

TABLE OF CONTENTS

November–December 2004 Issue

INSIGHTS

By the time you read this, the nation will (most likely) have chosen a President. But certain things will remain unknown: among them, what kind of language will describe the election, what kind of rhetoric will the new leader adopt?

In this issue, we have included an *Illuminations* by Abraham Lincoln, who speaks to the need to cultivate a civic language (if not a political rhetoric) that is at once visionary and precise. His speech, delivered in 1860, remains pertinent, as it reveals how ambiguity and vagueness are sometimes more than just poor creative writing habits; in such documents as the Constitution, vague language can put human rights in peril.

Our political issue begins with an inspiring account by Bechtel finalist Robin Behn of her successful grassroots attempt to transform the dynamic of an entire school. The issue continues with an interview with political writer and performance artist Marty McConnell on youth voting, as well as Laura Gamache (in “The Right to Inquire”) on the relationship between questioning, creative writing, and civil rights.

—Christina Davis & Christopher Edgar

Capitol County	3
Changing the Writing Climate of a Whole School Robin Behn	
Illuminations	11
Great Writers on Writing Abraham Lincoln	
The Right to Inquire	13
Approaching the Civil Rights Movement through Poetry Laura Gamache	
Declare Yourself	21
Talking about the Youth Vote with Marty McConnell Christina Davis	
Illuminations	25
Great Writers on Writing Walt Whitman	
Arrival Diaries	27
Teaching Students to Write Arrival Narratives Bushra Rehman	
W. B. Yeats’s Byzantium Map	32
A Political-Literary Cartoon Louis Phillips	