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The Bulletin and The New Journalism from 1880 to 1918

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Introduction

A bulletin, by definition, is a short, official statement (Sykes 1982, p.120). Despite its identical eponym, the early Bulletin was the antithesis of such decorum. Born in 1880, it grew as the young Australia moved towards Federation, amidst rapidly developing new technologies and the swirling vitality of the bohemian era. Just as turbulent was the paper itself. Largely indefinable, it challenged officialdom, while success swelled its size to multiple pages of news, gossip, illustration, verse, prose and advertising. Amidst these forms was a milieu of ideology, humour and literary expression, combining as a mix of old and new journalistic styles, yet with an unclassifiable individuality as strident as the legendary red cover.

It is the publication’s individuality that led observers in the 1890s to claim the Bulletin as “original”, “unmatchable” anywhere in the world, with “no exact equivalent elsewhere” (Franklin 1965, p.101; Inglis 1992, p.105; Stewart 1988, p.180). This individuality stemmed from the key personalities of the Bulletin between 1880 to 1918: founders, J.F. Archibald and John Haynes; editors William Henry Traill, A.G. Stephens, James Edmond and S.H. Prior. The
paper’s pages invoked their personal radicalism and scepticism, with the mercurial Archibald setting the tone for its high satire.

Amidst these features the *Bulletin*, like many of its newspaper and magazine contemporaries, published serialised literature, social, sports and business columns, front page advertising and, on several pages, long columns of text with single deck headlines. Elsewhere, various features of New Journalism are evident in short paragraph items, the use of lead sentences to introduce reports, a lighter, direct, more personable writing style which led to mass audience appeal, including material aimed at the ‘new’ woman reader (Green 1961). The New Journalism belief of the press as a lobbyist working from a moral conscience (Weiner 1988, p.48) was evident in the ardent campaigns mounted by Archibald and his successors. The *Bulletin*, however, cannot be considered merely as an adopter of New Journalism. It certainly used features of the evolving genre and disseminated the style by virtue of its large circulation. As the most successful early purveyor of New Journalism features in Australia the *Bulletin* could easily be claimed as the Australian pioneer of the style. Yet, the manner in which it employed New Journalism features indicates a coincidental rather than deliberate attachment to the British and American New Journalism formula. What the *Bulletin* most featured was not New Journalism per se, but “Bulletinese” (Dalley 1930, p.32), a style without precursor or successor.

**The New Journalism**

Academic research into nineteenth century New Journalism in Australia is scant. By contrast, there is a large body of overseas research discussing the advent of New Journalism in periodical, weekly and daily publications in England and America. In this, the
‘father’ of New Journalism is identified as W.T. Stead, editor from 1883 to 1889 of the London evening penny paper *Pall Mall Gazette* (Lee 1976; Weiner 1988). Stead aided in initiating a shift in the role of the press from a learned tutor to that of an informed lobbyist, acting with a moral conscience on behalf of the public (Lee 1976). It then followed that if the press was to identify itself with the public and attract a broader readership then its journalism needed to better relate to the public and its varying standards of literacy (Park 1923). This was achieved by reducing the density of news design and content through shorter items, greater use of cross-heads, multi-deck headlines and more illustrations (Lee 1976). It was of this journalistic style that essayist Matthew Arnold was referring when he coined the term the “New Journalism” in an article in *Nineteenth Century* in May, 1887, describing it as “full of ability, novelty, variety, sensation, sympathy, generous instincts; its one great fault is that it is feather-brained” (Read 1979, p.280).

Arnold’s declaration reveals the fine line between the so called yellow journalism of the era and New Journalism. Yellow journalism, most readily associated with Pulitzer and Hearst in the US (Örnebring and Jönsson 2004, p. 289), arose out of the penny papers and their propensity for emotional and shocking copy that mimicked fiction more than journalism (Park 1923). By contrast, the New Journalism was steeped in a sense of responsibility that placed greater emphasis on the newspaper as a crusader than entertainer. Just as Horace Greeley had, in the 1840s, with the *New York Tribune* (Örnebring and Jönsson 2004) Stead became known for his campaigns on such issues as Irish politics, divorce, child prostitution and slavery (Brake 1988). Stead brought a moral conscience to journalism, using direct language to relate his political convictions (Weiner 1988). While this direct style was similar to that
used by the yellow press, Stead and his New Journalism contemporaries were not seeking, in the modern vernacular, a deliberate “dumbing down” of journalism. Instead they were aiming for commercial success not through sensationalism but through an increased market (Ensor 1963). To achieve this, their journalism needed to entice new readers, particularly women, from the emerging literate middle class and upper lower class in subject matter and presentation. This journalism, most seen in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, T.P. O’Connor’s evening *Star* newspaper and George Newnes’ weekly *Tit-Bits*, was typified by direct language, interviews, human interest stories, briefer headlines, cross heads, shorter paragraphs and increased use of illustrations. From around 1830 many newspapers had begun to experiment with illustration, placing news on the front page, separating news coverage from political opinion and shifting editorial emphasis from parliament to sport, gossip, crime and sex (Weiner 1988). Whether Arnold, in his use of the term “feather brained” was more critical of yellow, rather than New Journalism is not known. However, the title became synonymous with the type of journalism proffered by Stead.

Joel H. Weiner, who edited the most detailed analysis of the New Journalism in his 1988 collection *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism in Britain 1850s to 1914*, reflects the complexity of the origins of the New Journalism by claiming the slow transformation of journalism throughout the nineteenth century reveals a much more nebulous transition than that indicated by Arnold in his somewhat belated 1887 declaration (Weiner 1988). The New Journalism, he argues, also needs to be considered in geographical and cultural terms with acknowledgment of the impact of the role of cheap fiction in popular culture and the advent of the bohemian
movement, which attracted many journalists (Weiner 1988). Likewise, the role of the telegraph, in allowing a never before known immediacy to journalism, needs to be considered. The brief writing style of telegrams quickly found its way into newspaper columns, not just in columns typically titled Cable News, but within the copy itself. The telegraph had shown information could be communicated in short, rather than long form and prioritised in a manner that the news lead came to replicate (Folkerts and Teeter 1994).

A similar conglomerate of influence and environment can be considered in assessing the introduction of the New Journalism into Australia. However, there is little academic work to date that has explored the movement in detail. The most in depth analysis is found in literary, rather than journalism histories, in particular, H. M. Green’s 1961 *A History of Australian Literature*. Interestingly, each discourse has a conflicting estimation of the New Journalism’s presence in Australia. Although included in his discussion of the New Journalism, Green argues the *Bulletin* was in a “position quite on its own” (Green 1961, p. 907). By separating the *Bulletin* from other publications, Green is able to argue the New Journalism did not come to Australia until late in the century, with little change in newspaper style before the 1890s and major change not evident until the second decade of the twentieth century. He identifies metropolitan dailies as the first to adopt change. In Sydney, the sedate *Sydney Morning Herald* was slower to break from convention than its livelier counterpart *The Daily Telegraph* (Green 1961). Had Green considered the New Journalism elements of the *Bulletin* alongside daily papers he would have found many features of the style evident from the early 1880s. Henry Mayer, by contrast, argues the New Journalism was evident in Australia from as early as 1826
in the pages of the *Monitor* (Mayer 1964). While discussed under a subheading titled “New Journalism”, Mayer limits his assessment of New Journalism qualities in early 19th century publications to the presence of scandal, human interest and horror content (Mayer 1964). As discussed in relation to the American and English experience, this content is most typical of yellow journalism and the penny press and not the sole criteria of the New Journalism, which was a far more complex mix of intent, layout and content. Mayer cites contemporaries as believing the New Journalism arrived in Australia in 1884 when Sydney’s *Daily Telegraph* adopted the new style (Mayer 1964). It is important to note this revamp came four years after the launch of the *Bulletin*. Green argues the *Telegraph*, while somewhat brighter in style, gravitated more towards the conservative SMH, aiming at a similar market (Green 1961). Like Green, Mayer also omits the *Bulletin* in his discussion, presumably also because it was weekly rather than daily. Where the idiosyncratic style of the *Bulletin* is discussed it is again isolated from the New Journalism. Ken Goodwin’s *A History of Australian Literature*, details the various radical elements of the *Bulletin*, but does not relate them to the New Journalism (Goodwin 1986). In journalism histories Dennis Cryle’s *Disreputable Profession*, *Journalists and Journalism in Colonial Australia* considers the *Bulletin* and New Journalism in his discussion of the South Australian press proprietor Samuel Frewarson (Cryle 1997). Frewarson was an early adopter of New Journalism styles. However, Cryle argues it would be inaccurate to view Frewarson’s publication as a forerunner to the *Bulletin* as its use of New Journalism features differed to the weekly’s. The two works dedicated to the *Bulletin*: Sylvia Lawson’s *The Archibald Paradox, A Strange Case of Authorship* and Patricia Rolfe’s *The Journalistic Javelin, An
Illustrated History of the Bulletin make some reference to the broader journalism environment during the weekly’s development. However, neither assesses the role of the Bulletin in introducing the New Journalism into Australia (Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1979). Similarly, several articles and chapters that analyse the idiosyncrasies of the Bulletin in its early years have not explored its radical nature in terms of the New Journalism. However, these varied discussions do provide an insight into the Bulletin’s character, which can then be used for interpretation within the New Journalism context.

Collectively then, existing publications identify the Bulletin as a radical paper without ancestry or a contemporary parallel, despite imitators. The unexplored implication is that the Bulletin was the pioneer of the New Journalism in Australia, publishing the style’s complex reworking of journalistic ethos, layout and content four years prior to the manifestation of the trend in an Australian daily newspaper. What this paper will examine is how prevalent the features of the New Journalism were within the Bulletin until the end of World War One and whether they were a deliberate adoption of the overseas style.

The Bulletin and the New Journalism

When the first edition of the Bulletin came off the presses on January 31, 1880 it promised a “new departure in journalism” with superior illustrations and “unsurpassed in the rigour, freshness and geniality of its literary contributions” (Bulletin 1880). This “departure” was not initially obvious with early editions differing little from other weeklies and monthlies of the time (Goodwin 1986). The famed coloured cover did not appear until mid 1883 (Rolfe 1979). Also, not immediately evident was the promise for literary
contributions. Already in Australia a burgeoning market of periodicals such as *Town and Country*, *Freeman’s Journal*, *The Queenslander* and *The Sydney Mail* all had poet’s corners amidst their pages (Dutton 1980; Goodwin 1986; Palmer 1954; Walker 1976). In the *Bulletin*’s first year only two short stories were published and it took at least a decade for the journal to earn its accolade as the pre-eminent publication for prose and poetry (Lewis 1950). This was almost exclusively due to A.G. Stephens with a huge increase in literature content under his editorship allowing the publication of numerous books of verse and prose affiliated to the *Bulletin* (Lee 1964). While now considered one of the *Bulletin*’s greatest legacies, with claims most late 19th century and early to mid 20th century Australian writers, including Henry Lawson and A.B. Paterson, owe their success to the weekly (Rolfe 1979). Rolfe suggests the *Bulletin*’s shift towards literature evolved from pragmatism, rather than editorial intent. She argues Archibald called for readers’ copy as an extension of the unpaid contributor practice, noting it was more practical and cheaper to receive reader contributions than employing correspondents throughout Australia (Rolfe 1979). Archibald regularly called for reader contributions after 1886 with the statement that “every man can write at least one good book” (Lawson 1983). Rolfe claims it was chance that contributors had talent in writing verse and prose (Rolfe 1979). While city and country were equally important to late 19th century publications in Australia (Dutton 1980), it was, perhaps, also serendipity that many contributors chose ‘the bush’ as their literary subject, culminating in *The Bulletin*’s alternative title as “The Bushman’s Bible” (Goodwin 1986; Rolfe 1979). Thus, it is from the early 1890s literature becomes a dominant feature, so much so that the *Bulletin* is variously given credit for not only moving Australia’s literary capital
from Melbourne to Sydney (Rolfe 1979), as being the cultural centre of Australia (Lindsay 1965) and as the driving force behind the development of home-grown Australian literature, when many other publications continued to rely on imported fiction (Cryle 1997; Green 1961; Lewis 1950). The *Bulletin* also paid for contributions, unlike most of its contemporaries (East 1930; Rolfe 1979).

Quality serialised fiction and verse were initially strong features of the New Journalism in England, exemplified in publications such as *Strand Magazine*, which, ultimately like the *Bulletin*, featured works of talented writers and aimed to bring short fiction to the masses (Read 1979). The staple role of serials in newspapers and magazines of the period can be interpreted as part of the New Journalism emphasis on the press as entertainment (Lee 1976), appealing to a broad audience, many of whom could not afford books. The market received the new style enthusiastically, with huge increases in sales of newspapers and magazines, most noticeably in Australia (Stewart 1988). While no official figures exist, the *Bulletin* claimed circulations of around 63,000 copies by 1887, in a population of just three million (Rolfe 1979). As Archibald noted in a letter to contributor Sam Wright in 1886: “The paper has now taken a firm hold over Australiasia and is the one non-local publication people buy wherever they are situated” (Archibald 1886). With such a high circulation the *Bulletin* attracted strong advertising. For example, of the 32 pages of the August 7, 1897 issue, just over half contained advertising (*Bulletin* 1897). Such commercial success is a key feature of the New Journalism, but it was not possible without stylistic changes in content and news writing. It is here the *Bulletin* did achieve, from the first issue, its “new departure in journalism”.
Among the eight pages of the first issue was a scoop, J. F. Archibald’s interview with the hangman of the Wantabadjery bushrangers, who had murdered a policeman (*Bulletin* 1880). Archibald’s decision to cover the hanging was a contrary one given most newspapers decided to boycott the event (Rolfe 1979). However, more sensational was the fact there was an interview at all. The interview, as a journalistic device, developed in America in the late 1850s (Mott 1962). At the time its use was viewed as sensationalist, indiscreet and synonymous with tabloid or yellow journalism (Örnebring and Jönsson 2004). By including an interview with a hangman Archibald was evidently seeking sensation and it appears here his motivations were more aligned with yellow, rather than New Journalism. Archibald was categorically demonstrating his intention for a “new departure”.

By the late 1890s the *Bulletin* averaged around 32 pages per edition, separated into numerous sections including Society, the Wild Cat financial reports, snippets in Aboriginalities, the lengthy A Women’s Letter, Sporting Notions, Answers to Correspondents, Pepper and Salt, Political Points and, in what now reads as a forerunner to modern Arts sections, The Red Page (*Bulletin* 1897, 1899). Within a decade they were joined by Business, Robbery etc and, in a reflection of early nationhood, Melbourne Chatter and reports from Queensland in Bananaland (*Bulletin* 1897, 1899, 1906, 1914). While variant in subject, these sections collectively espoused the New Journalism hallmarks of variety, gossip, human interest, an increase in sport and crime news and a particular emphasis on material targeted to women readers (Lee 1976; Weiner 1988). The *Bulletin* was certainly not alone in offering such variety. Many of
these innovations had their ancestry in the mid-Victorian popular press, especially the Sunday papers (Lee 1976; Weiner 1988) with American newspapers working towards a similar formula from the 1850s and 1860 (Mott 1962). By the Bulletin era, some Australian publishers had begun to adopt the trend, although more slowly than their overseas counterparts (Green 1961).

Amidst this journalistic menagerie were copious illustrations, becoming more frequent following the development of photo-engraving. The Bulletin was an Australian pioneer in the method after Traill’s admiration of American comic sketches prompted him to employ the American cartoonist Livingston Hopkins (Rolfe 1979; Tanner 1980). Great use was made of the new technology, with a marked increase in illustrations and cartoons evident by 1914 (Bulletin 1880, 1914). The Victorian era was known for its illustrations and satirical cartoons (Rolfe 1979). Both were regularly seen in a variety of Australian weekly and monthly journals (Greenop 1947) but the Bulletin reached new heights in illustrative excellence (Bulletin 1930; Palmer 1954), with such artists as Norman Lindsay, and Hopkins. Here too, personality features strongly as an influence. As an American, Hopkins lacked the inherent respect many of his contemporaries on other publications had for government and monarchy (Dalley 1930; Rolfe 1979). This enabled an irreverence that distinguished Bulletin cartoons, while at the same time confirming its radical reputation. The cartooning style gained mass appeal with recollections of early Bulletin readers impressed by their liveliness and humour (Lyons, Taska 1992).

It was liveliness and humour too that figured in the Bulletin’s columns of text, whether news, gossip, prose or verse. Written with
“complex vernacular intimacy and comic splash” (Stewart 1988), under Archibald’s maxim of “boil it down” (Lawson 1999), they reveal the publication’s most dominating manifestation of New Journalism. Writers were required to be direct, realistic, dramatic and most importantly, brief, creating an energy that Green argues, could only come from a new country, unbridled by tradition (Green 1930). In stark contradiction to the formality of typical Victorian journalism the new writing style was more personal and accessible to the reader (Cryle 1999; Green 1961; Lawson 1983; Lee 1976). Reports were shortened, paragraphs introduced and development of what is now known as “the lead” began (Lee 1976). For example, a typical Bulletin lead read:

Judge Murray has been appointed a Commission to inquire into and report upon the whole subject of the frequency of accidents in broken Hill mines and open cuts, and he has already begun his work. (Bulletin (1897): 7)

Its innovation is more marked when compared with the opening of a Sydney Morning Herald report of the same story:

The Royal Commission on Mining Accidents commenced its sittings in the council chambers yesterday. The Commissioner, Judge Murray, announced at the outset that the sitting would be open to the public an that any person believing himself affected could appear or be represented. Mr Edwards, solicitor, appeared for the mines; Mr Polkinghouse, president, for the Miners’ Association, Mr Hibbard, mining inspector, for the Mines Department. (Sydney Morning Herald (1897): 5)

The Sydney Morning Herald lead and the verbatim account that followed is typical of the traditional style of journalism that continued in Australia until around the time of the end of World War One (Green 1961, p.203). The Bulletin, by contrast, was
exemplifying the New Journalism, reflecting influences from overseas and scorning such Victorian formality (Dalley 1930), not just in 1897, but from its very first issue, 17 years earlier. To author Miles Franklin the *Bulletin*’s use of language was “over precocious, perhaps adolescent, cheeky, more daring than brave morally” (Franklin 1965). The direct, informal writing style was symptomatic of what was to become known as ‘personal journalism’, a key innovation of the New Journalism. In its Jubilee issue in 1930 the *Bulletin* congratulated itself for having been a pioneer of personal journalism in Australia (*Bulletin* 1930).

While such features suggest the *Bulletin* followed the New Journalism of overseas publications, other characteristics of the style were not adopted. These include larger and more informative headlines and cross heads (Lee 1976). Throughout the period to 1918 the *Bulletin*’s headlines remained brief, single deck, with no use of crossheads. News never replaced advertising on the front page, elsewhere a key feature of New Journalism (Lee 1976). Importantly, the New Journalism’s distaste for politics (Weiner 1988) was not acquired. While the *Bulletin*, as a weekly, could not compete with the dailies on political news, instead adopted Stead hallmark of New Journalism as a forum for political campaign. Under the Stead model the *Bulletin* exemplified this development. As discussed poetry and prose featured little in the early *Bulletin* and initially it was regarded as a magazine of political comment (*Bulletin* 1980). Under Edmond’s editorship the emphasis on politics was further increased (Rolfe 1979). Editors used the weekly’s pages for polemics on a range of topics: pro-federalism, republicanism, Irish home rule, protectionism, anti-capital punishment, the abolition of private land ownership and, most controversially, a white Australia
policy, viciously attacking Chinese immigration (Goodwin 1986; Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1975). In England, Alfred Harmsworth with the *Evening News*, had similarly pandered to xenophobia against the French, believing readers liked “a good hate” (Ensor 1963). But where Harmsworth used sensationalism in a grab for profits (Weiner 1988), Archibald and successors reflected Stead’s more conscientious approach and his polemics of “non conformist morality” (Lee 1976, p.125) delivered in a “sensational manner” (Weiner 1988, p.121). As such, the *Bulletin*’s stance on many issues was contrary to that of other press. However, in some instances, including its support of the Boers, its initial anti-conscription stand during World War One and on women’s suffrage, it did demur and change attitude (Green 1961; Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1979). Amongst these campaigns an obvious political persuasion is never revealed and despite its intolerance of conservatism the *Bulletin* never fully supported Labor (Walker 1976). The arbitrariness of its political philosophy is further evidence of the lack of an overall policy. Had the *Bulletin* editors merely adopted the general American and English New Journalism template as a means of making profit its strong political consciousness would not have occurred.

**The Bulletin – innovator or follower**

As has been discussed the adoption of the New Journalism into the *Bulletin* was mixed. Some characteristics were overtly employed and others ignored. It is therefore difficult to establish the extent to which the *Bulletin* was using overseas publications as a template of the new style, given there was no major exposition of the New Journalism in other Australian publications when it was launched. Apart from Archibald’s trips to England, the New Journalism was easily read in Australia through papers and magazines imported from England and America. Latter day observers disagree over local
and international influences on the *Bulletin* editors (Lawson 1983 Rolfe 1979). Despite the influence of England in pre and early post Federation Australia, it appears American, rather than English titles were more likely to have been influential (Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1979). Co-founder John Haynes suggests some influence in his admiration of the San Francisco Mail and other American papers of the time (Rolfe 1979). However, Archibald was an unlikely slavish follower, believing “tradition was formula” and formula was “fatal to art” (Rolfe 1979). A. G. Stephens, editor from 1896 to 1906, was similarly disinclined to follow overseas styles. In 1898 he wrote that “to filter Australian ideas through English modes alone would be the depth of folly” (Stephens 1898, p 2). Although speaking in terms of literature within the paper, he too demonstrated a determined individuality that was reflected in the *Bulletin* pages. Commentators point to a lack of coherence and planning evidenced in the *Bulletin* during much of the period to 1918 (East 1930; Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1979). This, in no small part, stems from the individualism of the successive editors. Archibald, for example, was seen as a vital and energetic editor but lacking an interest in politics, with little knowledge of finance and a weak cultural background (Rolfe 1979). Annalists point to Archibald’s editorship as the height of polemic and hilarity (Lawson 1983) with a dialectic and bizarre style (Lawson 1983); the intransigent Traill’s preference for New South Wales politics (Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1979); Stephen’s literary prowess (Lawson 1983); a further emphasis on politics under Edmond (Rolfe 1979), regarded as the most politically radical of the pre-1918 editors (Lawson 1983) and a staider, less virulent tone under Prior, by which time the “spirit, the golden derision was gone” (Lawson 1983, p.232). Much of the *Bulletin*’s style is therefore attributable to the individual passions and biases of Archibald, Haynes and their successors (Rolfe 1979). Content and style was therefore a mix of
personal preference manifested amidst the New Journalism, rather than a specific editorial policy advocating the New Journalism style.

The *Bulletin* frequently claimed in print it had influenced other publications throughout Australia, however researchers have been unable to find supporting evidence (Lawson 1983; Rolfe 1979), instead finding many contemporary journalists and editors were critical and suspicious of the *Bulletin* style (Stewart 1988). Despite frequent *Bulletin* editorial criticisms of the staid *Sydney Morning Herald*, the daily was unmoved and there is no evidence it altered its style to match the *Bulletin* (Rolfe 1979). There has been no evaluation as to the extent of the *Bulletin*’s influence on the Daily *Telegraph* which moved at least partway to the New Journalism in 1884. This apparent lack of imitation is particularly interesting. Given the *Bulletin*’s success it is surprising it was not readily imitated, particularly in an environment where publications frequently copied from each other (Green 1961). Perversely, the reason is perhaps its radicalism. While this radicalism, in a staid environment, brought success, the same radicalism also brought isolation from the contemporary publishing scene. The *Bulletin* was a “highly esteemed pariah” (Dalley 1930). Anecdotes of public reaction give further insight. The *Bulletin* was “considered vulgar and out of bounds for genteel females and clergymen”(Franklin 1965, p.98) and, by 1900, had been “removed from the subscription list of every important club, yet no leading politician or businessman could afford to miss seeing it”(Dalley 1930, p.32). What can be determined is that the *Bulletin*’s relationship with other press was as paradoxical as with the public, quarantining it from journalistic plunder.
Conclusion

The *Bulletin* from 1880 to 1914 was never a straightforward exposition of one style but a multifarious mix of personality and content. Its key features were at times synchronous with the New Journalism, elsewhere they were radical and external to any discernable influence or trend. The *Bulletin* rose out of a revolutionary era in journalism, charged by technological change and amidst a backdrop of yellow journalism and the New Journalism. While it assumed some characteristics of the former these were adopted within a New Journalism ethos of a press as an independent conscience. As contemporary accolades revealed its use of the New Journalism made it a stand-out publication of the era. Its use of direct and bright language contrasted with other major publications, which for at least part of the period from 1880 to 1918, adhered to traditional writing styles. Through language and content the *Bulletin* attracted a broad audience, a further key feature of the New Journalism. While eventually becoming the premier Australian journal for prose and poetry it did not initially publish much of either, an initial departure from the New Journalism trend. Likewise, it eschewed the New Journalism’s general dislike of politics and throughout the era maintained an emphasis on political reports in the style of Stead, albeit written in the new, lively fashion and accompanied by satirical cartoons. More influential were the individual editors with the weekly personalising their radicalism and spirit. Yet, the level of New Journalism content in the *Bulletin* between 1880 and 1918 was greater than that of any other contemporary daily or weekly publication. However, its use of the style on its own terms, creating a distinctive ‘Bulletinese’, and lack of a deliberate policy advocating the New Journalism has led to a blurring a role of its role in Australian newspaper and magazine
publishing history. The *Bulletin* was certainly the first major exponent of the New Journalism in Australia. Whether it or English and American publications were the prime motivating force for the ultimate adoption of the style within Australia remains an area of inquiry for future research.

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