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Hillsdale College Ph.D. Candidate Koty Arnold Presents Doctoral Research

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College doctoral candidate Gordon Dakota “Koty” Arnold gave a research presentation on his dissertation titled “The Constitutional Nationalism of Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr.” on Sept. 2. Lodge served in the U.S. Senate from 1892-1894 and famously opposed Woodrow Wilson’s League of Nations. Arnold gave his presentation after successfully defending his dissertation before a faculty panel.

Arnold argued that, while scholars have emphasized Lodge’s belief in national sovereignty, he saw the League of Nations primarily as a threat to Constitutional checks and balances and separation of powers.

“He made the case that Wilson had an understanding of government that would empower the President to act with a mandate from the people over and against the will of representative bodies and over and against the Senate,” Arnold said. “He thought that this was the core of the League of Nations battle. The league was ultimately the greatest expression of the progressive philosophy of the administrative state.”

Arnold argued that Lodge’s theory of constitutional nationalism, which esteemed the Constitution even above the Declaration of Independence, undergirded all of his major positions, from his opposition to the League of Nations to his stances against the federal income tax and direct election of senators.

“He believed that the Constitution was the great statement of America’s regime principles. He believed that it was the Constitution and its understanding of limited government through separated powers and a federal structure. It was the Constitution that did all these things that served as the embodiment of the genius of the American people and their philosophy of self-government.”

The presentation took place in Lane Hall and was followed by a brief reception. Graduate Dean R.J. Pestritto served as Arnold’s dissertation chair and provided introductory remarks.

“Dr. Arnold is a big fan of his subject, which is true of most dissertation writers,” Pestritto said. “But he learned that it wasn’t enough simply to describe how Lodge’s own devotion to the Constitution diverged in principle from the Founders’. He also had to examine critically whether and how this divergence actually held up. The result, I think at the end of the process was a defense of Lodge that can be taken with the highest seriousness. It is objective, it is utterly thorough, and yes, it is critical where it needs to be.”

Arnold received his Bachelor of Arts from Regent University in 2017 and his Master of Arts from Hillsdale’s Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship in 2020. Having successfully defended his dissertation, he will earn a Doctor of Philosophy in Politics in December 2024 and receive his diploma at Hillsdale College’s Commencement Ceremony in May 2025. Arnold has been working as Assistant Professor of Politics at Colorado Christian University in Lakewood, Colorado, since August 2023.

For a headshot of Arnold, click [here](#). For Arnold’s student profile, click [here](#). To view the poster for the event, click [here](#).

For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About Hillsdale College Graduate School of Statesmanship

The Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship was founded in 2010 “to educate students in the language of American constitutionalism and to place its graduates in positions of public service in politics, in journalism, in the Academy, and elsewhere.” Its courses of study, which culminate in either a Master of Arts or a Doctor of Philosophy in Politics, are centered around the core texts from the Western and American traditions of political thought — what Thomas Jefferson called the “elementary books of public right.” All admitted students received a full-tuition scholarship and admitted Ph.D. students receive an additional living stipend. For more information, visit gradschool.hillsdale.edu.

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent, nonsectarian, Christian liberal arts college located in southern Michigan. Founded in 1844, the College has built a national reputation through its classical liberal arts core curriculum and its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans. It also conducts an outreach effort promoting civil and religious liberty, including a free monthly speech digest, *Imprimis*, with a circulation of more than 6.6 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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