



Deborah Parker is Professor of Italian Emerita at the University of Virginia. Her books include *She Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance*, (1992), *Bronzino: Renaissance Painter as Poet* (2000) and *Michelangelo and the Art of Letter Writing* (2011) and the co-author, along with Mark Parker of *The Attainable Text: The Special Edition DVD and the Study of Film* (2011), *Inferno Revealed: From Dante to Dan Brown* (2013), and *Sucking Up: A Brief Consideration of Sycophancy* ((2017). Her most recent book is *Becoming Belle da Costa Greene: A Visionary Librarian Through Her Letters* (2024).

[*Becoming Belle da Costa Greene: A Visionary Librarian through Her Letters*](#) chronicles the making and empowerment of a female connoisseur, curator, and library director in a world where such positions were held by men. Greene (1879-1950) was Pierpont Morgan's personal librarian (1908-1913) and the first Director of the Morgan Library (1924-1948). She was also the daughter of two mixed race parents and passed for white. In the nearly 600 letters that Greene sent to art historian Bernard Berenson (1865-1959), Parker identifies Greene's energetic pursuit of exceptional opportunities, illuminating the artistry and imaginative features of Greene's writing—her self-invention, her vibrant responses to books and art, and her path-breaking work as a librarian large.

Recent notices on *Becoming Belle da Costa Greene* include reviews in the [London Review of Books](#) and the [New York Review of Books](#). Michael Dirda, columnist for the *Washington Post's* Book World, listed *Becoming Belle da Costa Greene*, among his recommendations for 2024 [holiday gift books](#); Harvard UP listed my book among its [best books of 2024](#) and John McWhorter referred to it in his *New York Times* [opinion column](#). *Becoming Belle da Costa Greene* has been awarded the [2025 Art in Literature](#) prize by the Library of Virginia and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.