

**Title of submission:** Frederick Jackson Turner and Andrew (Banjo) Paterson:  
Myth-makers and Nation Builders.

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**Abstract:**

In 1893 Frederick Jackson Turner wrote what has become arguably the central document describing American national identity. Two years later, in 1895, Andrew (Banjo) Paterson, a Sydney lawyer, essayist and balladist wrote the words of "Waltzing Matilda," a song which Australians have come to regard as epitomizing the Australian national character. In his essay "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," Turner touched the hearts and minds of Americans as no other historian. Paterson did the same for Australians with his verse. Turner provided the United States with a vision of the past which enabled Americans to remake their present and future. His ideas became an integral part of the American mentalite which has persisted for the past century and which shows little sign of diminishing; they became the cornerstone of arguments for American exceptionalism and unique national character. Paterson achieved the same for Australians; among other things transforming the landscape, and the European experience of it, by infusing it with myths. The myths these two white Anglo-Saxon men popularized came to embody their respective communities and constitute the essential task of nation-building. This paper explores the common characteristics of the two visions and asks what do they tell us about myth making and national building.