



7/13/81 Millie - for your information...
Course

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

VERA SHIFFMAN MEDICAL LIBRARY
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DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48201

July 10, 1981

Carol Colter
Chair, Ad Hoc Committee to Study MLA Affiliation
Midland Hospital
Medical Library
4005 Orchard Drive
Midland, MI 48640

Dear Carol:

I am responding to your call for opinions on the question of whether MHLA should seek chapter status within the Medical Library Association. My vote on this matter will depend on the wording of the question. My belief is that chapter status within MLA is desirable; however, I feel Michigan should not exist as a single state chapter but should consider forming a "KOM Chapter" with librarians in Ohio and Kentucky.

My reasons for not supporting a single state chapter are as follows:

- 1) The membership for a Michigan chapter would be too small. We currently have 100-125 members of MHLA. Not all of these members would become chapter members in MLA thereby creating a very small chapter.
- 2) By creating a single state chapter, Michigan librarians could in effect close themselves out of new ideas and new leadership. New ideas are needed to keep a chapter healthy. I fear a stale and stagnant chapter organization if Michigan forms its own chapter within MLA.

As I understand the Ad Hoc Committee's work, you are seeking MHLA membership opinion about forming a MLA chapter. The Committee will draft a set of pro's and con's on this issue to help MHLA members form their opinion before the annual business meeting. If the membership votes no, the question dies. If the membership votes yes, does the Committee realize that MHLA members will then have to say "why" they wish to become a chapter. I do not think that MLA will accept a chapter petition merely because chapter status is a current novelty. I think this Committee must make the membership aware of MLA's requirements for chapter status, and this includes providing a good reason for breaking up a currently existing MLA chapter (the Midwest Chapter). These requirements should be part of the pro and con statement given to MHLA members.

It is my opinion that chapter status within MLA is a good thing. Forming a MLA chapter is good in that it makes librarians aware of certain professional standards established by MLA. I think these standards such as education requirements, provision of library services, etc. are important and should be maintained. Chapter members would at least implicitly recognize these basic standards when they become members of the MLA chapter.

I also think that ^oKOM rather than a Michigan chapter be formed. I have never participated in MRG business, mostly because I have kept myself informed about MLA activity and did not see MRG filling this information need of mine. Since Michigan has active local organizations for medical librarians, MRG has never been important or relevant to me. If one of the local organizations such as MHSLA spearheaded a drive to form a KOM chapter, then I would want to participate in this chapter. MRG is also geographically too big; it is now too expensive to travel throughout the entire Midwest region. MRG has been, in my mind, associated with ~~the~~ NLN's Region 7. Since Region 7 business has little importance to a Region 5 librarian, there is no interest on my part in having membership in MRG. These then, are my reasons for supporting the formation of a KOM chapter within MLA.

In summary, I would emphasize that chapter status and participation in a MLA chapter are good concepts. I do not think Michigan should be a single state chapter in MLA. I would rather support the concept of a KOM chapter. This proposal seems more beneficial for Michigan librarians and might be more defensible before the MLA Chapter Council.

I hope these ideas are a help to you and your committee.

Sincerely,


James Shedlock

JS/pjp