 Bruins 3, Penguins 4, Final

# Dragons over Dartmouth? 'Game of Thrones' co-creator's career got started in N.H. Ivy League school

By [Matt Rocheleau](#) Globe Staff, April 15, 2019, 11:18 a.m.





@DARTMOUTHALUMNI ON TWITTER

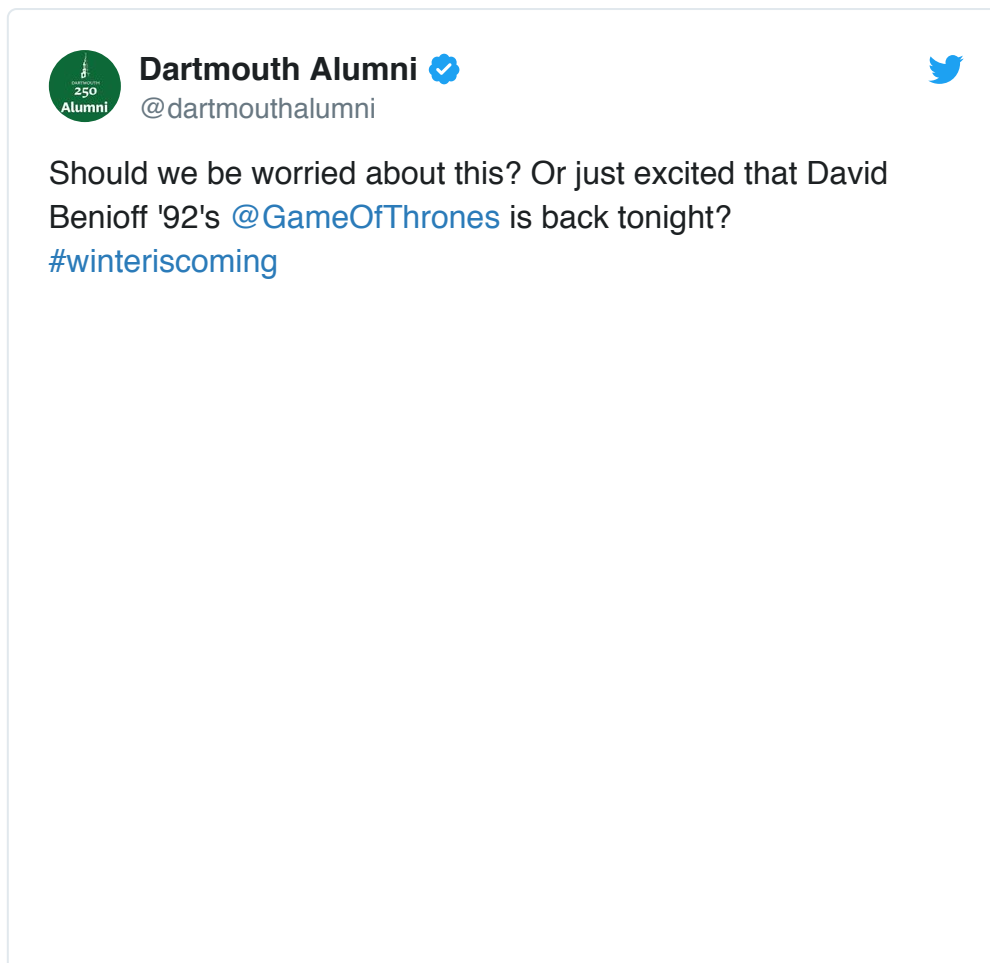
On the quaint, picturesque New England campus, students relax and bathe in the sun on a lush green campus quad — as a pair of dragons soar overhead.

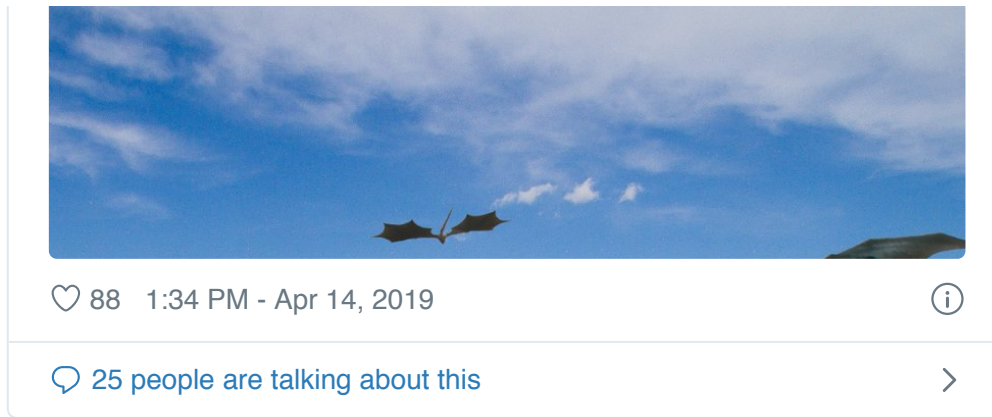
The picture looks like something David Benioff, co-creator of the landmark TV series “Game of Thrones,” might have sketched in a notebook during class when he was a student at Dartmouth College.

The college's alumni relations office tweeted the enhanced image Sunday afternoon in a nod to Benioff, who graduated in 1992 and whose hit HBO series launched its highly-anticipated eighth and final season Sunday night.

“Should we be worried about this? Or just excited that David Benioff '92's [@GameOfThrones](#) is back tonight? #winteriscoming,” the office tweeted.

The posting was liked and retweeted by another well-known Dartmouth alumnus, CNN anchor Jake Tapper, who graduated from the Hanover, N.H., school one year before Benioff.





In 2017, Tapper interviewed Benioff for Dartmouth's [alumni magazine](#).

Benioff said he was a member of the Phi Delta Alpha fraternity and belonged to the Sphinx senior society. (Oddly, there's no indication Benioff was a member of another senior society at the college called Dragon.)

Benioff told Tapper his writing career began at Dartmouth, though some of his early work wasn't published because it "sucked."

"The first one I started at the end of senior year at Dartmouth," Benioff told Tapper. "I had a senior fellowship, so I didn't have to take classes. I just met once a week with my tutor, Ernest Hebert, who was a great Dartmouth English professor and a wonderful novelist who wrote 'The Dogs of March' and a lot of other great books. It was an incredible learning experience, but I kind of knew that the book wasn't ready. I didn't even try to get that one published because it was a 21-year-old's novel."

Benioff said he worked on another novel for about five or six years in his 20s, but that too went unpublished. "I got rejected by I think every publisher in America, as far as I can tell," he said.

“And then I remembered the story that I’d written at Dartmouth that had been published in — what’s the name of our literary magazine?”

“Stonefence Review?” Tapper replied.

“Yes,” Benioff replied, describing how that story became the inspiration for Benioff writing “The 25th Hour.” That became his first published book and was adapted into a film directed by Spike Lee and starring Edward Norton. Benioff wrote the screenplay for the film and went on to write screenplays for several other Hollywood hits.

It’s a far cry from the career Benioff told Tapper he originally planned to pursue: English professor.

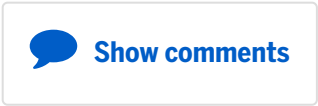
Instead, Benioff’s work has served as inspiration for other academics. Two Dartmouth professors teach a course there called “[Game of Thrones: Re-Imagining Medieval History as an Allegory of the Present](#).” At least one other professor [used](#) the popular series to teach Machiavelli, according to the college’s website.

Today, Benioff and fellow producer D.B. Weiss are in [unchartered territory](#) with the final season of Game of Thrones.

Earlier seasons were based on [books](#) by author George R. R. Martin. But because Martin missed several deadlines to finish the series in book form, the TV producers have had to come up with details and storylines for the later seasons and this year’s conclusion largely on their own, working only off descriptions Martin gave them on how he planned to end the books.

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