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**Australia as America's "Little Brother":
A Satiric Reading of John Howard in Andrew McGahan's *Underground***

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Abstract: In this article, I read Andrew McGahan's novel *Underground* as a criticism of the Australian government under the leadership of John Howard in the era following the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center. I draw out the satire of Howard's perceived role as President George W. Bush's little brother, which becomes a synecdoche for Australia's relationship with America. I situate the novel in the context of America's cyclically neo-colonial history in Australia and draw upon the work of Homi K. Bhabha to suggest that McGahan portrays Australians as an "in-between" people who are guilty of adopting American policies—and thereby relinquishing control of their nation's sovereignty to America—without compunction. I further suggest that, in the tradition of satire, the novel could be read as a warning to Australians against following the United State too closely. With the rise of the self-proclaimed Islamic State, Australia has witnessed the re-emergence of the political climate that is reflected in *Underground*, renewing its relevance to contemporary audiences.