

Perseus Project: Collection Development Policy

Casey Hoeve

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Overview

The Perseus Digital Library began in 1985, under the patronage of the Annenberg/CPB Project.¹ Its original aim was to amass a collection, focused upon knowledge of the ancient Greek world, comprising textual, archaeological, and artistic materials. The project gained momentum from funding, generously provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Science Foundation; these contributing institutions requested a researched study, investigating the complications of digital library production, for a collection of all humanities. Consequently, the Perseus Project has expanded coverage to the following areas: Roman Civilization, the history of science in Early Modern English, History and Topography of London, and American historical documents.² The project has since evolved from a compilation of cd-roms, to the launch of the website repository in 1995³, which currently maintains a collection of 151,723,190 recorded words.⁴

Mission and Goals:

The current mission of the Perseus Digital Library is the continuation, “of making a full record of humanity, as intellectually accessible as possible, to every human being, regardless of linguistic or cultural background.”⁵ The primary collection mission is centered upon materials spanning, “Greco-Roman Civilizations, Early Modern English, the American Civil War, the History and Topography of London, and the History of Mechanics. The Perseus Project additionally upholds a mission of access, through the provision of human readable information [digitized objects], machine accessible knowledge [commentaries, research and translations], and machine generated knowledge [searching capabilities].⁶

1 Gregory Crane et al., “Perseus: An Interactive Curriculum on Classical Greek Civilization, A Proposal to the Annenberg/CPB Project,” *Tufts University Digital Library*, 1998,

<http://repository01.lib.tufts.edu:8080/fedora/get/tufts:PB.001.001.00005/bdef:TuftsPDF/getPDF> (21 January 2010).

2 “Research Background,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/research/background> (21 January 2010).

3 “Perseus Project,” *Wikipedia.org*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perseus_Project#References (21 January 2010).

4 “Browse the Collections,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collections> (21 January 2010).

5 “Research,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/research> (21 January 2010).

6 *Ibid.*

Service Community:

The service community of the Perseus Digital Library predominantly consists of (1) Professors and upper-level university students in the classics and related humanities [history, archeology, English], for purposes of research or supplemental information. (2) Professors and all undergraduate students in art and language departments, as a resource for research and primary visual-textual instruction. (3) And independent, advanced researchers, who can access Perseus through private or public means. All users must have access to appropriate technology [a computer and high-speed Internet access] to use the collection. [For criteria used in this decision, see “Demographic Information” and “Users of the Collection”]

Demographic Information:

During the initial phases of Perseus, the Annenberg/CPB Project supplied funding for survey and analysis, for purposes of determining the predominant user base of the proposed collection. It was concluded that users would constitute “people who teach ancient literature, history, or art at the college level, as well as some collegiate individuals less involved with the classics.”⁷ Professors interviewed believed Perseus could be utilized for research, as well as furnishing supplemental information for upper-level students, in the subject areas of history and the classics. It was additionally proposed that Perseus could serve as primary text for language students.⁸ Most professors agreed that much of the material was not suitable for freshman, as lower-level course readings are typically concerned with secondary sources, and would not correspond well to the large proportion of primary documents included in Perseus. However, Art professors deemed that Perseus would be suitable for all levels of students, and provide new opportunities for visual comparison. Additionally important, all users of Perseus must have access to appropriate technological means, including a computer with a

⁷ Gregory Crane et al., “Perseus: An Interactive Curriculum on Classical Greek Civilization.”

⁸ *Ibid.*

recommended high-speed Internet connection, and the latest updated browser software.⁹

Parameters of the Collection:

Perseus is a Digital Library, which operates on the open source language Hopper, and includes materials encoded in Hopper, TEI Compliant XML, and Java.¹⁰ Perseus currently maintains collections in the following areas: Greco-Roman Classics, Arabic, 19th Century American, Germanic, Renaissance, Papyri, Art and Archeology, and the Richmond Times Dispatch.¹¹ Artifacts, digitized, and textual information will be collected by Perseus and partnered institutions. However, digital format is preferred by Perseus, as this is the sole method of access and display on the website [See “Formats”].

Library Programs and Patron Need:

Perseus Digital Library is oriented to serve patron needs in the areas of educational materials and culture preservation,¹² in a manner that is consistent with our service community [see “Service Community” and “Demographic Information”] In addition, Perseus is continually analyzing the problems associated with the creation and access of a digital library, for the humanities as a whole, as stipulated by grant funding institutions. Therefore, programs will concentrate upon methods of accessibility, such as the utilization of open-source software for preservation, and the accession of relevant subject matter to enhance current collections.¹³ Currently, materials may circulate [downloaded/viewed] on a limited basis. All materials within Perseus (non-partner material) belong to Tufts University, and may be used by students, faculty, and the public for non-commercial purposes. According to copyright law, all publishing uses of materials must be authorized by Tufts University, or partnered universities, based on the institutional ownership of a particular material.¹⁴ As funding

9 “Open Source Code,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/opensource> (21 January 2010).

10 “Open Source Code,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*.

11 “19th Century American,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collectioncollection=Perseus:collection:cwar> (21 January 2010).

12 G. Edward Evans and Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro, *Developing Library and Information Center Collections: Fifth Edition* (Westport: Libraries Unlimited, 2005), 54.

13 “Research Background,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*.

14 “Perseus Copyrights and Warranty,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/help/copyright> (21 January 2010).

institutions and partnerships expand, Perseus will continue to maintain, and enhance current collections, in addition to adding new subjects if stipulated, or donated by grant providing institutions.

Subject Areas and Formats Collected

Users of the Collection:

The users the Perseus Digital Library consist of (1) Professors and upper-level university students in the classics and related humanities [history, archeology, English], for purposes of research or supplemental information. (2) Professors and all undergraduate students in art and language departments, as a resource for research and primary visual-textual instruction. (3) And independent, advanced researchers, who can access Perseus through private or public means. With Perseus, all users must have access to appropriate technology [a computer and high-speed Internet access] to use the collection. The primary users of Perseus are researchers of Greco-Roman text, and professors and scholars of the humanities, whose studies correspond to the current collections.¹⁵ The secondary users of Perseus include university students in the language and art departments, who will utilize texts and visual art as an important source of primary learning materials. Upper-level humanities students may also fall into this categorization, as Perseus may serve as a supplemental resource for instruction and research materials. Tertiary users of the collection include lower-division university students and serendipitous users, who may use materials for basic educational purposes.¹⁶ [For more information, see “Demographic Information”]

Description of the Collections

Greek and Roman Materials:

The Greek and Roman Materials are the largest collection in the Perseus Digital Library, containing over 60,278,054 words, including languages of English, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Old English, and Others. Within this collection, the art and archeology section catalogs over “1305 coins,

¹⁵ Gregory Crane et al., “Perseus: An Interactive Curriculum on Classical Greek Civilization.”

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

1909 vases, 2003 sculptures, 179 sites, 140 gems, and 424 buildings, including descriptions and metadata.”¹⁷

19th Century American Materials:

The 19th Century American materials are the second largest collection in the Perseus Digital Library, with over 58,332,291 words, with a predominant number of items recorded in the English language. The majority of the collection focuses on materials of the American Civil War.¹⁸

The Richmond Dispatch:

The Richmond Dispatch is a newspaper based out of Richmond, Virginia, and Perseus maintains a collection of their publications, spanning from 1860 to 1865.¹⁹

Germanic, Renaissance, Arabic Materials:

Within this category, the Renaissance materials are the most numerous. “Renaissance” refers to the English Renaissance, which is considered to be Early Modern Britain. Most works collected span the 19th and 20th Centuries, however, the works of William Shakespeare have been additionally included in this collection.²⁰ Arabic materials consist primarily of the Quran and a few secondary sources, and the Germanic collection contains a large proportion of Old Norse Folklore.

The Duke Data Bank of Documentary Papyri:

The Duke Data Bank of Documentary Papyri was published in 1996, and contains over 5,000,000 words and nearly 500 volumes, in English, Greek, Latin, and other.²¹

Formats

Perseus is a Digital Library, which operates on the open source language Hopper, and includes materials encoded in Hopper, TEI Compliant XML, and Java. Artifacts, texts, and digital information will be collected by Perseus and partnered institutions, in the following formats: microforms, slides,

17 “Browse the Collections,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*.

18 “Browse the Collections,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*.

19 *Ibid*.

20 Clifford E. Wulfman, “The Perseus Garner: An Overview,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, April 2001,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.03.0024> (21 January 2010).

21 “Duke Payprus Archive,” *Duke.edu*, <http://SCRIPTORIUM.LIB.DUKE.EDU/PAPYRUS/TEXTS/HOMEPAGE.HTML> (21 January 2010).

pictures, pamphlets, manuscripts and archival material, maps, government documents, realia, specimens and electronic format.²² However, given the expense of retrospective materials, and the unwillingness of institutions to lend or donate rare items, digital format is preferred by Perseus, as this is the sole method of access and display on the website. Hopper code is language independent; therefore, all languages are welcome for inclusion, as long as the material is relevant to the current collections and mission of Perseus. Cataloged data will be coded in XML MODS and MADS format, to properly adhere to the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic format. Metadata on texts will be provided under the Canonical Services Protocol, to synchronize dynamic links and XML transcriptions.²³ Scanned items will be produced according to Open Content Alliance Standards, as studies have shown this method to produce the highest percentage of readable content.²⁴

Selection Responsibilities:

Material selection will be made by Perseus staff members and partnering organizations. Groups by subject matter will be established, and shall be comprised of the following positions: collection curators and digital librarians, research faculty, and editorial staff. Within these positions, staff members will be divided in groups by area of expertise, and will then be responsible for building and maintaining collections in their respective areas of specialization.²⁵ Funding for each subject will be determined annually, and allocated from the collective budget. Greco-Roman and 19th Century American subjects shall receive at least 50% of the budget, in conjunction with the collection goals of Perseus and grant institutions.²⁶

Selection Criteria

Perseus shall select materials based on the following categories:

22 G. Edward Evans and Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro, *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, 57.

23 "Research in 2008/2009," *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/research/current>, (21 January 2010).

24 Gregory Crane, Alison Babeu, and Gordon Stewart, "A New Generation of Textual Corpora: Mining Corpora from Very Large Collections," *Tufts University Digital Library*, 2007, http://dl.tufts.edu/view_pdf.jsp?pid=tufts:PB.001.001.00006 (21 January 2010).

25 "Members of the Perseus Digital Library," *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/about/who> (21 January 2010).

26 "Grants," *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/grants> (21 January 2010).

1. Relevance: the materials must be relevant to current collections in Perseus Digital Library, as established by the missions and goals of the organization.
2. Format: Items selected must coincide with the format requirements issued in the “Format” section of the policy. Any items not meeting the requirements may be added on an individual basis, but will need both group approval and permission from the Editor in Chief.
3. Materials should be almost solely retrospective in nature. Perseus articles and research papers, produced by research fellows, may be included in the library with author permission.²⁷
4. Duplicate items shall not be selected unless deemed a rare or historical artifact.
5. All works shall be valued equally; materials shall not be denied based on attempts to censor unpopular viewpoints.
6. Materials protected under copyright may only be selected and used if granted permission by the creators.²⁸

Selection Aids

The Perseus Digital Library specializes in the retrospective collection of materials. Therefore, Perseus should use bibliographic guides, such as the OCLC/RLIN, and National Union Catalogs to locate materials.²⁹ Perseus should also contact prominent Universities, Museums, and Archives for lists of collected materials. If an item cannot be issued to Perseus for purchase or loan, the collection development personnel should strive to acquire a digital copy of the item, in one of the approved formats described in the “Format” section of this document.

Miscellaneous:

Gift Policy

Perseus is a non-profit organization that operates through the contribution of grants and donated

27 “Perseus Articles and Publications,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/about/publications> (21 January 2010).

28 G. Edward Evans and Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro, *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, 61.

29 *Ibid.*, 91.

materials; therefore, gifts are highly encouraged and appreciated. Gifts may be issued in the form of monetary donations, or through the donation of a rare item. Gifts will not be accepted unless a preliminary gift form is filed. Forms may be accessed [also in Appendix] at the following links:

[Tufts University Gifts Form](#)³⁰

[Perseus Digital Library Gift Form](#)³¹

If a gift is presented without an identified donor or gift form, it must receive approval from both the selection group and the Editor in Chief. All gifts will be approved according to the “Selection Criteria” section. Temporary loans of materials will be acquired on a contractual basis, authorized by the legal department at Tufts University.

Deselection and Discards

Perseus shall only discard duplicate items that are not considered rare or historical artifacts. Damaged items shall be assessed, and will not be discarded if they are considered rare or historical artifacts. It is recommended that unwanted duplicate items be donated to partnering organizations if interest is expressed. Obsolete formats of digitized items shall be deleted, only if an updated version of the file is present in the electronic records. Weeding of the collection will be the responsibility of the collection development staff.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Collection shall be based on the 5,000-topic level of the Pacific Northwest Collection Assessment, used for research collections. Based on the specific nature of the collections included in Perseus, this system most adequately measures the strength of the collection.³²

Complaints and Censorship

Perseus will not remove items on the basis of complaints or ideological disagreement. As U.S.

30 “Tufts Giving Form,” *Tufts.edu*, https://secure.www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/TUF/onlinegiving/showGivingForm.jsp?form_id=532 (21 January 2010).

31 “Support Perseus,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/help/supportperseus.pdf> (21 January 2010).

32 G. Edward Evans and Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro, *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, 58.

based institution of higher learning, we strongly value the legal right of the First Amendment, and the protection of intellectual freedoms. Secondly, our mission is to provide reasonable access to every individual possible, and we will not legally deny this right to any individual, based on personal preference or bias. We sincerely appreciate and encourage individual suggestions for included material,³³ but the final decision will remain in the hands of our collection development staff. All materials in Perseus have been selected by collections staff after careful consideration, and will remain in the system until deselection, based on the criteria listed in “Deselection and Discard” section.

Appendix

³³ “Perseus-Help-FAQ,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/help/faq> (21 January 2010).

Perseus Giving Form

The Perseus Project needs your support. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Perseus Project.

Yes, I would be pleased to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Perseus Project in the amount of:

\$250 \$100 \$500 \$1000 Other \$ _____

Please select type of payment:

Payment by check (payable to Trustees of Tufts College)

Payment by credit card (circle one): Visa MasterCard Discover AmEx

Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Please select payment schedule:

Full payment enclosed

Partial payment of \$ _____ is enclosed. Please send me a reminder for the balance.

If you would like more information about making your gift using other methods, please

contact the Tufts Gift Planning team or visit the WWW site:

http://advancement.tufts.edu/make_gift/index.html

Please provide the following information:

name _____

mailing address _____

city _____ state _____ zip _____

telephone _____ fax _____

e-mail _____

Please send your gift and this form to:

Perseus Project

c/o The Tufts Fund for Arts, Sciences & Technology

Tufts University

P.O. Box 3306

Boston, MA 02241-3306

Bibliography

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<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collectioncollection=Perseus:collection:cwar> (21 January 2010).
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- Crane, Gregory et al. “Perseus: An Interactive Curriculum on Classical Greek Civilization, A Proposal to the Annenberg/CPB Project.” *Tufts University Digital Library*. 1998.
http://dl.tufts.edu/view_pdf.jsp?pid=tufts:PB.001.001.00005 (21 January 2010).
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http://dl.tufts.edu/view_pdf.jsp?pid=tufts:PB.001.001.00006 (21 January 2010).
- “Duke Payprus Archive.” *Duke.edu*. <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/homepage.html> (21 January 2010).
- Evans, G. Edward and Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro. *Developing Library and Information Center Collections: Fifth Edition*. Westport: Libraries Unlimited, 2005.
- “Grants.” *Perseus.tufts.edu*. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/grants> (21 January 2010).
- “Members of the Perseus Digital Library,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*,
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/about/who> (21 January 2010).
- “Open Source Code.” *Perseus.tufts.edu*. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/opensource> (21 January 2010.)
- “Perseus Articles and Publications,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*,
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- “Perseus Copyrights and Warranty,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*,
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/help/copyright> (21 January 2010).
- “Perseus-Help-FAQ,” *Perseus.tufts.edu*, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/help/faq> (21 January 2010).
- “Perseus Project.” *Wikipedia.org*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perseus_Project#References (21 January 2010).
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- “Research.” *Perseus.tufts.edu*. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/research> (21 January 2010).

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“Support Perseus.” *Perseus.tufts.edu*. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/help/supportperseus.pdf> (21 January 2010).

“Tufts Giving Form.” *Tufts.edu*. https://secure.www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/TUF/onlinegiving/showGivingForm.jsp?form_id=532 (21 January 2010).

Wulfman, Clifford E. “The Perseus Garner: An Overview.” *Perseus.tufts.edu*. April 2001.
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.03.0024> (21 January 2010).