

liaisons, functional specialists, and technology specialists. Each chapter includes practical tools that can be applied right away. One example is librarian listservs that are related to the various subject areas. In addition, stories from liaison librarians are identified throughout each chapter to give further insight into different ideas and strategies; snippets from each of these stories are also compiled at the end of each chapter. While the full texts of the stories are not included in the book itself, they are included in a free PDF available at [https://rowman.com/WebDocs/Supplement\\_Stories\\_of\\_Liaison\\_Engagement\\_Success.pdf](https://rowman.com/WebDocs/Supplement_Stories_of_Liaison_Engagement_Success.pdf).

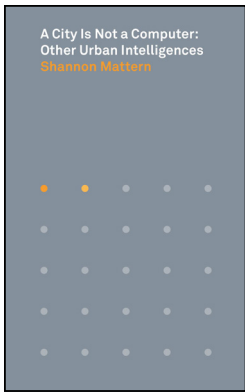
The final two chapters are geared specifically toward leaders of liaison programs. The main areas discussed include developing a framework for success, creating a shared vision of engagement, and conducting effective assessment of liaison work. These chapters in particular highlight a main strength of the book as the authors share their personal experiences and resources they've developed as liaison librarians and leaders of liaison programs. One example is the specific templates the authors' teams have created and used for tracking liaison activity and instruction data. Templates of a postinstruction survey and research consultation follow-up survey are also included. These templates will be a valuable resource for librarians at other institutions to build upon in the assessment of their own work. These materials may be especially useful for liaisons in libraries that have never implemented one or more of these types of tools before. A second example is a thorough and clear description of how the authors used a work retreat to create a shared vision for how to successfully do liaison work. The text lists specific and replicable tasks, including reflection and group work designed to identify best practices as liaisons.

One minor criticism is centered on the supplemental stories of outreach strategies listed in many of the chapters. In total, there are 56 of these stories in the online PDF. While these stories are helpful in providing a more varied understanding of how liaison librarians have served faculty and students, their presentation is less useful than it might have been. For example, the authors could have included one or two whole stories within each chapter of the book itself as opposed to snippets. These could have been combined with commentary that delved further into how these stories could be connected to exemplary liaison librarian practices. Including more of this narrative content in the text would have increased the breadth of the book itself, rather than requiring readers to visit the website to learn more.

As a whole, *Liaison Engagement Success: A Practical Guide for Librarians* serves as an excellent resource that will be useful to a few specific groups. New academic librarians who may not yet be familiar with all of the ways to engage in liaison work will benefit from learning about specific strategies they can immediately use in their work. Seasoned liaison librarians can learn new ways to approach their work by reading the stories of other liaison librarians. The book can also be helpful for individuals seeking to enter a career in academic librarianship, including librarians from other settings or LIS students who wish to gain a greater insight into the type of work liaison librarians do in universities and colleges. — *Andrew Chae, San José State University*

**Shannon Mattern.** *A City Is Not a Computer: Other Urban Intelligences*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021. 200p. Paperback, \$19.95 (ISBN: 9780691208053).

When Grand Valley State University completed their Allendale, Michigan campus library's remodel in 2013, it reflected a specific vision for a transportation hub, which is probably why it feels like an airport when I go to work. What does it mean to embrace that intense liminality?



People, ideas, objects, community, as always transitioning from one space to another, until they're required to hold still, lockdown, and quarantine. This metaphor is expansive and full of the possible, though I occasionally wonder about its limits. Hubs, nodes, and clusters in networks (and their associated movements) expose the limits of developmental metaphors, and so I've read Shannon Mattern's *A City Is Not a Computer: Other Urban Intelligences* with this in mind.

*A City Is Not A Computer* is written with a density that invites revisiting over a lifetime. Mattern's parsing of the "metaphors that give rise to technical models" will engage a variety of readers looking to complicate and otherwise reimagine how people understand information. There's a useful critique of the city-as-computer model's actual outcomes in various smart-cities projects here. Hailed as transformational and innovative, they're taken up and quickly abandoned by companies. Mattern shares the story of Alphabet, who treated their failed project, Sidewalk Toronto, as an engineering problem and not a philosophical one, along with their city partners like Toronto Public Library, engaged largely in order to privacy wash and create the illusion of neutral facilitation between Sidewalk Labs and the residents of Toronto. Worse than abandonment, Mattern cites projects like Google's Tree Canopy Lab and Microsoft's Tree Equity Score as examples of city-scale interventions, as though the absence of trees in low per-capita income neighborhoods in Los Angeles were the result of poor people and not a conscious series of policy decisions shaping the environment. *A City Is Not A Computer* argues that technologies can augment, but not substitute for, human and community intelligences.

Mattern opens with a chapter on consoles, mission control rooms, and dashboards. It explores where these consoles make visible the often invisible structures and work, while inviting surveillance and encouraging paternalist nudges in design. The dashboard is itself a representation of faith, that the consoles we develop will actually drive resource allocation and help us divine "impoverished understanding" of what can be known about the work of libraries (12). Key performance indicators are not so much "key" but rather the items most easily measured within our systems. It's why, for example, our professional organizations do not coherently track student savings with authored and adopted Open Educational Resources, or spend on Article Processing Charges, or otherwise incentivize similar metrics. Nor can those organizations reasonably describe a commitment to open infrastructure. Open Access remains coded as a "trend" along with questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion. The systems producing statistics that drive how academic libraries describe themselves to each other and to funding agencies cannot meaningfully explicate the work of libraries. Although Mattern brings up many examples throughout the chapter, I'm reminded I have yet to encounter a dashboard or console that displays the time, processes, and knowledge required to maintain a dashboard.

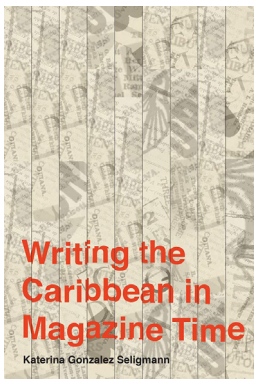
As many library workers consult a variety of dashboards and consoles in their jobs, the university functions in the same structures where Mattern draws her attention. Universities build (and buy) dashboards for Covid-19, scholarly production and funding, strategic planning, diversity initiatives, and surveillance under the pretense of various interventions. Mattern takes the design of the dashboard in a variety of spaces and untangles the new forms of expertise, literacies, and communications demanded by these codified assemblages and ontologies. Because dashboards are also a form of marketing, they define boundaries around what *is* and *is not* a system, library, city, space, disaster, community (43).

Complex infrastructure often invokes stopgaps to manage the measurable effects of a problem. What it means to make, in the context of those infrastructures, is an “enactment of [city] knowing—which cannot be reduced to computation” (72). It’s unsurprising that this conclusion flows immediately into a discussion of libraries and public knowledge in chapter 3. Mattern complicates the library’s position in these projects and within itself: libraries could have a “productively adversarial” role against “smart” initiatives (81). Moving fast and breaking things tends to strain resources and break people. Mattern cites practitioners, theorists, and those who work in hazy, less defined spaces of expertise, and the text is stronger as a result. Mattern engages with maintainers, writing with a voice that inhabits *doing* and *observing* with few peers.

Mattern does masterful work that only scholars willing to pay the interdisciplinary taxes required to develop this analysis can achieve. Mattern draws from architecture, technology, libraries and archives, archeology, sociology, and media studies with ease. Mattern is able to graft and weave more specific vocabularies of maintenance across scale. Because so much necessary work exists at each of these scales of repair, *A City Is Not a Computer* provides tools to better make legible and understand both the work and its often overlapping scope. One review will not do justice to this achievement, but the scholarship, advocacy, and communities that follow certainly will.

A city is not a computer. Neither is a library. Mattern’s work will find readers of both utility and joy, and each of these readers will develop different metaphors, reclaim knowledge, and reframe value propositions. As each of us confronts what it means to exist in liminality in this moment of strangled, unevenly distributed momentum, Mattern’s research is a striking and necessary text that resonates in multiple disciplines, a handbook to ethically reconstitute the world. — *Scarlet Galvan, Grand Valley State University*

**Katerina Gonzalez Seligmann.** *Writing the Caribbean in Magazine Time*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2021. 216p. Paper, \$29.95 (ISBN: 9781978822429).



In this book, Katerina Gonzalez Seligmann traces the way literary magazines in the middle of the twentieth century created different senses of geographical belonging and affiliation for their readers. She explores how these journals created relations to locality and elsewhere that betrayed their desires for specific kin relationships. Seligmann accomplishes her ultimate goal of mapping polycentric networks of infrastructure, ideas, and literature for us that are worthy of study in their own right, without reference to the global centers of literary production where capital fuels larger infrastructures that we are constantly in danger of confusing for value.

At the center of the book is the concept of “location writing.” In chapter 3, “*Gaceta del Caribe* v. *Orígenes* in Cuba: Black Aesthetics as Battleground,” Seligmann focuses on the cultural combat between these two magazines. The former wants to work in close alignment with Black culture, which it rightly sees as closer to the Cuban reality. As Seligmann writes, “the Caribbean location enunciated by *Gaceta del Caribe* functioned strategically to covertly orient the national literary canon and the Communist Party in Cuba away from a Eurocentrist orientation toward the politics and aesthetics located in Black popular culture.” In other words, the title of the journal, its entries, and its constant geo-cultural ref-