

Aberdeen Medieval and Early Modern North Conference (Aberdeen, 25–26 May 26)

University of Aberdeen, Scotland, May 25–26, 2026

Deadline: Jan 15, 2026

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Violence in the Medieval and Early Modern North.

In 1336, a battle took place in the Wars of Scottish Independence in which Edward III of England burnt Aberdeen to the ground. In 1646, the Battle of Aberdeen saw the clash between Covenanter and Royalist forces in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, with the battle and its aftermath shaking Aberdeen and its denizens. While living memory of these events has faded away, their scars can still faintly be seen. Battles, plague, witch trials and legal cases of domestic abuse have all left their mark on Aberdeen and have shaped the way we view the past.

Violence in the medieval and early modern world is central to our construction and understanding of the past. Although we have dates and locations, the details of violent enaction are often hazy. Violence, then as now, heavily colours the pages of history, with societal expectations often being enforced through threat of violence. Thus, we propose an exploration of violence for this year's conference, inspecting closely what is considered violence, what is determined as avoiding violence, and who decides the definitions of such things.

We encourage researchers to explore how violence was interpreted, enacted and avoided in the medieval and early modern north. How does the reality of the medieval and early modern world reflect how we view the past? How did Vikings, Knights and Musketeers handle the violence of their occupations? Do we still enact violence on the past as researchers? What were the aftereffects of violence, on the body, on architecture, and on society? From witch trials, war, bizarre medical practices, and natural phenomenon, this conference will investigate the violence of the past.

The conference is multidisciplinary inclusive of art history, but aimed at all medievalists/early modernists. We we are hoping for abstracts looking at the artistic representations of violence in the CfP, as well as on material culture. Papers on art history and medieval/early modern art are very welcome.

We're seeking papers on the topic of violence and its intersections with:

- Memory and Trauma
- Judicial and Legal Systems
- Literature and Artistic Representations
- Domestic and Public Spheres
- Gender, Race, Class, and Disability Studies

- Military and War Studies
- Religious and Ecclesiastical History
- Histories of Medicine and the Body
- Medievalism and Early Modern Reception
- History of Emotions (e.g. anger, humour etc.)
- Ecocriticism
- Manuscript Studies and Material Culture

While we invite papers on all parts of the north, we especially welcome papers on Aberdeen and northern Scotland.

The conference will be held on 25-26 May 2026 at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

Please email abstracts of no more than 250 words to medievalandearlymodernaberdeen@gmail.com

Reference:

CFP: Aberdeen Medieval and Early Modern North Conference (Aberdeen, 25-26 May 26). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 22, 2025 (accessed Apr 6, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51332>>.