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**Violent and racist undertones in early  
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## Violent and racist undertones in early Australian children's literature: 'the proof's in the puddin'

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### Abstract

Norman Lindsay (1879-1969) is generally considered as one of Australia's most prolific and accomplished artists. Although primarily admired for his skilful drawings and paintings, he was also an accomplished sculptor, modeler, and writer. During his lifespan, Lindsay wrote eleven novels and two children's books<sup>i</sup>, one of which, *The Magic Pudding* (1918), endeared itself to many generations of Australians, old and new. Still in print today, *The Magic Pudding* has been translated into over twenty languages and will be portrayed on the big screen as an animated film<sup>ii</sup> in the near future.

Lindsay wrote *The Magic Pudding* as a result of an argument with a critic who claimed that children liked to read about fairies; Lindsay said they liked to read about food. The light-hearted plot revolves around Albert, the magic pudding, The Noble Society of Pudding Owners and two Professional Pudding Thieves. In this Australian children's classic which highlights the divide between those who have and those who have not, Lindsay regales the reader with song, fast moving vignettes and charming bush characters. However, there are also sinister undertones unbecoming children's literature; murder, extreme, repetitious violence, racist remarks and anti-judiciary sentiments. This is a side of *The Magic Pudding* that has, to this point, been ignored by critics. This paper will briefly examine some of Lindsay's more obvious stylistic conventions before more fully exploring certain aspects of the darker side of Lindsay's masterpiece.

### 1. Introduction

Although this study of *The Magic Pudding* (*TMP*) is primarily concerned with less desirable aspects portrayed within its pages, it would be foolish to discount the overall richness of Lindsay's work at the expense of such a viewpoint, and, in so doing, to claim that the less desirable aspects being investigated here are so pervasive that they ruin the book from the point of view that children should not be exposed to its influence. This would be an over-reaction to this children's classic. Even so, it would also be equally naive, and incorrect, to ignore these most obvious faults.

*TMP* is a wonderful source for stylistic investigation. Consequently, it would be an inadequate study, indeed, of *TMP* that did not offer some form of examination of some of the stylistic conventions used by Lindsay. His work abounds in rhymes, songs, parallelisms, dialects, neologisms, archaic language and large doses of humour, and the book itself is self-illustrated by Lindsay's own hand. This paper is written in the spirit of a conventional linguistic stylistic investigation, that is, it will check or validate my initial intuition (Leech and Short 1981: 13), this being that although *TMP* is a wonderful, rich source of entertainment for young readers, it also offers disturbing, less desirable undertones, tinted by early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australian politics and Lindsay's personal philosophy on life.

In order to fully appreciate the elements of style discussed within this paper, it is first necessary to have a fuller understanding of both Lindsay the man, and early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Australia, for both strongly influence the nature of *TMP* and hence our interpretation of it. Born 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1879 to Dr Robert Lindsay and Jane Elizabeth Lindsay in Creswick Victoria, Norman was the fifth of ten children, many of whom were equally accomplished in the arts and as distinguished in the art world as Norman would prove to be. In fact, his brother Lionel would later be knighted for his artistic merits. Norman himself would prove to be highly influential for some of Australia's leading poets of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, including Hugh McCrae, Kenneth Slessor and Douglas Stewart. At the age of 17, Norman began working in Melbourne, Victoria for *The Bulletin*, a politically orientated magazine that leaned to the left and viewed itself as the champion of the underdog and working classes. It is still in print today. Norman's prominence as an artist would continue to grow but he remained with *The Bulletin* throughout his working career as a principal cartoonist. He married and had three sons before moving to England for a number of years. Upon return to Australia he moved west of Sydney to the Blue Mountains with his second wife. It was in the Blue Mountains that he was to find the home and property that he worked on until his death in November 1969. Today, this home, at Falconbridge via Springwood in New South Wales, is under the guidance of the National Trust, houses a great deal of his work and is the Norman Lindsay Gallery and museum.

Better known for his etching, painting and pen work than his writings, his creative abilities were endless and were not confined to the etching block or the canvas. Douglas Stewart (1975: 212) states that "the few people who have attempted to compile a bibliography (of Lindsay's work) have usually abandoned the task as too complex". Lindsay also mastered book illustration, model ship-building and sculpture using cement. He created his own ancient world at Springwood and adorned his property with statuary fountains and a Roman styled pool. One might catch a glimpse of this world, and of Lindsay's ethos, in the film *Sirens*<sup>iii</sup>, filmed on location at Lindsay's home in Springwood.

As mentioned, Lindsay made his career chiefly as a cartoonist, graphic artist and painter. His drawings, etchings and paintings frequently ran into trouble with censorship because of his fondness for amply proportioned, seductive nudes. One of his novels, *Redheap*, was unaccountably banned in Australia until 1959. The story is of a 19-year-old Robert Piper growing up in a devout family in the countryside, he discovers the forbidden fruits of beer and sex and impregnates the parson's daughter. She has an abortion and he goes off to study at university; heady material considering it was written at the conclusion of the war in 1918. However, it was not published until 1930, by Faber. Lindsay believed in vitalism, glorification, the joy of living and the joyousness of sex and the central value of art in society.

He was scornful of nationalism in art but believed that in the Australian climate a new classicism might flourish and that the values of the fringe or province would displace those of the centre. His heroes were Shakespeare, Beethoven, Byron, and Browning and he admired Swinbourne and Oscar Wilde. His favourite artists included Durer, Rubens, the Pre-Raphaelites and the Australian *plein-air* (or Heidelberg) school. In his later life, he would read and be read to from Petronius, Rabelais, Cervantes, Scott, Dickens, Balzac, and Conrad.

Although writing for Lindsay was a peripheral activity, he still wrote 11 novels and two children's books, as well as many stories. Most of his stories stayed in manuscript form and he would read them to friends and then revise them. They were artificial comedies that preached the zest of living for the moment. Norman himself was detached from the life of his own times, he was strongly opposed to modernist tendencies in art and literature and he was highly selective in what he saw. His world of literature and art was that of the radiant, imaginary country of Atlantis and Hyperborea (a place held by the ancient Greeks to be beyond the north wind in a region of perpetual sunshine).

However, the reality of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia, an emerging, newly independent country, was something quite different to this lofty, imaginary world inhabited by Lindsay.

The turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a young Australia full of promise. One of the politically most progressive and richest countries in the world, per capita, it was quite literally living off the back of its sheep and wheat production. Where once Australia's initial convict inhabitants nearly starved, their descendants were now producing enough food to be exporting back to Mother England and other parts of the world. Australia, at this time, was a country of diverse dichotomies. Fiercely proud of its independence formally gained in 1901, and having proved itself on the international battlefields of, for example, the Somme and Gallipoli during WW1, one's typical image of an Australian was that of a tanned, young, fit ANZAC larrikin beholden to no-one. This, at least, is the image projected to us through the history books and films such as *Breaker Morant, 1915*, and *Gallipoli*, in which most British characters are projected as being pompous, supercilious and clearly inferior to the colonial lads who made good in the new land. Yet, in contrast to this image, we were nearly always first to volunteer to fight for the mother country and to claim that one must *Buy British*, or that *British is Best*, often to the detriment of our own national safety and industry. This trend would continue through to 1975, culminating in a national constitutional crisis that still arouses bitter feelings today, 27 years later.

Yet, despite the wealth of the country, it was still one of stark contrasts between those who had and those who did not. The wealth was disproportionately distributed, despite our overall egalitarian viewpoints, evident, for example, in strong unionisation and the female franchise. The original squatters of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had arisen to become the landed gentry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite our thoughts to the contrary, the majority of the population now lived in the cities, huddled along the eastern seaboard, as it always had done. Our collective heart, however, still belonged to the countryside or the bush as it is more commonly referred to in Australia, as evidenced, for example, by *The Bulletin*, commonly known as the Bushman's Bible, but yet which predominantly relied upon its readership from the city dwellers. One of our national literary heroes, who wrote for *The Bulletin*, Henry Lawson, based all his work on the lonely bushmen and women who were to be found "up the country", or "outback". Equally so, many of our national poets at the time found inspiration from the bush, for example, Banjo Paterson's first book of verse *The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses*, was to sell 100, 000 thousand copies between the years 1895 to 1924. *The Bulletin* was responsible for "discovering" both Lawson and Paterson, and would offer a lifelong career as a cartoonist to Lindsay himself. On *The Bulletin*, *The Times* wrote:

It is hard to over-estimate the extent to which this journal modifies the opinions (one might almost say character) of its readers. Most Australian newspapers alter no-one's opinion, being read only by those who already agree with them...The organ (real or supposed) of some ring or clique is suspected; ...*The Bulletin* is beyond suspicion in these matters; ... it's candour verges on the cynical, but the Australian has no objection to humour in his politics or grimness in his jests...(*The Times*, 31 August, 1903, from Ward 1978: 271)

In relation to *The Bulletin*, Ward (1978. 271) claims that "there is no doubt of the faithfulness with which it reflected, and helped to bring to full consciousness, the emerging national mystique. If one examines the declared political policies of the journal it is possible to trace almost all of them back to roots in the social attitudes of the pastoral proletariat."

In the issue of June 1893, *The Bulletin* proposed the following policies:

1. A republican form of government.
2. One person one vote.
3. Complete secularisation and freedom of State education.
4. Reform of the criminal code and prison system.
5. A united Australia and protection against the world.
6. Australia for the Australians – the cheap Chinaman, the cheap nigger, and the cheap European pauper to be absolutely excluded.

7. A state bank, the issue of bank notes to be a State monopoly.
8. The direct election of ministers by parliament, instead of party government or rather government by contradiction.
9. A new parliamentary system – one house to be elected by the constituencies as at present; the other to be chosen by the whole country voting as one constituency.
10. A universal system of compulsory life insurance.
11. The entire abolition of private ownership of land.
12. The referendum.
13. The abolition of titles of so-called “nobility”.

Many of these policies went on to materialise in Australia’s new, forthcoming constitution, some of which, unfortunately, would cause deep-seated discontent and, for many, embarrassment throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, the racist White Australia policy, which was only annulled in 1972. Some of the other proposed points, such as the anti-clericalism expressed in point 3, a deep-seated mistrust of policemen in point 4, and the levelling egalitarianism in points 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, and 13 emphasise, in political terms, marked features of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia. And, as we shall shortly see, these points also clearly manifest themselves in Lindsay’s *TMP*, subjects perhaps not all that befitting children’s literature.

*The Magic Pudding*’s plot revolves around our three main heroes Sam Sawnoff, a penguin, Bill Barnacle, a man, and Bunyip Bluegum, a koala, who are all swagmen (itinerant travellers) travelling aimlessly throughout a bush setting. Notably, when they come upon a country-town trouble always besets them. For sustenance, they survive off the grace of their magic pudding, Albert, which is able to regenerate himself and offer three different flavours (steak-and-kidney, boiled jam roll and apple dumpling, and plum duff). Apart from these characters we also have two professional pudding thieves, Possum and Wombat, who try through various devices to steal the pudding, which they successfully manage to do on several occasions before our heroes retrieve Albert. Such retrievals, as we shall see, are usually quite violent.

## 2. Methodology

The plot of *TMP* is a fast moving tale of various adventures that take place between the Puddin’ Owners and the professional Puddin’ Thieves, with various interludes punctuated by scenes with other characters. Upon close reading several stylistic methods become immediately noticeable, primarily because of their numerical prominence. In this study, I approach the text from a traditional linguistic stylistic perspective. That is, from a primarily quantitative investigation of particular linguistic conventions. Linguistic stylists place value upon scientific rigour, objectivity and the replicability of the analytical procedures under consideration. They are concerned with the grammar of the text, with which they compare phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of a text against the grammar of the language with which it is written. These comparisons help to reveal which grammatical categories have, or have not, been used and in which way these categories have or have not departed from normal usage.

Linguistic stylists are sometimes criticised for placing too much emphasis upon specific linguistic models and the structure of the text at the expense of its interpretations. I, however, adhere to the thoughts of Enkvist (1964, 1973, 1985, 1993), which argue for the interrelatedness of style and situation. Enkvist does not purely rely upon a formalist account of the text in question. Instead, he takes into account the social, cultural and psychological contexts of the texts in question when interpreting the empirical data arrived at. This agrees with Spitzer’s (1948: 19, 47ff) thoughts on the philological circle (Leech and Short 1989: 14),

that being that we respond to a text on both a literary appreciative level and a language level and that the two are interdependent. To understand our literary interpretation, we seek linguistic evidence, which, once found, we use to understand our literary interpretation.

I believe that the linguistic stylistic approach is useful because it is based upon linguistic description. Therefore, it is open to inspection and replication. Linguistic analyses can afford us systematic glimpses of the breadth and depth of various prose writers. This very dependence upon the analyst's understanding of what a language is and what it does are the declared and, therefore, corrigible groundings for a linguistic stylistic approach. Although "language behaviour is typically and intrinsically too creative and innovative for linguistic stylistics, or any other singular approach, to be able to provide a complete and definitive deciphering of discourse" (Watson 1997:13), it is a scientific and replicable step towards a full description of style for any given text.

As mentioned in the introduction, although this paper is primarily concerned with the darker sides of Lindsay's *TMP*, violence and racism, there are also wonderful examples of particular stylistic conventions to be found within its pages, so much so that it could almost act as a textbook for a student of stylistics. For example, there are multiple examples of archaic language, neologisms, dialectal language and different registers of English, rhymes, song, parallelisms and semantic themes (for example, food and violence) throughout the text. This paper examines some of these by close reading and through the use of the TACT (Text Analysis Computing Tools) program, version 2.1. Hence, this paper supports stylistic intuition with linguistic evidence consolidated by computer assistance. The entire novel has been assessed. The statistical data for these findings are presented in the following results section before the ensuing discussion of these results.

### 3. Results

Table 1 Overall division of major categories of text.

<b>Total no. of words</b>	18 962
<b>Total no. of narrative words</b>	7 013
<b>Total no. of dialogue words</b>	7 796
<b>Total no. of words written in verse</b>	2 011
<b>Total no. of words written in song</b>	2 142

Table 2 Distribution of major text categories per "slice".

	<b>Slice 1</b>	<b>Slice 2</b>	<b>Slice 3</b>	<b>Slice 4</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	1306	2062	1805	2623
<b>Verse</b>	425	52	699	835
<b>Song</b>	838	825	309	170
<b>Narrative</b>	1659	1803	1631	1920

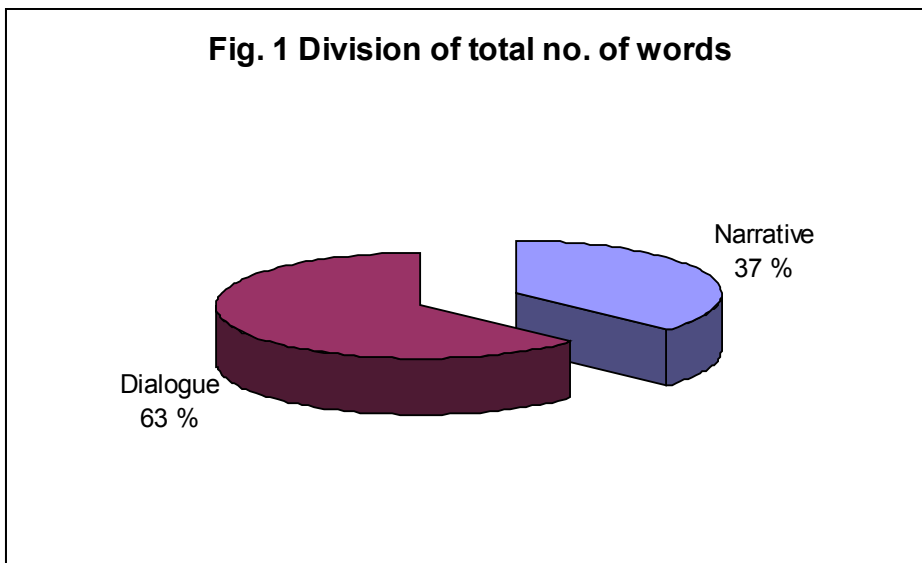
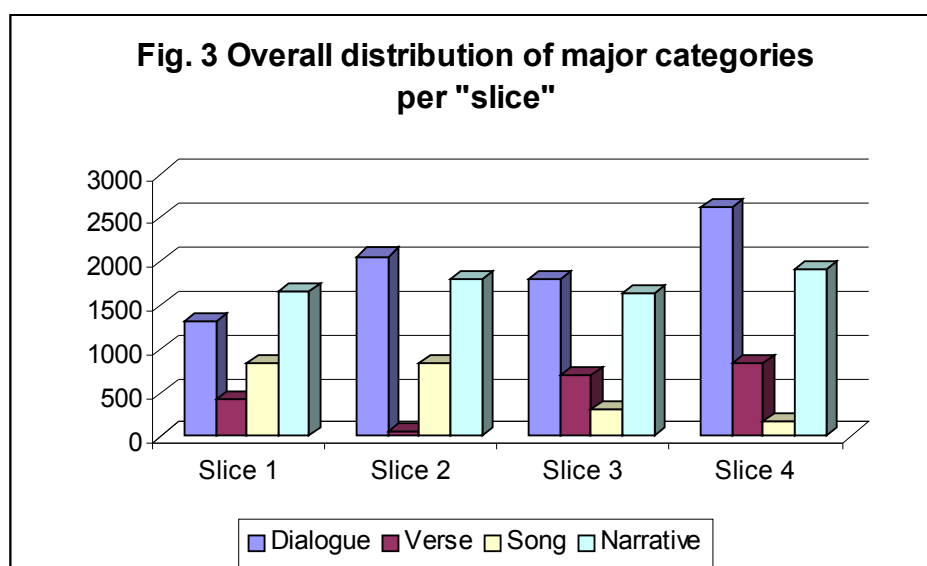


Table 3: Number of occurrences of particular stylistic features.

	Raw data – no. of occurrences	% of no. of total paragraphs with this usage
<b>Parallelisms</b>	14	2.2%
<b>Colourful expressions</b>	61	9.77%
<b>Semantic theme – food</b>	121	19.39%
<b>Racist remarks</b>	5	0.8%
<b>Semantic theme – violence</b>	97	15.5%



#### 4. Discussion

Looked at from one perspective *TMP* could simply be viewed as a rollicking tale of three friends fulfilling the duties of being fully fledged members of the Noble Society of Puddin' Owners, whose duties are light. They are required to "wander along the roads indulgin' in conversation, song and story, eatin' at regular intervals at the Puddin'" (Lindsay 1918: 44). And, this is essentially what they do for the four chapters within the book or Slices as these chapters are referred to. In each slice they have an encounter with the nefarious Puddin' Thieves who are determined to alter the ownership of the magic pudding, Albert. As this stands, *TMP* is a light-hearted tale of food and friendship and, as is typical of most children's stories, it is peopled with personified animals, in many cases the unique animals of Australia, and perhaps a little more unusually, vegetables and other forms of food, who all easily interact with their human colleagues.

For instance, our three main heroes are Bill Barnacle, a real sailor, his close friend Sam Sawnoff, a penguin and Bunyip Bluegum, a koala. This last character is a highly refined young gentleman, which contradicts his namesake, the bunyip, which equates to something akin to the Yeti, but is only to be *found* in the Australian outback. Many of these word-plays, which abound within the book, would probably be lost to non-Australians<sup>iv</sup>. Their sworn enemies are the notorious Puddin' Thieves, Possum, "with one of those sharp, snooting, snouting sort of faces" (Lindsay 1918: 28) and the "bulbous, boozy-looking Wombat", whose dresses in "a long-tailed coat and a hat that marked him down as a man that couldn't be trusted in a fowl-yard." (Lindsay 1918: 28).

From just this very short description of the villains we can see that alliteration is one of Lindsay's favourite conventions and it abounds and is used repetitively throughout the text. For example, we hear of the "professional Puddin' Thieves", the "snooting, snouting scoundrel" possum, "Henderson Hedgehog, horticulturalist", a "slaverin', quaverin', melon-carryin' nincompoop" bandicoot, Bill being a "bun-headed old beetle-crusher", "Finglebury flying-fox, the well-known and respected fruit stealer", "dozing, snoozing, sausage-shaped places", "he's a sausage-shaped porous plaster" and, finally, "remove to some safe secluded spot and settle down".

*TMP* is a very funny book. It abounds in word plays, puns and nonsensical poems and songs, even ditties and ballads. In fact, true to the Noble Puddin' Society's duties, the three members engage in song and verse frequently. This is evidenced by the statistics presented in Tables 1 and 2, and Figures 1, 2 and 3 in the results section above. There is a large amount of dialogue in this children's book, 63% of the book consists of dialogue, which can be further broken down into song, verse and *true* dialogue. The song or verse is always presented in the form of dialogue or intertwined with it. The significance of this song or verse is the sheer quantity of it, 18% and 17% of the dialogue is accounted for by song and verse respectfully, and, as we can see from Fig. 3, this usage is relatively evenly distributed throughout the book between the slices. This is indicative of the freewheeling, carefree disposition of the heroes as they swagger along singing their way from one adventure to another. The playfulness, humour and joviality of these mediums is immediately apparent in extracts (1) and (2):

- (1) The fact is," said Bunyip, "I have decided to see the world, and cannot make up my mind whether to be a Traveller or a Swagman. Which would you advise?"  
Then said the Poet –  
"As you've no bags it's plain to see  
A traveller you cannot be;  
And as a swag you haven't either  
You cannot be a swagman neither.  
For travellers must carry bags,  
And swagmen have to hump their swags

Like bottle-ohs or ragmen.  
 As you have neither swag nor bag  
 You must remain a simple wag,  
 And not a swag- or bagman.”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 14)

- (2) “Dear me,” he said, “I feel quite faint. I had no idea that one’s stomach was so important. I have everything I require, except food; but without food everything is rather less than nothing.”  
 "I've got a stick to walk with.  
 I've got a mind to think with.  
 I've got a voice to talk with.  
 I've got an eye to wink with.  
 I've lots of teeth to eat with,  
 A brand new hat to bow with,  
 A pair of fists to beat with,  
 A rage to have a row with.  
 No joy it brings  
 To have indeed  
 A lot of things  
 One does not need.  
 Observe my doleful-plight.  
 For here am I without a crumb  
 To satisfy a raging tum  
 O what an oversight !"  
 (Lindsay 1918: 18)

One can see from the preceding dialogue of the verse in extract (2) above an example of the word-play that Lindsay frequently employs throughout the novel. In fact, Lindsay is constantly punning, as in (3) and (4) below:

- (3) “How’d you like to be shoved in a blooming log,” he shouted at Bill, “when you was burning with anxiety to see the fire?”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 54)
- (4) “Me eat a singed possum! I wouldn’t eat a possum if he was singed, roasted, boiled or fried.”  
 “Not ett-met,” shouted Bill. “I said met a singed possum.”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 66)

Another example of Lindsay’s wordplay can be seen in extract (5) where Bill is addressing the pudding thieves and is keen to accost them. The phrase “take your gruel” being both a play on the theme of food, in this case a very unpleasant food and that of the unpleasant treatment he has in mind for the thieves.

- (5) “Put ‘em up, ye puddin’-snatchers,” shouted Bill. “Don’t keep us sparrin’ up here all day. Come and take your gruel while you’ve got the chance.”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 32)

Parallelism also plays a significant role in this book, being found in 2.2% of the paragraphs within the novel. Extracts (6) and (7) exemplify this particular stylistic technique:

- (6) “What d’yer mean, playin’ such bungfoodlin’ tricks on a man at breakfast?” roared Bill.

“What d’yer mean,” shouted the Puddin’, “playing such foodbungling tricks on a Puddin’ being breakfasted at?”

“Breakfast humour, Bill, merely breakfast humour,” said Sam hastily.

“Humour’s humour,” shouted Bill, “but puddin’ in the whiskers is no joke.”

“Whiskers in the Puddin’ is worse than puddin’ in the whiskers,” shouted the Puddin’ standing up in his basin.

(Lindsay 1918: 50)

- (7) “An’ it please you , My Lord,” said the Constable hurriedly, “this here Puddin’ has been arrested for pinching the Mayor.”

“As a consequence of which, I see you’ve pinched the Puddin’,” said the judge facetiously.

(Lindsay 1918: 145-46)

Apart from the punning and wordplay, *TMP* also contains quite a few jokes within its text that have both internal and external reference. Towards the end of the novel the characters are openly referring to the plot, and how the book may come to a close, as shown in extracts (8) and (9). Just before this, Bill puns on the extensive use of verse within the novel (see extract (10)). Some of these jokes are often subtle and are, perhaps, beyond younger, less sophisticated readers.

- (8) “For the point is,” continued Bill, lowering his voice, “here we are pretty close up to the end of the book, and something will have to be done in a Tremendous Hurry, or else we’ll be cut off short by the cover.”

“The solution is perfectly simple,” said Bunyip. “We have merely to stop wandering along the road, and the story will stop wandering through the book.”

(Lindsay 1918: 168)

- (9) “And as we haven’t time to waste talkin’ philosophy to a Puddin’, why, into the bag he goes, or we’ll never get this story finished.”

(Lindsay 1918: 169)

- (10) “If this isn’t too bad,” said Bill, furiously. “Here we’ve had all the worry and trouble of fightin’ puddin’-thieves night and day, and on top of it all, here’s this Tooralooral tadpole of a Mayor shovin’ his nose into the business and arrestin’ our Puddin’ without rhyme or reason.”

(Lindsay 1918: 142)

One of the major themes of this novel is food and this is more than reflected in the frequency of reference to items pertaining to food or the act of eating. 19.39% of all paragraphs refer to food, and there are often multiple references within each of these paragraphs. In order to highlight Lindsay’s underlying wit, I will only refer to one particular aspect of his food related references, his use of similes. Lindsay’s references to food through similes are pervasive throughout the whole novel. Some of them are established idioms, others are refreshingly new, clever and pertain to the plot. The following offers a cross-section of this technique:

(11) as round as a hot cross bun

(12)as thin as Irish stoo

(13)bent it like a carrot

(14)porridge as stiff as glue

(15)eggs as tough as leather

(16)as pale as tripe

(17)as pale as a turnip

(18)as pale as cheese

(19)as would have brought tears to the eyes of a hard-boiled egg

- (20)as pale as lard  
 (21)as pale as soap  
 (22)stuck like a sardine

Apart from Lindsay's songs, verses, puns, and the underlying theme of food, his work is also distinct because of the large number of colourful expressions he brings to his work (9.77% of all paragraphs contain at least one colourful expression), some of which may now be regarded as archaic, and some of which are clearly of a very Australian flavour. On these last two points, it would be an interesting study to see how such expressions have been translated, remembering that *TMP* has been translated into over 20 languages. Perhaps the best way to appreciate this practice of Lindsay's is to examine a cross-section of the expressions he has used:

- (23)I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Albert," said Bunyip.  
 "No *soft soap* from total strangers," said the Puddin', rudely.  
 (Lindsay 1918: 22)
- (24)They were all *singing at the top of their pipe*, as Bill called it, when round a bend in the road...  
 (Lindsay 1918: 28)
- (25)The society of Puddin' Owners were up bright and early the next morning, and had the billy on and tea made before six o'clock, which is the best part of the day, *because the world has just had his face washed*, and the air smells like Pears' soap.  
 (Lindsay 1918:47)
- (26)"Observe the rules, Bill," said Sam hurriedly. "Boisterous humour at the breakfast table must be greeted with roars of laughter."  
 "*To jeredelurn with the rules*," shouted Bill. "Pushing a man's face into his own breakfast is beyond rules or reason, and *deserves a punch in the gizzard*."  
 (Lindsay 1918: 51)
- (27)"Them low puddin' thieves has borrowed a fireman's helmet, *collared a hose*, an' set fire to a cowshed in order to lure us away from the Puddin'."  
 (Lindsay 1918: 62)
- (28) "It's *worse than kerosene to boose*,  
 It's worse than ginger hair.  
 It's worse than anythin' to lose  
 A Puddin' rich and rare."  
 (Lindsay 1918: 62)
- (29)"Of all the *swivel-eyed, up-jumped, cross-grained, sons of a cock-eyed tinker*,"  
 exclaimed Bill, boiling with rage.  
 (Lindsay 1918: 68)
- (30)"If we catch you sneakin' after our Puddin' again, *you'll get such a beltin' that you'll wish you were vegetarians...*"  
 (Lindsay 1918: 80)
- (31)"Never mind," said Bill. "I'm starin' at you for good an' sufficient reason."  
 "Are yer?" said the Kookaburra. "Well, all I can say is that if yer *don't take ye dial outer the road I'll bloomin' well take an' bounce a gibber off yer crust*," and he followed them for quite a long way, singing out insulting things such as, "You with the *wire*

*whiskers,*” and “*get onter the bloke with the face fringe.*”  
(Lindsay 1918: 90)

(32)The worst of it was that the Puddin’, being too short to look in, was left outside, and the puddin’ theives grabbed him at once and *ran off like winking.*  
(Lindsay 1918: 103)

(33)“Well if this ain’t enough *to dumbfound a codfish,*” exclaimed Bill.  
(Lindsay 1918: 134)

Extracts (23) to (33) offer only a very brief exposé of the range of colourful expressions to be found within *TMP*. A large percentage of them belong to the character of Bill, who, as we can see, is a highly colourful, excitable but good-natured person. His language is representative of a lesser educated, rather rough, yet likeable character. Extracts (24), (26), (27), (29), (30) and (33) help to confirm this. The Puddin’, who is also rather direct, shows a hint of his abruptness with the expression “no soft soap”, in other words no smooth-talking, no flattery. Extracts (27) and (28) are interesting. In (27) we see the usage of “to collar” something, that is, to steal something, and in (28) we are told how to have lost the Puddin’ is worse than putting kerosene in booze (boose), which is an unusual comparison to be making in a children’s novel. Not only are the expressions colourful, they are quite aggressive and violent. This violence will be discussed at greater length later. In (26), Sam is told to “to (go to) jeredelurn” (Jerusalem), a now lesser used curse and the kookaburra is more than blunt about his feelings in (31). But, apart from these rather earthy expressions emanating from the characters, the narrator also offers some interesting, slightly more refined expressions, as seen in (24), (25) and (32). The metaphor expressed in (25) is clever and refreshing and the simile used in (32) is also unique. Once again, this usage highlights Lindsay’s wordcraft.

To this point I have concentrated on the more humorous, light-hearted aspects of *TMP*, but there are also darker, more sinister aspects to be considered. If, perhaps, they were not so numerous in their occurrence they might be allowed to go unheeded, but this is not the case. I speak specifically of that which I refer to as negative references to aspects of society, direct and indirect racist remarks and another semantic theme that runs alongside the overtly stated semantic theme of food, violence. The number of occurrences of violent references is so frequent that one could not call it a covert semantic theme. I shall first address the issue of negative comments, and then racist remarks, before finalising with a discussion on the theme of violence within *TMP*. In this final discussion, I shall conclusively prove that it is not the Puddin’ Thieves, Possum and Wombat, who are the most sadistic, as claimed by Zwicky (2000: 3), the director of the forthcoming animated version of *TMP*, but, in fact, it is the heroes of the novel, Bill, Sam and Bunyip, along with particular pillars of society, who engage in, in fact, strongly advocate, the use of gratuitous violence.

The number of negative observations upon aspects of society within *TMP* are quite prevalent. Lindsay seems to have had a healthy distrust of particular institutions of society. Like Dickens before him, Lindsay seems to have had little time for lawyers and as we shall see, the law itself, and its legal representatives. Members of the upper-classes also receive short shrift. The numerous comments on the nature of lawyers begins as early as page 22 and continues throughout, and nearly the whole of the fourth slice, close to one quarter of the novel, is dedicated to ridiculing the law and its representatives. This is strange fare for a child’s book:

(34)“You have to be as smart as paint to keep this Puddin’ in order. He’s that artful, lawyers couldn’t manage him.”  
(Lindsay 1918: 22)

- (35)“How much longer do you expect me stay up here, bein’ guzzled by these legal land-crabs?” demanded the Puddin’.  
(Lindsay 1918: 161)
- (36)The uproar brought the Mayor of Tooraloo hastening to the scene, followed by the local constable. The Mayor was a little, fat, breathless, beetle-shaped man, who hastened with difficulty owing to his robe of office being trodden on by the Constable, who ran close behind him in order to finish eating a banana in secret. He had some more bananas in a paper bag, and his face was one of those feeble faces that make one think of eggs and carrots and feathers, if you take my meaning.  
(Lindsay 1918: 136)
- (37)“The trouble is,” said the Constable, “that there are far too many rioters. One would have been quite sufficient. If there had been only one small undersized rioter, I should have quelled him with the utmost severity.”  
(Lindsay 1918: 138)
- (38)“It’s very clear that somebody has to be arrested,” said the Mayor. “I can’t be put to the trouble of wearing my robes of office without somebody having to pay for it. I don’t care whether you arrest the top-hat batterers, or the battered top-hatterers; all I say is, do your duty, whatever happens.”  
(Lindsay 1918: 140)
- (39)As they had arrived at the Court House at that moment, Bill was forced to smother his resentment for the time being. There was nobody in Court except the Judge and the Usher, who were seated on the bench having a quiet game of cards over a bottle of port.  
(Lindsay 1918: 144)
- (40)Personal remarks to the judge are not allowed,” shouted the Usher, and the Judge said solemnly:  
“A judge must be respected,  
A judge you mustn’t knock,  
Or else you’ll be detected  
And shoved into the dock.  
You’ll get a nasty shock  
When gaolers turn the lock.  
In prison cell you’ll give a yell  
To hear the hangman knock.”  
(Lindsay 1918:148)

We can see from these few extracts that Lindsay definitely presents these representatives of the law and society in a negative light. He makes his opinions more than clear in extracts (34) and (35) in relation to lawyers. Extracts (36-38) show the Mayor to be a supercilious, self-important, corpulent person who is of no great use to society, and the Constable is shown to be a cowering coward who fawns on the Mayor. In addition, the Usher and Judge are shown to be abusers of their respective offices and are first introduced to us (extract 39) as gamblers and partakers of alcohol during the middle of the day whilst in office. The judge’s sense of self-importance is more than illustrated in extract (40). These extracts are but a short cross-section of the references to these characters within the novel, all of which are in the same vein. As we shall soon see, the judge has even less desirable qualities than the mere misuse of office.

Not only does the law receive less than favourable treatment from Lindsay, the landed gentry, always a favourite for ridicule in Australia, also comes under fire. The following helps to illustrate this fact:

(41)“And this here niece of Buncle  
 When they got safe to land,  
 For havin’ saved her Uncle,  
 The Noble Hearl of Buncle,  
 She offered Sam her hand.

“And that Uncle Buncle,  
 For joy of his release,  
 On burgundy got drunk all  
 Day in castle Buncle,  
 Which hastened his decease.

“The lovely maiding Buncle  
 Inherited the land;  
 And, now her aged Uncle  
 Has gone, the Hearl of Buncle  
 Is Sam, the foremost hand.”

“Of course,” said Sam, modestly, “the song goes too far in sayin’ as how I married the Hearl’s niece, because, for one thing, I ain’t a marryin’ man, and for another thing, what she really sez to me when we got to land was “You’re a noble feller, an’ here’s five shillin’s for you, and any time you happen to be round our way, just give a ring at the servant’s bell, and there’ll always be a feed waitin’ for you in the kitchen.” However, you’ve got to have songs to fill in the time with, and when a feller’s got a rotten word like Buncle to find rhymes for, there’s no sayin’ how a song’ll end.”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 87)

We can see from extract (41) that within the space of a few short stanzas and the ensuing paragraph Lindsay manages to highlight the gap between the social classes. He depicts the landed gentry as being class-conscious snobs who over-indulge in drink. In fact, he uses alcohol as a negative prop in several instances throughout the novel. For instance, one of the puddin’-thieving villains is repeatedly referred to as a “bulbous boozy-looking Wombat” and the Judge is shown to be very partial to his port and becomes incensed when a glass of the liquor is misused by the Puddin’:

(42)“Too much style about you,” said the Puddin’, rudely, and threw the judge’s glass of port into Bill’s face, remarking: “Take that, for being a pumpkin-headed old shellback.”  
 There was a great uproar over this very illegal act. The Judge was enraged at losing his port and the Mayor was filled with horror because Bill wiped his face on the mayoral hat...”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 161)

However, an even more disturbing finding than these negative observations upon lawyers, the law and its representatives and the misuse of alcohol are the racist statements that occur on five separate occasions throughout the novel. Once again, this is highly unusual content, and one might argue highly unacceptable content, for children’s literature:

(43)“it’s no use wastin’ time on this low-down, hook-nosed, tobacco grabber.”  
 (Lindsay 1918: 68)

(44)“It’s worse than being chased by natives on the Limpopo River,” said Sam.  
 (Lindsay 1918: 104)

(45)“It’s worse than fighting Arabs single-handed,” croaked Bill.  
(Lindsay 1918: 104)

(46)“Within he saw a fearful man,  
With eyes like coals a-glowing,  
Whose frightful whiskers over-ran  
His face, like weeds a-blowing;

And there this fearful, frightful man,  
A sight to set you quaking,  
With pot and pan and curse and ban,  
Began a puddin’ making.

“’Twas made of buns and boiling oil,  
A carrot and some nails-O!  
A lobster’s claws, the knobs off doors,  
An onion and some snails-O!

“A pound of fat, and old man rat,  
A pint of kerosene-O!  
A box of tacks, some cobbler’s wax,  
Some gum and glycerine-o!

“Gunpowder too, a hob-nailed shoe,  
He stirred into his pottage:  
Some Irish stew, a pound of glue,  
A high explosive sausage.

The deed was done, that frightful one,  
With glare of vulture famished  
Blew out the light, and in the night  
Gave several howls and vanished.”  
(Lindsay 1918: 124)

(47)“So I’ll tell you what I’ll do  
You unmitigated Jew;”  
(Lindsay 1918: 164)

Some of the above extracts (43) to (47) vary in their degree of racism. Some of the comments can only be construed to be suggestive of racist content, such as (43), where the reference to hook-nosed could be seen in several lights. It could simply be referring to the character being addressed, which is a parrot, or then it could be understood to be a more general reference to a Jewish personage, in which case it would be a negative reflection upon the Jewish people. The same might be said of extract (46) where no direct reference is made about Jewish people or Asian people, but when one combines the text “...a fearful man, With eyes like coals a-glowing, Whose frightful whiskers over-ran His face, like weeds a-blowing.” with the illustration provided by Lindsay’s own hand one cannot help thinking that the drawing is reflective of a man of Asian and/or Jewish genealogy. At this stage, it should be remembered that early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia wanted “the cheap Chinaman, the cheap nigger, and the cheap European pauper to be absolutely excluded” from its shores and that this sentiment was openly circulated by Lindsay’s employer *The Bulletin*. One might equally argue that he may not have held these same sentiments simply because he was employed at the paper but then one might counter-argue that it is strange that he remained employed there for 27 years if he had had ideological conflicts. Besides, his other more direct comments on natives and Arabs, in extracts (44) and (45) along with his direct, and most damning comment

on Jews in (47) tends to show Lindsay in a more than negative light in relation to inter-racial tolerance. To speak of an “unmitigated Jew” at all, let alone in a children’s novel, is quite amazing.

Some might argue that these racist remarks should be overlooked because there are so few of them, that is, they are statistically insignificant. Even though I personally advocate a quantitative approach towards the study of style, I do not do so at the expense of close reading and qualitative interpretations. One cannot, and should not, overlook these negative reflections on different racial and cultural groups. Because they are statistically insignificant in respect to the overall text does not diminish their damaging character. Even if a child (or adult for that matter) reads only one negative comment or makes only one negative visual association through the illustrations provided and this association remains in the child’s mind, enormous damage has then been incurred. We should remember that children are often unable to appreciate particular nuances and innuendos, that they often interpret at a more literal level and are unable to discriminate between the truth and what is being presented in the text. In addition, they have a far more limited intertextual and intercultural knowledge. Because of these facts, Lindsay’s words are even more potentially damaging, they go beyond racial slurs and threaten to implant and disseminate thoughts similar to his own.

If we were simply to be concerned with only statistically relevant figures we would need to be alarmed about the representations of violence in *TMP*, which are overwhelming in number and of a very disturbing nature. In 97 different paragraphs a violent act or intention is performed or mentioned. This amounts to 15.5% of the text. At this point it should be remembered that the supposedly chief theme of the novel, food, was mentioned in only 19.39%. Hence, the statistics for violence within this novel are quite staggering.

We are introduced to this violence quite early within the novel, as early as page 2, and it then continuously arises throughout, actually increasing in its frequency. In the first slice, we read of 20 incidents, then 10, then 24 and finally, in the fourth slice, we read of 43 separate references to violent acts. There is a progressive increase in this violence as the novel progresses. As we shall see, the final slice seems to degenerate into a *free-for-all, no holds barred punch-up*.

The nature of this violence normally pertains to punching the Puddin’ Thieves and making them atone for their sins. This logic is presented to us quite early on in the novel:

(48) “What on earth’s to be done?” he said.

“We shall have to fight them, as usual,” said Sam.

“Why do you have to fight them?” asked Bunyip Bluegum.

“Because they’re after our Puddin’,” said Bill.

“They’re after our Puddin’,” explained Sam, “because they’re professional puddin’ thieves.”

“And as we’re professional puddin’-owners, said Bill, “we have to fight them on principle. The fighting,” he added, “is a mere-flea-bite, as the sayin’ goes. The trouble is, what’s to be done with the Puddin’?”

(Lindsay 1918: 29-30)

This logic persists throughout the novel. Whenever the opportunity arises they give the puddin’-thieves a hiding, though these thieves always try to avoid such confrontations, being represented as cowards, as extract (49) depicts:

(49) "Put 'em up, ye puddin'-snatchers," shouted Bill. "Don't keep us sparrin' up here all day. Come out an' take your gruel while you've got the chance."

The Possum wished to turn the matter off by saying, "I see the price of eggs has gone up again," but Bill gave him a punch on the snout that bent it like a carrot, and Sam

caught the Wombat such a flip with his flapper that he gave in at once.  
 "I shan't be able to fight any more this afternoon," said the Wombat, "as I've got sore feet." The Possum said hurriedly, "We shall be late for that appointment," and they took their grindstone and off they went.

But when they were a safe distance away the Possum sang out:

"You'll repent this conduct. You'll repent bending a man's snout so that he can hardly see over it, let alone breathe through it with comfort," and the Wombat added, "For shame, flapping a man with sore feet."

"We laugh with scorn at threats," said Bill, and he added as a warning –

"I don't repent a snout that's bent,  
 And if again I tap it,  
 Oh, with a clout I'll bend that snout  
 With force enough to snap it."

and Sam added for the Wombat's benefit -

"I take no shame to fight the lame  
 When they deserve to cop it.  
 So do not try to pipe your eye,  
 Or with my flip I'll flop it."

(Lindsay 1918: 32-34)

The extent of our Puddin' owner's vengeance knows no bounds as is clearly shown through the words of the Puddin' Owner's Quest:

(50) THE PUDDIN'-OWNERS' QUEST

"On a terrible quest we run north-west,  
 In a terrible rage we run;  
 With never a rest we run north-west  
 Till our terrible work is done.  
 Without delay  
 Away, away.  
 In a terrible rage we run all day.

"By our terrible zest you've doubtless guessed  
 That vengeance is our work;  
 For we seek the nest with terrible zest  
 Where the puddin'-snatchers lurk.  
 With rage, with gloom,  
 With fret and fume,  
 We seek the puddin'-snatchers' doom."

(Lindsay 1918: 108)

Note how they will not be satisfied until the puddin' snatcher's have met their doom. Quite strong words for a children's novel, which are echoed shortly after with Bill's words:

(51) "No bungfoodlin'," said Bill sternly. "Produce the Puddin' or prepare for death."  
 (Lindsay 1918: 116)

Once again, this reference to the threat of death is highly unusual text for a children's novel. However, this is not the first reference to death. As early as slice one there is a strong suggestion that two of our heroes, Bill and Sam, are actually responsible for the murder of another character, Curry and Rice, the cook who originally cooked the magic pudding. This suggestion is again reinforced in slice 4. The following extracts reveal these revelations:

- (52) Now Sam an' me can never agree  
 What happened to Curry and Rice.  
 The whole affair is shrouded in doubt,  
 For the night was dark and the flare went out,  
 And all we heard was a startled shout,  
 Though I think meself, in the subsequent rout,  
 That us bein' thin, an' him bein' stout,  
 In the middle of pushin' an' shovin' about,  
 He - MUST HAVE FELL OFF THE ICE."

"That won't do, you know," began the Puddin', but Sam said hurriedly, "It was very dark, and there's no sayin' at this date what happened."

"Yes there is," said the Puddin', "for I had my eye on the whole affair, and it's my belief that if he hadn't been so round you'd have never rolled him off the iceberg, for you was both singing out, 'Yo heave Ho ' for half-an-hour, an' him trying to hold on to Bill's beard."

"In the haste of the moment," said Bill, "he may have got a bit of a shove, for the ice bein' slippy, and us bein' justly enraged, and him bein' as round as a barrel, he may, as I said, have been too fat to save himself from rollin' off the iceberg. The point, however, is immaterial to our story, which concerns this Puddin'; and this Puddin'," said Bill, patting him on the basin, "was the very Puddin' that Curry and Rice invented on the iceberg."

(Lindsay 1918: 26-27)

In this extract we are told directly, by the Puddin' that Sam and Bill intentionally pushed Curry and Rice off the iceberg, that they intentionally murdered him. This is corroborated later in slice 4 by the Puddin' once again, when the ownership of the Puddin' is being discussed in a court of law. He again states outright that Curry and Rice was murdered and we see that Sam pretends that he is shocked at being called a liar.

- (53) "Let me but say, e'er these adventures cloy,  
 I've knowed that Puddin' since he were a boy."

"All lies," sang out the Puddin', looking over the rim of his basin. "For well you know that you and old Bill Barnacle collared me off Curry and Rice after rollin him off the iceberg."

"Albert, Albert," said Bill, sternly. "Where's your manners: interruptin' Sir Samuel in that rude way, and him a-performin' like an actor for your deliverance!"

"How much longer do you expect me to stay up here, bein' guzzled by these legal land-crabs?" demanded the Puddin'.

"You shall stay there, Albert, till the case is well and truly tried by these here noble Peers of the Realm assembled," said Bill, impressively.

"Too much style about you," said the Puddin', rudely, and he threw the judge's glass of port into Bill's face, remarking: "Take that, for being a pumpkin-headed old shellback."

There was a great uproar over this very illegal act. The judge was enraged at losing his port, and the Mayor was filled with horror because Bill wiped his face on the mayoral hat, Sam had to feign amazement at being called a liar, and the

puddin'-thieves kept shouting: "Time, time; we can't stand here all day."  
(Lindsay 1918: 160-161)

So, it appears as if our heroes are not the shining moral lights they claim to be when justifying the violent retributions they deal out upon Possum and Wombat. In fact, they appear to be guilty of a far greater crime than stealing. In addition to these sinister undertones, it is the overall gratuitous sense of violence which one finds disturbing in this novel. The characters seem to take great pleasure in inflicting pain upon others, as extracts (54) to (58) show:

- (54) "As for me," said Sam Sawnoff, practising boxing attitudes as he walked along. "I feel like laying out the first man we meet on the off-chance of his being a puddin'-thief."  
(Lindsay 1918: 88)
- (55) "Nothing short of felling you to the earth with an umbrella could possibly atone for the outrage..."  
(Lindsay 1918: 94)
- (56) The wombat tried to escape punishment by shouting, "Never strike a man with a Puddin' on his head," but, now that their guilt was proved, Bill and Sam were utterly remorseless, and gave the puddin'-thieves such a trouncing that their shrieks pierced the firmament. When this had been done, all hands gave them an extra thumping in the interests of common morality. Eggs were rubbed in their hair by Benjimen, and Bill and Sam attended to the beating and snout bending, while Bunyip did the reciting...  
(Lindsay 1918: 120)
- (57) "No insults," and he gave the Mayor a slap in the face.  
(Lindsay 1918: 147)
- (58) By a fortunate chance, at this moment the Possum happened to put his snout within Bill's reach, and Bill hit him a swinging clout to relieve his feelings.  
(Lindsay 1918: 150)

In contrast to this predilection towards violence exhibited by our heroes, the villains, the puddin'-thieves, are not so inclined towards violence. True, they are crafty and use deception to try to obtain the Puddin' but they do not resort to violence, in fact, they actively shy away from it (see extract (49)), because they usually come out worse for wear from their encounters. Zwicky (2000) claims that in the forthcoming movie he has Possum and Wombat portrayed more like comical villains, unlike in the book where they are "more sadistic" (Zwicky 2000: 3). I believe that Zwicky is quite wrong on this point. In *TMP* the two in question actively shy away from violence, they are natural cowards, but their enemies, Bill, Sam and Bunyip relish in the violence and see it as necessary. If any of the characters are sadistic, it is they and not Possum and Wombat. To verify this fact, of the 97 instances of violence reported within the novel, not one of them is committed by Possum or Wombat. In all instances where they come to blows with the heroes, it is the heroes themselves who initiate the violence. To consolidate this line of argument I present the rather cruel insight presented by Bunyip Bluegum, who is actually the most restrained of our heroes:

- (59) "Indeed, said Bunyip Bluegum, "the consciousness that our enemies are deservedly the victims of acute mental and physical anguish, imparts, it must be admitted, an additional flavour to the admirable Puddin'".  
(Lindsay 1918: 82)

When speaking of sadism, we must not forget the actions of the Judge. When informed that the Puddin', of which he has been liberally partaking, might be poisoned he runs amuck. He completely loses any semblance of control and begins hitting anything and everything that comes within his reach. He does so to such extremes that once again one must question the appropriateness of this material for a children's novel. He speaks of hitting people until they are "black and blue", he insults Jews and he openly states that he will not show any pity. The following extracts highlight this behaviour most unbecoming a Judge, or anyone else for that matter:

- (60) "If what you say is true,  
That idea you'll sadly rue,  
The poison I have eaten is entirely due to you.  
It's by taking your advice  
That I've had my seventh slice,  
So I'll tell you what I'll do  
You unmitigated Jew,  
As a trifling satisfaction,  
Why, I'll beat you black and blue,"

and with that he hit the Usher a smart crack on the head with a port bottle.

"Don't strike a poisoned man," shouted the Usher; but the Judge went on smacking and cracking him with the bottle, singing –

"The emotion of pity  
Need never be sought  
In a judge who's been poisoned  
By Puddin' and Port."  
(Lindsay 1918: 166)

- (61) Before they could get rid of the Usher, the Judge bounded over the bench and commenced whacking them with the bottle, singing -

"As I find great satisfaction  
Hitting anybody who  
Can offer that distraction,  
Why, I'll have a go at you."  
(Lindsay 1918: 166)

- (62) and he went on bounding and whacking away with the bottle, while the puddin'-thieves kept roaring, and the Usher kept screaming. The uproar was deafening.  
(Lindsay 1918: 166)

- (63) As they ran, they could hear the Judge still whacking away at everybody, including the Mayor, and the Constable, whose screams were piercing.  
(Lindsay 1918: 166)

## 5. Conclusion

In summary, we must not lose sight of the fact that *TMP* is a wonderfully talented piece of writing. It abounds in colourful language and witticisms. The plot is clever and imaginative and engages the young reader at every turn. Lindsay clearly had an ear for his language and the vernacular of early 20th century Australia. It abounds in jokes, puns and wordplays which can even have adults laughing aloud. But Lindsay was never one to shy away from controversy. Many of his writings and drawings drew the censor's attention. Perhaps if this book were not considered a classic of Australian literature, perhaps if it were not steeped in a form of self-perpetuating folklore because of the Lindsay name and the era he represents, this book might not pass the censors of today.

It is an undeniable fact that *TMP* has racist content and a strong predilection for violence. Although presented in a humorous manner it still clearly exists. His outlook on society and its outlook on what Australia ought to have been invariably influenced the manner in which Lindsay wrote *TMP*. We should, of course, take this into consideration when judging his work.

In writing this article, it was not my intention to establish some form of moral high-ground from which to judge Lindsay's work. I simply wish to bring these observations to bear, so that future readers will be better informed about its content before presenting it to their children. I, for one, will still read this to my younger child who has not yet reached an age to appreciate Lindsay's work, but perhaps I will be reading a more edited version.

Finally, I leave the reader with a few thoughts. Lindsay is also renowned for his appreciation of the female form. His nudes are famous and his open candour about sex is well documented, yet with *TMP* there are no major female characters what-so-ever, the female form being only referred to in passing in a matter of 13 words. Secondly, there is an obvious paradox within *TMP*. Australian folklore would have us believe that a swaggie would have shared his tucker (food) with another who had not. But in *TMP* this is not the case. The Puddin' Owners do not want to share that which they themselves, at best, stole or perhaps even murdered for. Instead, this is a book about those who have that will not share with those who do not. This is particularly ironic in the case of the magic pudding, which is able to regenerate itself, because there would have been more than enough for everyone at any one time. The parallel to early Australian 20<sup>th</sup> century society is more than apparent.

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## Endnotes

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Novels: *A Curate in Bohemia* (Sydney 1913), *Redheap* (London 1930), *Mircales by Arrangement* (London 1932), *The Cautious Amorist* (New York 1932) *Saturdee* (Sydney 1933), *Pan in the Parlour* (New York 1933), *Age of Consent* (London 1938), *The Cousin from Fiji* (Sydney 1945), *Halfway to Anywhere* (Sydney 1947), *Dust or Polish?*(Sydney 1950), *Rooms and Houses* (Sydney 1968).

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Reminiscences: *Bohemians of the Bulletin* (Sydney 1965) and *My Mask* (Sydney 1970).

Criticism and Philosophy: *Creative Effort* (Sydney 1920), *Hyperborea* (London 1928), *Madam Life's Lovers* (London 1929) and *Scribblings of an Idle Mind* (Melbourne 1966).

Art Books: *Norman Lindsay's Book No. 1* (Sydney 1912), *Norman Lindsay's Book No. 2* (Sydney 1915), *The Pen Drawings of Norman Lindsay* (Sydney 1918), *Pen Drawings* (Sydney 1924), *The Etchings of Norman Lindsay* (London 1927), *Norman Lindsay's Pen Drawings* (Sydney 1931), *Norman Lindsay Water Colour Book* (Sydney 1939), *Paintings in Oil* (Sydney 1945), *Norman Lindsay's Ship Models* (Sydney 1966), *Selected Pen Drawings* (Sydney 1968) and *Pencil Drawings* (Sydney 1969)

<sup>ii</sup> This forthcoming film has all the original main characters and some new ones added to it. The storyloine has also been rewritten. It boasts quite an impressive cast, including John Cleese, Geoffrey Rush, Hugo Weaving, Sam Neill and Jack Thompson. It is being directed by Karl Zwicky and produced by Gerry Travers for Energee Entertainment.

<sup>iii</sup> Australian-British production directed by John Duigan; included Hugh Grant, Sam Neil (who plays Lindsay)and Elle Macpherson. Lindsay has also been portrayed by James Mason in a 1969 film, *Age of Consent*.

<sup>iv</sup> An interesting study would be to examine how the overt Australian setting and Australian animals are characterised within translated versions of *TMP*.