

## **Award in English: Literature**

Professor Sandra Saari is unable to be here, so I will read the remarks she wrote for Matthew Campbell:

Matthew Campbell wrote his award-winning paper, "Worse Than Death," for the Modern Latin American literature class this winter term. "Worse Than Death" begins: "Latin American literature has often reminded us that there are fates far worse than death." It then goes on to signal a significant cultural difference between American and Latin American literature, wherein the latter "often portrays death as a natural part of the cycle of life," indicating, for example, that "Isabel Allende's *The House of the Spirits* takes its very title from the spirits of life and death that move about in the house on the corner." What then is meant by a fate worse than death, you might ask. Mr. Campbell responds that those who have been disappeared through political and economic atrocities in Latin America "have been robbed of the influence their voice and their spirit might have on the living, thus suffering a fate worse than death." He then demonstrates his thesis by analyzing Allende's novel, Luis Puenzo's film *The Official Story*, and some of the poetry of Nobel prize winner Pablo Neruda. He ends his insightfully