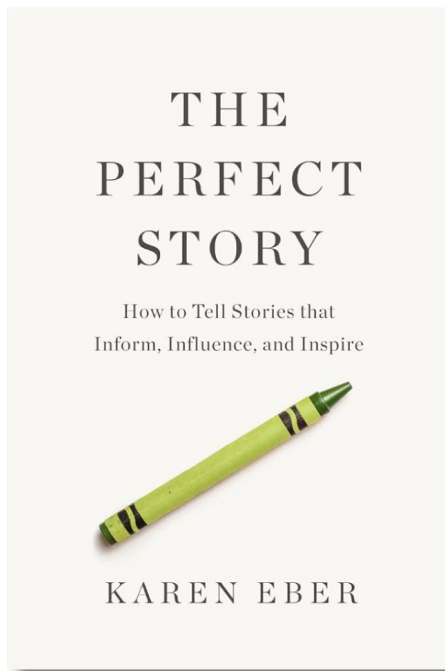




## The 23rd Annual Summer Reading List

Sprawl out on your picnic blanket or beach towel. This year we have 4(ish) books to reinspire you with the how, what, and why of storytelling.



**The Perfect Story** (Harper Horizon © 2023)  
by Karen Eber

The popularity of Eber's Tedx talk, [How Your Brain Responds to Stories -- and Why They're Crucial for Leaders](#), propelled her to write this engaging and straightforward book on applying storytelling to your work. Though Eber tends to consult in the corporate world, her easy-to-follow checklists and models apply equally to the public interest world.

If you are a regular reader of this newsletter, or you've participated in a storytelling workshop with us, almost everything in this book will be familiar. Sometimes, it is helpful to hear it from a new source.

One word of caution: Eber talks about how to present the stories as well. One of her tips takes a very 'outside-in' approach, meaning starting with some set gestures and movements. For some, this may work great! If you practice them enough, these gestures can move from your conscious to subconscious, become natural movement, and enhance your connection to the audience. However, this can also lead to gestures that feel contrived and robotic. That being said, almost everything in this book made me shout, "hooray!"

Take what works and leave the rest. (*Scroll down to learn more – and happy reading!*)

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Upcoming online classes at The Goodman Center		
RUN MEETINGS	TELL STORIES	PLAN CAMPAIGNS
Meetings for People who Hate Meetings	Storytelling: Tapping the Power of Narrative	Strategic Communications: Cutting Through the Clutter
September 16 & 18 9am - 10am PT	September 17, 24, October 1 & 8 9am - 10am PT	September 30 & October 2 11am - 12pm PT

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## Welcome, Jasmine Elist!



**Jasmine Elist**

We're thrilled to welcome [Jasmine Elist](#) as our new Operations Manager.

Jasmine (she/her) is a first generation Iranian-American, and an alum of the Groundlings Theatre's Sunday Company. She is the writer behind an episode of Netflix's podcast "*Because I Watched*" (featuring Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin), detailing the story of a woman in India who felt inspired to pursue a career in comedy after watching the shows of Fonda and Tomlin.

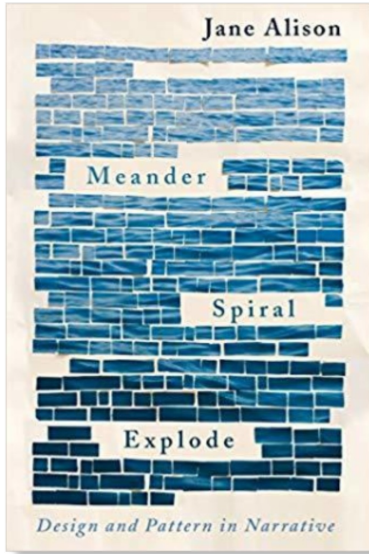
Jasmine studied Creative Writing at the University of Southern California and got her start as a writer for the Los Angeles Times, writing stories for their Calendar Section.

Whether through her one-person musical "*Anxiety: The Musical! (do you like that title? is that okay?)*," or through comedy videos peeking into the Iranian family she grew up with, Jasmine aims to tell stories that are personal, nuanced, connected, and hopefully funny.

When Jasmine isn't telling stories, she's listening to long, howl-y stories from her foster Husky, Haley.

Here at The Goodman Center, Jasmine will co-facilitate workshops on storytelling, presentation design, and strategic communications. Please join me in welcoming Jasmine!

## The 23rd Annual Summer Reading List (cont.)

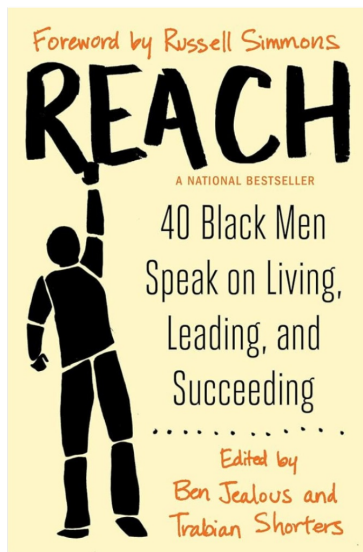


### Meander, Spiral, Explode: Design and Pattern in Narrative (Catapult © 2019) by Jane Alison

Explore beyond the 3-act structure of storytelling in this brilliant book for lovers of language and literature. Jane Alison shares descriptions and examples of story structures that parallel shapes and structures present in nature. If the 3-act structure is a wave (inciting incident, rising action, crest, and resolution), what other natural models can expand our thinking about how to tell a story? How about radials, fractals, networks, cells, and, of course, meanders, spirals and explosions?

The examples really make Alison's ideas come alive as she discusses forms old and emerging. Her focus is fiction-writing, but each one of her

tools will help you tell stories that keep your audience's attention and make them care.



### Reach: 40 Black Men Speak on Living, Leading, and Succeeding (Atria Books © 2015) Edited by Ben Jealous and Trabian Shorters

I was lucky enough to see Trabian Shorters again this year! He was speaking at the GEO conference in Los Angeles. I am a huge fan of his. His work on asset-framing is transformative for public interest storytellers. HUGE FAN.

So, imagine my surprise when they introduced him as an author. Y'all! I had no idea he had a book. After I left that ballroom, I went directly to the LA Central Branch library one block away and checked out a copy.

In *Reach*, black men from all walks of life share personal accounts of success, learning, growth, and giving. Some of my favorite contributions to this collection are:

- Shaka Senghor – his experience illustrates how we can use the stories we tell to transform ourselves and uplift others.
- Barrington Irving – the youngest and first African-American pilot to fly solo around the world. Irving's story takes you on a ride!
- Trabian Shorters – If you don't read in order, maybe start with this one. It shares the why behind this book in a powerful and personal way.

## Follow Your Fun!

There are lots of great books about storytelling and writing, but I still think the best way to learn is by reading what you love. Not only do you deserve a break (beach read, much?), but diving into a book or graphic novel that keeps you on your toes, makes you laugh or cry – that experience teaches you exactly what you need to know about how to make the audience care, and what makes them read on.

The book we read just for the joy of it can be the one that changes the way we approach storytelling or even how we view the world.



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## About Us

This edition of *free-range thinking* was written by Kirsten Farrell and edited by Jasmine Elist. To read back issues, download free publications, and to learn more about our work, please visit [www.thegoodmancenter.com](http://www.thegoodmancenter.com).

To reach the Goodman Center directly, please call (323) 272-4737 or send an email to [kirsten@thegoodmancenter.com](mailto:kirsten@thegoodmancenter.com).

To subscribe to this newsletter, [click here](#).

