

McKee, Ochsner and Williams: Ingraham Has Not Changed

Laura Ingraham's return to Dartmouth will not contribute to productive dialogue on campus.

By Erik Ochsner , Lyra A. McKee and Pete Williams Published February 24, 2026 Updated March 1, 2026

Laura Ingraham, former Editor-in-Chief of The Dartmouth Review, will be returning to campus on Feb. 25. She's been invited by the Dartmouth Political Union for an "authentic, one-on-one exchange" in the form of an unmoderated question-and-answer session.

Yet for many alumni, she represents a dark period of Dartmouth's history.

Shortly after Laura Ingraham became editor in 1984, she sent a reporter to secretly tape record a confidential meeting of the Gay Students Association and published the transcript, outing several students in the process. This is probably The Dartmouth Review's most notorious act of homophobia, and it's impossible to mention the name "Laura Ingraham" in the presence of LGBTQIA+ Dartmouth alumni without someone recalling the GSA taping incident. On top of this controversy, The Review repeatedly portrayed gay people as threatening and repulsive. In an edition published on May 14, 1984, they printed false statistics under the heading "How Gay Is Gay?": "The average homosexual has more than 500 sexual partners, most of them anonymous." They described various sex acts, "golden showers" and "eating excrement," twice reminding the reader that this should make them nauseous. And of course, they blamed the queer community for spreading AIDS to innocent heterosexuals through blood transfusions. Ingraham also described the GSA as a "screaming interest [group]" that was intimidating Dartmouth's administration into accommodating them. She didn't miss an opportunity to mention that the reporter who taped the GSA meeting was a "freshman girl" and alleged that the GSA "snapped," "sneered" and threatened her with "blackmail."

It is impossible to speak for the whole of DGALA's membership on the topic of Ingraham's planned visit this month. When we reached out to our members, we received a healthy mix of opinions. Some feel that inviting Ingraham at all is inappropriate; others believe it is important to give students the opportunity to push back on her dangerous agenda. What everyone seems to agree on, however, is that Ingraham should be judged, too, by her present actions, not just those of her past. As DGALA's Board of Directors, we believe we have a duty to use our history to inform how we receive Ingraham's political commentary today. We tell the story of Laura Ingraham and the GSA not to condemn her, but to better understand how she operates in the present.

Ingraham's primary justification for reporting on the GSA was that the group received funding from the Council on Student Organizations, and thus the student body had the right to know what they were doing with their money. Unsurprisingly, The Review did not similarly obsess over the Amateur Radio Association, Camera Club or Il Circolo Italiano. But it didn't matter whether the pretense for blatant homophobia was strong. Once Ingraham had an excuse to target the GSA, she could launder more outrageous allegations in the form of more questions. Under the heading "Sober Questions About Gays," she wondered, "Why doesn't the GSA sponsor discussions, debates, film series, etc.?", escaping the burden of admitting that they did, in fact, sponsor those things. "Doesn't College funding

of the GSA amount to a moral statement promoting homosexuality?” she wondered.

Although four decades have passed since then, Ingraham’s strategy hasn’t aged a bit. She still weaponizes her audience’s feelings of fear and disgust against her political enemies. In 2024, Ingraham warned viewers of “roving criminal gangs, random hoodlums and even potential spies and terrorists” among undocumented immigrants. Similar to her rhetoric about gay people spreading disease, she baselessly blamed migrants for infecting elementary school students with measles, speculating that they could bring all sorts of “contagious diseases” across the border — alongside “violent crime,” of course. She continues to dodge responsibility for her propaganda by asking questions. For example, she blamed Boeing’s diversity, equity and inclusion efforts for an emergency exit door’s plug blowing out: Even after she admitted there was no evidence DEI had anything to do with the accident, she insisted it was “worth asking” whether incompetent people of color could cause “needless American deaths, and a lot of them.” No one died in the Boeing accident. Through these rhetorical tactics, Ingraham effectively peddles extremism. She consistently gestures at the counterfactual white supremacist “Great Replacement” theory with accusations that Democrats are intentionally importing immigrants to turn red states blue. Just this year, she has called anti-ICE protests “insurgency,” “armed insurrection” and even “civil war.”

The Dartmouth Political Union plans to have a “conversation” with Laura Ingraham. When Ingraham targeted the GSA, she did not foster “conversation.” There was nothing “authentic” about the answers she disguised as questions to escape accountability. Given her similar patterns of behavior over 40 years later, we have no reason to believe she has learned or grown since then. But if she won’t learn, the rest of us can. We can learn to recognize malicious actors. We can learn not to mistake spectacle for constructive debate. We can learn that Laura Ingraham has nothing more to teach us than this.

Signed,

DGALA Board of Directors

Erik Ochsner ’93, President

Pete Williams ’76, Secretary

Bryan Jacobs ’02 Board Member

Lyra McKee ’15, Board Member

Kelii Opulauoho ’96, P’26, Board Member

Val Werner ’20, Board Member

Lyra McKee ’15, Erik Ochsner ’93 and Pete Williams ’76 are a part of the Board of Directors of the Dartmouth LGBTQIA+ Alum Association. Guest columns represent the views of their author(s), which are not necessarily those of The Dartmouth.

<https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2026/02/mckee-ochsner-and-williams-ingraham-has-not-changed>