

Handwriting on wall - Sam and Gerry talk

By LEE HORSTMAN

Drs. Gerald O'Grady of the Rice English Department and Louis Mackey of the philosophy department provided a lively analysis of graffiti in Wiess College last night.

Mackey made two points, after defining graffiti as a secretive men's room art form: America has relegated sex to her "tombs" along with excretion, and she is also pushing another essential, religion, into the same place.

Mackey argued that this is a reaffirmation of God, and that the "atheist villains" are the four-letter word-erasers. "God, after all, is just a three-letter word meaning love."

O'Grady argued that "language is symbolic action," and embodies a logical paradox in that some words asymbolizing a "dirty" thing are no dirtier than other words referring to the same thing.

He also made the point that graffiti mocks other terse literary forms: instructional signs ("Turn Left"), advertisements, old saws, political slogans.

Discussion afterwards was lively, and O'Grady urged that a graffiti contest should be held at Rice, since "good graffiti may attract better students."