

# The Wellcome Trust funds its first open access monograph, helping medical humanities reach wider audiences.

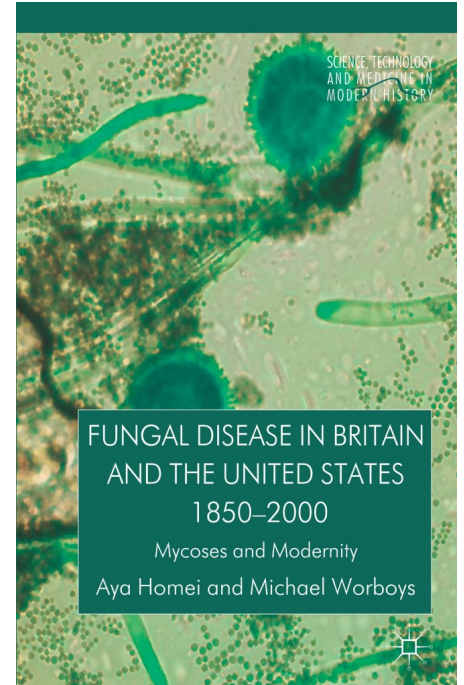
 [blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/11/14/wellcome-trust-open-access-humanities/](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/11/14/wellcome-trust-open-access-humanities/)

11/14/2013

The Wellcome Trust requires that research outputs which arise from their funding are made available in open access formats. This policy notably includes scholarly monographs. Today marks the first day where that policy has been put into practice with an open access book in the medical humanities now available, published by Palgrave Macmillan. Below is a reflection from author [Michael Worboys](#) on the opportunities this offers his research. [Sam Burrige](#) also shares her thoughts on the future of open access at Palgrave Macmillan.

**Professor Michael Worboys** (University of Manchester)

Aya Homei and I are the guinea pigs for the new Wellcome Trust policy on open access monographs. Our book, *Fungal Disease in Britain and America, 1850-2000: Mycoses and Modernity*, published by Palgrave Macmillan this week, is the first new monograph published through the [Trust's scheme](#). It is available free to download from Palgrave Connect, and from online retailers such as Amazon Kindle. We are delighted that our book is being published open access and feel that it will ensure that our subject, the history of fungal disease, will enjoy a much wider audience than would otherwise have been the case.



Fungal infections or mycoses are the great neglected diseases of medical history. There are numerous histories of viral, bacterial and protozoan infections, for all times and all places, but very few studies of those caused by fungi. Why? It cannot be because of prevalence. Historical sources and contemporary epidemiological investigations show that fungal infections were and are ubiquitous. In the first half of the twentieth century, children feared the school nurse finding ringworm on their scalp and having to endure not only the pains of X-ray depilation or the embarrassment their shaven head painted mauve with gentian violet, but also exclusion from school and the shame of being stigmatised as 'unclean'. The neglect of serious fungal infections might be explained by their relative rarity, but this situation is changing rapidly with invasive candidiasis and aspergillosis becoming increasingly prevalent in critically ill patients and those with compromised immune systems.



We have found the process of manuscript preparation, reviews, editing and production to be the same as with the normal hardback. The only difference was the extra work needed to obtain permission to use images, in large part due to having to explain the principles and practice of open access to copyright holders, simply because of its novelty – none refused. However, where copyright was not clear cut or written permission impossible to obtain, a few images were dropped, but none of these were critical.

We are certain that open access will give our book a wider readership and hopefully be assigned as a student reading text. We were reminded many times at the recent [International Congress for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine](#) at the University of Manchester, which attracted over 1,600 delegates from 64 countries, just how difficult it is for teachers and researchers in many countries to acquire books for their library and personal use. We are pleased that open access publication is accompanied by affordable print on demand editions. Lastly, and returning to our initial point about the neglect of fungal disease in medical history, we trust that open access publication will ensure that this important class of infections receives the scholarly attention it deserves and also reaches a wider public audience, not least through linkages to patient groups such as that at the

[Aspergillus/Aspergillosis website](#). Overall, we found the experience wholly positive.

**Sam Burrige** (Palgrave Macmillan)

Monographs have always been a strength for Palgrave Macmillan. In 2013, we published over 1,700 monographs, and we think it's vital we continually look for ways to usefully innovate in this space. That's why it is such a privilege for us to publish the first open access monograph funded by the Wellcome Trust, *Fungal Disease in Britain and the United States 1850-2000*; and it has been a fascinating process, from start to finish.



We first announced our intention to publish open access across all our formats – journals, Palgrave Pivots and monographs – in January of this year, after a survey of our authors told us they wanted the option. The humanities and social sciences (HSS) have been slower to adopt open access than the STEM subjects, but over two thirds of our academics across all HSS disciplines said that they thought it would benefit their specific field.

We think it's important to be at the forefront of exploring open access, and we don't think it will be the only model we explore as the market evolves, but it was vital that our first exploration was sustainable. The processing charge, which was £11,000 +VAT, was paid by the Wellcome Trust. It covers everything from editorial guidance and expertise, to peer review, marketing, production, dissemination, sales support and long-term preservation of the research.

All of our open access monographs will receive the same treatment as those published through the traditional model. In fact, we don't even ask whether the author wants to publish open access until the book has been accepted, post peer-review, ensuring our research is always of the highest quality.

Furthermore, Dr Aya Homei and Professor Michael Worboys's book is published via a CC BY license. This allows others to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon the article, even commercially, as long as they credit the authors for the original creation.

The book is published as an ePub via online retailers such as Amazon Kindle, and via PDF on Palgrave Connect, our own platform. It's also published in XML on PubMed Central, due to their relationship with the Wellcome Trust. We don't charge for any of these. The book is available print on demand too, at a significantly reduced price.

Of course, we still publish the vast majority of our monographs via traditional methods, and we will do for as long as our community wants us to. We acknowledge that unless you have the funding, publishing OA is a challenge, and for many HSS academics funding simply isn't available.

In the future, we plan to expand our OA offering with the launch of a fully open access journal, and we're working closely with our colleagues at Nature Publishing Group and Frontiers to leverage their expertise in OA developments, to deliver OA solutions that meet the needs of the HSS community. Today, we're delighted to work with the Wellcome Trust, and with the results of the open access book, which you can download for free [here](#). We hope it's the first of many, and that it will demonstrate that to academics from all disciplines the evolving nature of the monograph.

*Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the Impact of Social Science blog, nor of the London School of Economics. Please review our [Comments Policy](#) if you have any concerns on posting a comment below.*

## About the Authors

**Professor Michael Worboys** is Director of the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine at the University of Manchester

**Sam Burrige** is Managing Director of Palgrave Macmillan. Joining Macmillan in 1995, Sam started as a Sales Representative for Eastern and Central Europe. During her time at Palgrave she has fulfilled several senior roles across sales, business development and executive publishing. In 2012 Sam took on her current role of Managing Director of Palgrave Macmillan.

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