

**CHART SHOWING DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN
MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES**

	Archives	Libraries	Museums
What do they collect?	Inactive records for permanent values; can include manuscripts and unpublished documents; also multimedia material Material is unique	Published material in various formats: including but not limited to journals, books, films, DVDs, material not unique	Artifacts and associated documents that may or may not be unique
How is material obtained?	By donation, loan, transfer or purchase	Usually by purchase; sometimes by donation	Usually by donation, loan and sometimes by purchase
How is material arranged?	In original order determined by creator	Determined by standardized library classification system- Library of Congress	Arrangement is not significant; usually based on storage requirements for items' needs
Access issues	Material can be used only on site; preservation issues may limit access to originals	Material may be used on site or signed out to take home (unless it has restrictions such as reference material)	Material is viewed in the display galleries or exhibition areas; some museums have research policies but many are not equipped for the public to have access to material
How do you find what you want?	Archives guides, finding aids, inventories, online or manual catalogues	Name and subject headings in catalogues or by browsing shelves	View what is on display
Who uses material?	Depends on archives policy and donor/legislative restrictions	Any member of the library's community	Any member of the public
Who takes care of material?	Archivist	Librarian	Museum curator

This section is based on Table Two in, "Introducing Archives and the Archival Profession", (Schwirtlich, 1987, p.9)

Carolynn Bart-Riedstra, MCA Archivist, March 2020