THE COUNTERARGUMENT

Definition: A counterargument is simply an argument that opposes another argument.

Purpose: To add validity and legitimacy to your main argument.

Function: Counters your main argument by implementing an opposing argument. This opposing argument is then analyzed. The extent of the analysis is up to the discretion of the writer—should be a hearty, wholesome amount, enough to challenge the audience’s intellect of the two (or more) opposing arguments. Counterarguments are most appropriate in persuasive papers.

Keep in Mind: The counterargument is NOT argued more than the primary argument. Giving more support to the counterargument than the primary argument will create a misleading paper. Also, it is possible to incorporate multiple counterarguments in one’s paper.

How to Properly Execute: Counterarguments usually go towards the end of the paper or after one has effectively and fully argued for the primary argument. Do not be afraid to play around with the orientation of the counterargument. It does not have to go near the end of the paper: It can be placed in the middle or beginning of the paper as well—just as long as the individual fully and effectively supports the primary argument throughout the paper.

Example:

- Arguing that the sky is blue
  - Execution: The sky is blue because of X, Y, and Z. But one may argue_________
    - The sky is blue because of U, V, and W
    - The sky is green because of R, S, and T

Aha, the sky is green!

No...It’s BLUE