21W.730   Guided Revision #3

The following guided revision exercises should help you to craft a more vibrant, cohesive and memorable advocacy essay. Before starting to revise, read your piece aloud for a general sense of how this essay communicates its meaning. Essay #3 should read more like a speech than #2.

1. Check to see if you can organize your statistical data into charts or graphs (inserted in a page or appended to the end). If you are able to do this, note the difference in the flow and power of your writing.

2. Compare the size and scope of counterargument with #2. In #3, your counterargument should be tighter and smaller in scope.

3. Be sure that you introduce the speaker before starting a quotation.

4. Change 75% of :your "being" verbs to action verbs, passive verbs to active verbs.

5. Check for "breaks in voice" in your essay. Sometimes, these changes are planned and desirable (as in from a personal epilogue to a more academic body). However, other times "breaks in voice" occur because of breaks in a writing pattern or uncertainty as to argument.

6. Read your intro and conclusion together as "bookends" of the piece. If you identify similar problems in each (e.g. fuzzy language, conceptual confusion), check for this issue throughout the essay. Identify the relation between the two: Does your essay have a circular style? Does the conclusion show movement from the intro.
    Think about the type of conclusion that you have crafted. Do you advocate a particular position or action on the part of the reader? Check to see that your language mirrors your goal (more action-oriented prose should communicate energy and commitment).

7. Write a short abstract of your piece to identify its argument clearly. Are there any parts of the abstract that are undeveloped or unsupported?

8. Insert subheads into your piece, then decide if they are helpful (general rule: adding a subhead every 2-3 pages is fine, more than that can be annoying to the reader).

9. Check your title. How well does it serve as a preview of your piece? Think about: Subtitles, epigraphs, etc.