being aggressive. While, as noted above, aggressiveness in females was praised in a few instances, it was more common to see aggressiveness condemned in females. High school debate ballots contained the following advice to females: "Loose the attitude! Be professional!" and "Don't be cocky about your case! It's rude . . . Don't look at opponent . . . . It has been known to be a challenge." To compound the mixed message, another female on a college debate ballot was told: "Don't keep looking at the gov't during your speech—makes it too personal." Is looking at your opponent masculine and a challenge or feminine and personal? Whether the act of looking by a female was viewed as the same or different from a man, it was condemned.

One woman in a college debate apparently "Attacked (her) opponent a little too hard." Another college debate ballot commented: "She had this air of authority. Mind your p's & q's though, in courtesy." Yet, another female in college debate was told: She "... is bubbly (good). Talks too much with hands." These last three comments illustrate that the display of both masculine and feminine traits in females is open to criticism.

Comments from ballots that presented women with the femininity/competence bind include comments about dress. One college individual events ballot contained the advice: "Shirt is too short—especially in the back. NOT PROFESSIONAL." A college debater was told: "Please get a top that effectively covers your midriff." A woman debating in college was advised that: "Your abilities were weakened in your appearance . . . . If you look more professional, you will be taken seriously. The shoes were too clunky and didn't work with the . . . lavender pants . . . ." Feminine dress and professionalism do not seem to mix in forensics.

Additionally, women's voices were criticized for not being masculine. A woman competing in individual events in college was told to "Drop your tone to sound more conversational and dynamic. Speak from your gut—find a lower register." On another ballot, she was told: "You have a soft manner. I suspect that's a problem in all public speaking." A different woman participating in intercollegiate individual

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events was advised that "The otherwise soft voice gave me the impression that you were inexperienced" and to "Watch out for making your voice breathy—it strips you of your power."

Females in debate and individual events were criticized for lack of aggression. Female high school debaters were told: "... don't be afraid to be vicious! Debate is a fighting sport, so be passionate!" A female competing in individual events on the high school level received the following comment: "Did you ever study HISTORY? If so, your whole speech would seem silly to you. IRAN declared war on the USA in the 1970's ... So your thesis of 'making friends' with them means 'surrendering' and Americans do not surrender!" A female college debater was told: "The negative was very courteous .... Her offcase, though unapplicable, as very nice and well put together."

#### Conclusions

A review of 962 ballots revealed that 9.1 per cent of the ballots reinforced binds or double binds. Is this a significant percentage? This question is difficult to answer. How much reinforcement of a patriarchal concept is needed before harm occurs? We imagine the answer you give to this question depends on your personal attitudes, values, and experiences. We believe it is significant. Some of this belief is attributed to anecdotal evidence. For example, one author cannot escape the fact that one of the feminity/competence comments mentioned above is the only comment that one of the females on the squad seems to remember from all of her ballots. She mentions the comment often. She is always upset by it because, while it has not changed her behavior, she knows that the patriarchal attitude contained in the comment can rear its ugly head in any round and disadvantage her ability to compete fairly.

Though this study has only scratched the surface of an important area for forensics to study, it sets the stage for future research. Beyond replication of this study, which would certainly be important, other issues to look into might include geographical differences and demographic differences (such as public vs. private schools, religious affiliated vs. secular schools, etc...). A researcher might also look into the sex of the ballot writers and the comments they write. This might help interested forensic scholars determine if there are any correlations between the sex of the judge and the types of comments written. Regardless, the area is rich for future research studies.

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## Competitors' Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages to Participation in Collegiate Individual Events

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Abstract: This study identifies the perceptions of 273 collegiate individual events competitors regarding the benefits and disadvantages of participation. Responses to open-ended questions produced 749 perceived advantages and 644 perceived disadvantages. Categories of advantages include enhanced levels of academic achievement, future success, competitive success, social relationships, sense of self, and material success. Categories of disadvantages included too much time, harms to personal self esteem, lower academic achievement, negative social relationships, harms to health, and frustrations with the tournament environment.

#### Introduction

Nationwide, many collegiate forensic programs are struggling. Based on a number of factors, more and more students who once participated in forensic activities discontinue their involvement, leading to a number of schools being unable to maintain healthy programs in their departments (Paine & Stanley, 2003). Often, first-year students on college campuses self-select ways to seek out opportunities to participate in forensics based on their high school experiences (Littlefield & Larson-Casselton, 2004). Although this is generally a robust source of recruitment, the needs and rewards of competitors is a serious issue impacting many programs.

Students' perceptions about participating in forensic activities are instrumental in their decisions to remain competitors. A key to understanding how to assist schools in making their programs more appealing to students and how to help administrators foster healthy

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participation is understanding what makes forensic participation a positive experience for students and what factors are negative influences on students' decisions to remain competitors.

While previous studies have investigated how students are recruited into forensic programs and what elements are instrumental to retaining students in the program, little research exists about what aspects of competition on a collegiate speech team are positive and which influences are negative. Most previous studies have focused on how debaters perceive forensics, but lack giving substantive attention to previous literature. Additionally, the investigation of student attitudes about the efficacy of individual events competition has not been conducted in over a decade. With this in mind, the present study reveals the reasoning behind students' participation, or lack thereof, and how these needs may have changed.

#### Literature Review

Research addressing the views of college students about the efficacy of participation on collegiate individual events competitions has been limited, although several key studies inform the debate on this issue. The most recent understanding of how individuals perceive collegiate forensic activities has been based on research of debate competitors (Williams, McGee & Worth, 2001). Debate competitors were asked to identify three benefits and three disadvantages of participation in debate. Of these, 735 advantage responses were coded into 49 categories and 582 disadvantage responses were coded into 43 categories. The most frequently reported benefits to participation in debate were enhanced speaking skills, communication skills, as well as analytical and critical skills. On the other hand, the most reported disadvantages were loss of time for other activities, harms to academic achievement, and negative health impacts on the competitors. While useful, this study provided no insight into how individual events competitors view their respective activity.

Paine and Stanley (2003) investigated what elements of forensic participation were considered "fun" by surveying current students, coaches, judges and ex-competitors. The researchers found relationships, educational benefits, tournament experiences, accomplishments, speaking to others, event guidelines and risk-taking to be elements of forensics that made the experience fun. Conversely, risk-taking and self-expression, travel experiences, absence of a real world connection, and absence of professionalism were the elements of participation that were considered not "fun." Unfortunately, the survey failed to distinguish the capacity in which participants were involved in forensics making it difficult to solely identify perceptions of individual events competitors.

In order to contrast the literature about debate and forensics and illuminate the perceptions that individual events competitors have towards their activities, McMillam and Todd-Mancillas (1991) developed a survey asking respondents to record their perceived advantages

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and disadvantages to participation in individual speech events. Although the total sample included 164 respondents, of these, only 64 completed the open ended questions which tapped these perceptions. These responses provided a total of 19 different advantages and 14 different disadvantages. Major categories for advantages included improved relationships (64%), self-improvement (19%), education (10%) and assorted responses (7%). Categories for disadvantages included unfair judging (33%), available events (22%), harms to education (22%), tournament structure (11%), relationships (6%), and self (6%).

Despite the apparent robustness of these results, there were a number of major questions arising from these findings which may not necessarily accurately reflect how college students view their participation in forensics. First, although the larger survey included 164 responses, the open-ended questions produced responses from only 64 individuals or 39% of the total sample. Allowing 64 participants to illustrate the complex view students have on competing in forensics is highly suspect.

In addition to the small sample size, the categorization of responses also raised several questions. First, educational benefits were coded to include both benefits to students within their classes or academic pursuits as well as education benefits which reflect the ability of students to more successfully compete in their events. Combining these two ideas fails to discriminate between two very different aspects of forensic participation. Secondly, the primary focus of the disadvantages is a description of problems within the tournaments themselves, not the reasons why students may enjoy or dislike participating in an activity. These disadvantages would be more valuable to those hosting or developing tournaments than to those interested in developing or strengthening an existing program. Lastly, this data was published in 1991. Given the decline of forensics programs in many parts of the country over the last few decades, it would be valuable to take a more current pulse on the view students have towards their participation in forensics, specifically individual speech events.

Based on the previous analyses (McMillam & Todd-Mancillas, 1991; Williams, McGee & Worth, 2001), the present study seeks to gain a more current understanding into how students perceive competition in individual events. Additionally, by using a larger sample size, a more accurate picture of how respondents feel about participating in individual speech events is possible.

#### **Research Question**

In order to explore the changes that may have occurred in how participants perceive their experience in forensics, the following research question was developed: What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages held by collegiate forensic participants regarding their involvement in individual events competition?

#### Methods

#### Participants

Data were collected from 273 undergraduate college students (164 females, 107 males, 2 choosing not to disclose their sex) who participated in individual speaking events competitions at the collegiate level. Participants came from 16 different states and represented four distinct years in college (first year – 37.6%, sophomore – 21.5%, junior – 18.6%, and senior – 21.9%). The respondents had considerable forensic experience: 83.3% competed at the high school level and 48.5% had two or more years of collegiate experience.

#### Measures

The instrument used in the present study was based on those used by Williams, McGee & Worth (2001) and Littlefield (2001). The survey consisted of three sections: Demographic information, perceptions about the collegiate recruitment process, and perceptions about high school and collegiate individual events competition. Once developed, the instrument was pre-tested with a group of six local collegiate forensic students. Former collegiate forensic coaches then reviewed the revised instrument for clarity and face validity. After this, the instrument was prepared for distribution.

#### Procedure

Initially, managers of four college invitational individual events tournaments held during fall semester in 2003 were identified and contacted to assist with the distribution and collection of surveys. Surveys were mailed to the managers prior to their tournaments, along with a summary sheet requesting demographic information about the tournament. From this initial set of four, data were collected from two of the four tournaments. The other two managers were unable to conduct the survey as planned and distributed copies to their own teams and to students from other schools competing at two subsequent tournaments in their regions of the country. To further broaden the sample geographically, an additional tournament manager was contacted and she agreed to distribute the survey at her tournament. Surveys included a number of demographic items as well as other items that are not included in the present study. Participants were asked to list three "perceived benefits" and three "perceived disadvantages" from participation in competitive individual events. Each response was coded individually providing 749 responses outlining advantages and 644 disadvantage responses.

After preliminary examination of the data and based on previous studies, several categories emerged using a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Using this method, six categories (including an "other" category) to describe the advantages and six disadvantage categories (also including an "other" category) emerged as a means for coding the data. The emergent advantage categories included the following:

- Enhanced academic achievement. This category focused on the skills that students develop in order to become better in the classroom or skills that help them excel in school.
- Enhanced future success. Items in this category reflected future benefits of participating in speech events, leading to career benefits and job networking.
- Enhanced competitive success. These items addressed the acquisition of skills that enable students to compete more successfully in a competitive environment.
- Enhanced social relationships. Items focused on how participation in speech events improves the student's ability to meet people and develop friendships.
- Enhanced positive sense of self. For this category, items focused on how speech competition helps students develop a more positive view of themselves.
- Other. Any responses not falling into the other categories were listed here.

The emergent disadvantages included the following categories:

- Personal harms to the individual: Items in this category outlined generic complaints about the time required for participation in speech activities, and elements of competition that reduce self-esteem, or cause personal discomfort, or personal frustration.
- Harms academic achievement. These items focused on detrimental aspects of speech competition to grade point average, poor quality of performance on tests, and inability to keep up with homework.
- Harms social relationships. Items in this category included negative team relationships, personality conflicts with friends and family, or limitations of being with the same group of people all the time.
- Harms the health of the competitor. This category included such items as physical and/or mental detriments, stress, fatigue, and poor nutrition.
- Frustrations with the tournament environment. Items in this category focused outside of the individual competitor and address issues or complaints with tournament structure or related issues, such as judging, costs, cheating, and favoritism.
- Other. This was the place for any response not fitting the other categories.

Four independent coders were trained by the first author; then, divided into two teams. One team coded the advantages and the second team coded the disadvantages. This process yielded inter-coder agreement of 83.6% for the advantages and 81.6% for disadvantage categories.

Once all of the agreed upon items had been placed, two coders discussed the items listed as advantages where there was disagreement and came to consensus about where those responses should be categorized. Two responses that were unrelated to the scope of the study were eliminated and eight responses, originally coded as "other," were found to be similar and the category was renamed as Enhanced Material Benefits, thus eliminating the "other" category. A similar process to achieve consensus was followed to discuss items of disagreement regarding the disadvantages. All items were retained except four, which either fell outside the scope of the study or reflected unintelligible responses.

Upon further review of the disadvantage categories, the Personal Harms to the Individual category appeared to be considerably larger than the others, accounting for 49% of the responses. The researchers noted two more specific areas within this general category (one addressing loss of time for personal interests and the other addressing personal harms to individual competitors), prompting a secondary coding of this larger category by two independent coders. The two more specific categories, Too Much Time and Harms Individual Sense of Self, were identified with inter-coder agreement of 97.2%. These replaced Personal Harms to the Individual, bringing the number of disadvantage categories to seven.

#### Results

An analysis of the coded responses revealed several clear perceptions individual events competitors have about their participation in forensics. These findings are reposted in Table 1.

Table 1.

Perceived Advantages to Participation in Collegiate Individual Events.

Categories	Frequency	% Totals	
Enhanced positive sense of self	. 247	33%	
Enhanced competitive success	200	27%	
Enhanced academic achievement	133	18%	
Enhancement of social relationships	131	18%	
Enhanced future success	30	4%	
Enhanced material benefits	8	1%	