So Furr's career is safe. If anyone's career is in danger, it is that of Ted Price, a fellow English professor at Montclair State who has been critical of Furr. Unlike Furr, a Baby Boomer who has retained the childish leftism of the 1960s, Price is an 80-year-old World War II vet who is unabashed conservative. He has been openly critical of Furr's defense of Josef Stalin, which can be seen along with his other ravings on Furr's Web site (http://ctup.montclair.edu/english/turr).

"I call him a Stalinist fascist and he hates to be called that," Price told me. "In letters from my chairman, they said that sort of thing was harassing a fellow colleague."

This is a common tactic in academia today. Whatever a left-wing professor says, no matter how outrageous, is protected by academic freedom. But when a conservative speaks up, the charge of "harassment" follows.

Price has written to the Foundation for Individual Responsibility in Education to protest the administration's effort to curb his criticism of Furr. FIRE was founded by Alan Kors, a University of Pennsylvania professor who went from the Jersey City public schools to Princeton and Harvard.

"The real problem is not the sole lunatic who is dumb enough to let the public know how people really think on the campuses," Kors said of Furr. "The real problem is that these people tend to clone themselves in hiring and promotion. Whole sections of the university have been given over to the politically correct."

English departments tend to be the worst, Kors said. That's certainly the case here in New Jersey, Furr is typical in that his expertise is in medieval literature but he teaches courses that focus on left-wing political tracts of no literary value.

There's room for political eccentricities on both the right and left in academia, says Kors, but we've reached the point where only the left-wing wackos have academic freedom.

"If instead of talking about fragging soldiers, he had talked about turning weapons on gays, they would have marched him off campus," Kors said of Furr.

As for Furr, I gave him a call and asked him to comment. He declined but later sent me an e-mail:

"You asked about 'the controversy over my teaching,' he wrote. 'There is no controversy over my teaching.'"

He's right about that. I rest my case.

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