



Alexander Lawrence Ames is an historian, material culture scholar, and library and museum professional based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. With interests in the religious, intellectual, and cultural history of early America, Ames's research has explored the production and use of religious books and manuscripts in Pennsylvania and beyond, with a special focus on unlocking how the material construction of historic books and manuscripts impacted their dissemination, use, and preservation as cultural artifacts. Ames also studies the history of libraries and archives, a field in which he has published several essays.

Ames holds a B.S. in information media and an M.A. in public history from St. Cloud State University (St. Cloud, Minnesota), as well as an M.A. in American material culture, an M.A. in history, and a Ph.D. in history of American civilization and museum studies from the University of Delaware. He works as Collections Engagement Manager at The Rosenbach, an historic house museum and special collections library affiliated with the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Ames's research has been published in the scholarly journals *Winterthur Portfolio: A Journal of American Material Culture*, *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, and *Libraries: Culture, History, and Society*, as well as volume 6 of the edited series *Suave Mechanicals: Essays on the History of Bookbinding* (Ann Arbor, MI: Legacy Press, 2020), and the edited volume *Elusive Archives: Material Culture in Formation* (University of Delaware Press, 2021). He was awarded the 2017 Katherine C. Grier Prize for the best recent article in *Winterthur Portfolio* for his essay titled "Quill and Graver Bound: Frakturschrift Calligraphy, Devotional Manuscripts, and Penmanship Instruction in German Pennsylvania, 1755–1855" (*Winterthur Portfolio* Volume 50, Number 1, Spring 2016). His doctoral dissertation was awarded the University of Delaware's Wilbur Owen Sypherd Prize in Humanities in May, 2018. *The Word in the Wilderness: Popular Piety and the Manuscript Arts in Early Pennsylvania* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020) is his first book.

Active in bibliophilic circles, Ames is a member of The Philobiblon Club of Philadelphia, The Grolier Club in New York City, and the Delaware Bibliophiles. He sits on the Library Committee at the German Society of Pennsylvania, where he organizes the Library's Treasure Tour and Adopt-a-Rare-Book programs. A Celtic harpist, Ames regularly offers "biblioharp" recitals, which combine the interpretation of rare books and manuscripts with musical performances. In his free time, he enjoys collecting rare books, drinking tea, baking scones, reading, and performing hymns for church services at his Episcopal parish church in Philadelphia.