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# The 1982 Falklands War and a critical geopolitical eye: Steve Bell and the if cartoons

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### Abstract

This paper is a further contribution to the critical geopolitical literature on war and the representational practices of international politics. By concentrating on the work of the cartoonist Steve Bell during the Falklands War, the paper argues that these images constituted a powerful critique of the Thatcher government and the decision to despatch a task force. It is suggested that Bell's critique of the Falklands campaign operates at two levels. First, it refuses to separate events in the South Atlantic from domestic developments within Britain. The rigid realist separation of the domestic and the foreign is refused. Second, his work highlighted the importance of historical and cultural fantasy in shaping state identities and international politics. Three recurring themes of his work are used to illustrate those points. Finally, some conclusions are offered relating to the importance of cartoons and other forms of popular geopolitics.



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