**Everyday invasions: *Fuckland*, geopolitics, and the (re)production of insecurity in the Falkland Islands**

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*Abstract:* Academic and popular debates examining the geopolitics of the Falklands Islands/Islas Malvinas have focused overwhelming attention on the 1982 war and its aftermath in ways that foreground (in)security in predominantly militaristic terms. Notwithstanding these tendencies, this paper seeks to think through another example of ‘invasion’ of the Falkland Islands that has been important in provoking and sustaining insecurity among Islanders. The film *Fuckland* (2000), directed by José Luis Marqués, was shot covertly in the Falklands without the consent of Falkland Islanders who unwittingly star in it. By examining the scales, sites, practices, and shifting temporalities of *Fuckland,* as well as the everyday insecurities it (re)produces, we show how the bodies, homes and community of Falkland Islanders have been territorialised in the Argentine geopolitical imagination, and therefore subject to modes of violence. *Fuckland* also exposes the enmeshing of practical, popular and everyday geopolitics in productive ways that allow us to address popular geopolitics’ approaches to ‘the cinematic’ (and other media). Rather than treating *Fuckland*’s production and consumption as distinctive temporal moments, we seek to account for how film can linger and reverberate in often subtle and sinister ways long after fading from mainstream public attention. We position the film as a lively geopolitical object with ongoing emotional and other effects/affects that have the potential to ‘feed back’ into practical/everyday geopolitical and diplomatic relations. Examining these kinds of events can be useful in understanding why the Falkland Islands Government (and the Islanders themselves) continue to be so cautious in their management of contemporary diplomatic relations with Argentina.

*Key words:* everyday geopolitics; invasion; (in)securities; Falkland Islands

**Introduction**

In the last few years, domestic political affairs in Argentina and the United Kingdom have set the tone for an improvement in diplomatic relations between the two countries and raised hopes for renewed cooperation in the South Atlantic over the disputed Falklands Islands or *Islas Malvinas* (Dodds and Manóvil, 2001a; FCO, 2016). The election of the pro-business candidate Mauricio Macri as President of Argentina in December 2015, as well as the fallout from the United Kingdom’s vote to leave the European Union in June 2016, have created a particular set of (geo)political and economic conditions conducive to warming bilateral ties. This apparent détente has ushered in some practical signs of cooperation in the South Atlantic region. Proposed exchanges of fishery data between Argentine and Falkland Islands’ authorities are being actively discussed, identification of the remains of Argentine soldiers buried at Darwin cemetery has been undertaken by the Red Cross and an additional flight between Latin America and the Falkland Islands (from Sao Paulo in Brazil) has been announced (see Benwell, 2017a; *Mercopress*, 2017). While the UK’s Prime Minister, Theresa May, and the Minister of State for Europe and the Americas, Alan Duncan, were hailing the potential investment opportunities for British business in Argentina, the response of the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) and some Islanders to the incoming administration in Buenos Aires has been rather more circumspect (Governor’s Office Stanley, 2017). The publication of an article discussing the pros and cons associated with the potential introduction of visas for Argentine visitors to the Falklands in *The Penguin News* (the newspaper of the Falklands), a measure reportedly supported by some Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) of the Falkland Islands, is a striking illustration of the insecurities invoked by the prospect of increasingly open relations with Argentina and the enhanced mobility of Argentine nationals to and from the Islands (Niebieskikwiat, 2017). Popular accounts in the Argentine and British press tend to explain these responses as somehow indicative of the parochialism characterising the Falklands community and/or evidence of the lingering scars of military invasion and the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas War. Whilst the events of 1982 (and their continued commemoration, see Benwell, 2016) are an inescapable backdrop to understanding the contemporary geopolitics of the South Atlantic, this paper contests such simplistic and pejorative constructions of the Falkland Islands and the security concerns of its citizens.

Instead, we consciously foreground the film *Fuckland* (2000), directed by the Argentine José Luis Márques, as a specific example of non-military ‘invasion’ of the Falkland Islands. The paper uses *Fuckland* and the insidious acts of invasive violence that it portrays/enacts to problematise predominant conceptualisations of (in)security. By analysing the film’s unusual processes of production, which involved covert filming on the streets of Stanley, the island’s capital, we also call for greater attentiveness within popular geopolitics to the liveliness of films as active geopolitical objects (see Saunders, 2010 and his examination of *Borat*). The film’s plotline, which explores fantasies of ‘sexual invasion’ and territorial conquest achieved through the bodies of Islander women, provides an opportunity to interrogate gendered and intimate notions of threat, (in)security and invasion previously unexamined in the context of the Falkland Islands. By drawing on the work of feminist geopolitics and specific interventions on intimate (Cowen and Story, 2013; Pain and Staeheli, 2014; Pain, 2015) and embodied geopolitics (Mayer, 2004; Smith, 2009, 2012) we show how the (in)securities of Falklands Islanders can be framed in ways that go beyond the straightforward fear of state-sanctioned military invasion. This paper shows how geopolitics and security of the South Atlantic can be theorised differently by thinking through the production of intimately lived (in)securities *in* the Falklands. By examining the scales, sites, practices, and shifting temporalities of the film *Fuckland,* as well as the everyday insecurities it (re)produces (Philo, 2014), we show how the bodies, homes and community of Falkland Islanders have been territorialised in the Argentine geopolitical imagination, and therefore subject to modes of violence. While the director self-describes the film as a satire, we ultimately question the limits of its satirical potential given the insecurities the film (re)produces.

Our analysis of *Fuckland* seeks to be productive in ‘extending analysis of the intimate relations of violence, that seem at once everywhere and absent in analyses of the political, and in connecting apparently separate, differently scaled and situated forms of violence and insecurity’ (Pain, 2015: 72). Following Pain (2015: 67), we have used language with distinctly military overtones (e.g. invasion, incursion, strategy, tactics and so on) to refer to everyday breaches of citizens’ security, ‘not to draw direct parallels but to illustrate continuities across violences in different arenas, and to point to their integrated whole’. It is equally important to note that in drawing out these continuities we do not wish to validate *Fuckland*’s desire to be seen as the spiritual successor (and ethical/moral equivalent) to Argentina’s military invasion in 1982. Thus, the registers, temporalities, and scales of security discourse associated with the Falkland Islands might be usefully recast, allowing for the consideration of civilian *and* military dimensions; a recognition of slow acts of layered violence alongside sudden acts of military aggression; and the recasting of Cartesian and territorial visions of geopolitical ambition to account for the intimate, embodied and emotional. While we are not seeking to draw any direct lineage between *Fuckland* and specific policy responses per se, we nonetheless recognise the film’s capacity to provoke fear and inform governmental and societal responses to security and surveillance. Insidious invasions such as those required for the making of *Fuckland* are often overshadowed by the focus on the Argentine military invasion that preceded the 1982 Falklands War. However, we argue that they are critical to understanding Falkland Islanders’ ongoing and intimate experiences of (in)security and associated anxieties about increasing contact with Argentina. What makes these incursions especially troubling for Islanders is the fact that they have been instigated, and in this case filmed, by Argentine citizens, making them less ‘spectacular’ than the military invasion of 1982 but more difficult to detect in Islanders’ everyday lives given their insidious qualities. They act as potent reminders of the vulnerability of the islands to exploitation and/or violation from outside parties for (geo)political or other advantage and help explain the ostensible reticence of Islanders to engage with Argentina and its citizens.

We proceed by considering *Fuckland* and its production within the geopolitical context of the South Atlantic, before situating the paper within literatures related to security, feminist-, embodied- and popular geopolitics. Our analysis of the film is structured through the examination of three ‘vignettes’ – that is to say three key moments in the film’s evolving plotline that enable critical geopolitical reflection on (i) the representation of Islander women, temporality and the biopolitical, (ii) everyday (in)securities of Falkland Islanders, voyeurism and surveillance, and (iii) popular geopolitics, film as a lively geopolitical object, and the limits to satire.

**Situating *Fuckland* (2000)**

*Fuckland* (2000) is the fictional account of Fabián, a self-described Argentine ‘pioneer’, who hatches a plot to ‘conquer’ the disputed Falklands Islands/*Islas Malvinas* (and thereby complete the task started by the Argentine military in 1982) through non-military means. Fabián develops a strategy to transform the islands into Argentine territory by targeting, seducing and impregnating the female population of the Falklands. As Scorer (2008: 44) has pithily observed ‘the film documents Fabián’s mission: to populate *Las Malvinas* with little Argentines and so re-take the island(er)s, a literal enactment of the male citizen impregnating the female “*patria”’.* Fabián’s story was filmed in the Falkland Islands in 1999 without the permission or knowledge of the FIG or the Islanders who unwittingly star in the film. The action is recorded through the lens of a rather clunky VHS camcorder slung around Fabián’s waistline resulting in the grainy, shaky footage characteristic of ‘a covert military operation’ filmed clandestinely (*ibid:* 44). After scouting the streets, supermarkets, gift shops and churches of Stanley for suitable female host bodies, Fabián zeroes-in on Camilla, who we are led to believe is a local Falkland Islander.

The logistics of the film’s production were extraordinary and required exhaustive planning and preparation, including strict rules of communication and behaviour that were adhered to by the crew throughout their stay in the Falklands, as the director Marqués explained to the authors in interview:

‘The most complicated thing of all was to establish an order of filming taking into account that we shouldn’t be seen together in front of the community. Normally a film crew, we all meet and we discuss things…there wasn’t any of this, it was simply done through notes where I wrote [for example], at six in the morning, camera number one will be here in this square, behind a tree…We put together a plan, a plan where let’s say a meeting happens between Camilla, Fabián, the ‘real’ people [Islanders], those that were there in that moment and the film crew that was hidden somehow’ (interview with José Luis Marqués, 23/03/14).

 A crew of five Argentine men and two British women travelled to the Falklands in December 1999 to undertake the covert filming of *Fuckland,* shortly after post-war restrictions were lifted on Argentine citizens visiting the Islands. The crew included two actors, Fabián Stratas from Argentina and Camilla Heaney from the UK, with the latter cast to play the part of a Falkland Islander. The entire crew took exceptional measures to ensure they were not detected by Islanders and the authorities during their weeklong stay. This encompassed filming a pilot project in a similarly sized town in the province of Buenos Aires, where the crew simulated working incognito in a small community in which the presence of outsiders would be conspicuous. For the actual trip to the Falklands, each member of the crew had a carefully crafted double-identity that enabled them to clear customs and divert attention from their actual role (see Marqués, 2000).

Our intrigue in the film emerged having conducted lengthy periods of research in Argentina and the Falkland Islands with different communities, exploring a range of topics related to the geopolitics of the sovereignty dispute (see Benwell, 2016, 2017a/b; Pinkerton, 2008). Interviewees in the Falklands often recalled previous unexpected ‘intrusions’ including the landing of Argentine aircraft in the Islands in 1964, 1966 and 1968; the planting of flags on outlying islands from Argentine-registered boats; and, more recently, the release in 2012 of a secretly-filmed advertisement starring an Argentine athlete training for the London Olympics on the streets of Stanley (Pinkerton and Benwell, 2014). Whilst some of these incidents were laughed off, albeit defensively at times, as theatrical performances by eccentric nationalists, *Fuckland* by contrast generated notably different responses from Islanders. In Argentina, the film was often referred to as a slightly odd if amusing take on the Malvinas issue, yet in the Falkland Islands the film was almost never mentioned. Given the gendered nature of sexualised violence inflicted on Islander women in the film, it is possible that our identity as ‘outsider’, male researchers from the UK had a suppressive effect (see Benwell, 2014) on interviewees. In a similar way, we were conscious of the sensitivities surrounding covert filming and the sexually-suggestive narrative and therefore did not seek interviews with the women who appeared in the film. Instead, we note the Islanders’ strategy of exhibiting purposeful indifference in newspaper interviews at the time of the film’s launch in 2000 so as not to generate additional publicity (*Clarín* 2000a), although it is worth noting that some complained that the film was both ‘in poor taste’ (*La Nación*, 2000) and an ‘invasion of privacy’ (*Clarín,* 2000b). While the director had talked about some aspects of the film in the media, he had not been asked to reflect on some of the more problematic elements of the film, an opportunity we were afforded during an interview in Buenos Aires in March 2014. Quotes from that interview are included in this paper and provide insight into his personal decision-making and the film’s carefully choreographed production.

A pirated version of the film uploaded to *YouTube* in 2014 has been viewed over 28,000 times in the intervening five years, but, as we contend in this paper, these relatively modest numbers do not begin to account for the lingering effects (and affects) produced by the film. Nor do these numbers reflect the impact that the film had on its release in 2000 when it became a surprise hit at the London Film Festival and so popular with audiences that extra screenings had to be arranged at short notice (Hjort & MacKenzie, 2003). The *Independent* labelled the film as one of the eight best of that year’s festival (Matheou, 2000), and the film was nominated and won awards at a variety of other international festivals in 2001 and 2002. This popularity and credibility was further reinforced by the award of Dogme 95 certification – only the eighth film to receive such an accolade.[[1]](#footnote-2) *Fuckland* was positively reviewed in *The Guardian* under the headline ‘Falklands girls are easy’ (Moss, 2000), and *Variety* magazine described the film, somewhat unproblematically, as a ‘cheeky, largely successful gag’ (Elley, 2000) – two responses that now jar in the context of the #MeToo campaign and revelations about the film director Harvey Weinstein. The casual, accepting tone of these reviews suggest that Falkland Islands’ women were legitimate targets for crass stereotyping by privileged international film directors and the journalistic classes. While the film could, indeed, be regarded as a subtle, scything, satire of the Argentine man abroad, exposing male pretensions and masculine fantasies (as the director and some reviewers suggest), it is also important to recognise the very real violations and violence that *Fuckland* enacts on the comparatively powerless women of the Falkland Islands depicted in the film. In the discussion that follows (see vignette 3), we explore the limits of satire in a context where the geometries of geopolitical power are often misunderstood. In asking these questions we are conscious of our positionality as two white, British, male scholars with long-standing connections to the Falkland Islands and recognise the problematic representations of lascivious Latin predators that the film propagates. While we do not subscribe to these constructions it has been necessary to address them within our analysis in ways that might be considered discomforting. Despite the difficulties of researching and writing about offensive intrusions like *Fuckland* it is critical to explore the insidious capacities of popular geopolitical ‘texts’ (authored by civilians rather than governments or militaries) and their implications for everyday relations between citizenries on either side of territorial/geopolitical disputes.

**Challenging popular geopolitics through the intimate, insidious and embodied**

Geopolitical scholarship on British Overseas Territories (OTs) like the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar and the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus (see, for example, Dodds and Benwell, 2010; Dodds, 2012, 2013; Dodds *et al.* 2015; Gold, 2004, 2009) has been typically drawn to conventional notions of security, understood through diplomacy, defence, and the strategic importance of these territories to the UK in the context of various regional challenges. Our engagement with literature from feminist geopolitics, and more recent interventions on intimate geopolitics, invites a reconsideration of how geopolitics and the security of British OTs might be conceptualised in ways that unsettle (the predominant interest in) ‘“official” security agendas’ (Philo, 2012: 1). This body of work attends ‘to everyday, lived experiences of (in)security, drawing attention to the unexpected sites and subjects of securitisation’ (Williams and Massaro, 2013: 752). It has brought geopolitical research increasingly into contact with everyday spaces of the home, school, street, internet and more, acknowledging a wider array of geopolitical actors in the process (see Benwell and Hopkins, 2016). As Koch (2011: 500) is at pains to point out, this does not mean that feminist geopolitics ‘ignores the “macro-scale”, but it rather insists on the co-constitution of scales’, as well as, ‘considering the central actors of geopolitics as not just states, but also people’ (*ibid:* 512). Interventions investigating domestic geopolitics have been useful here for teasing out connections between violences experienced in the home *and* as a consequence of global events (e.g. Brickell, 2012, 2014; Pain, 2014). They have prompted a reconsideration of how and where geopolitical research interrogates war, conflict, (in)security and violence, as well as the relations that are framed as constituting geopolitics (Cowen and Story, 2013).

More recently, this work has turned to intimacy to show how, ‘all forms of violent oppression work through intimate emotional and psychological registers as a means of exerting control’ (Pain and Staeheli, 2014: 344). The recognition of ‘the global and intimate as mutually constituted entities’ opens up space for a fuller consideration of how (in)securities can be emotionally and psychologically experienced as a result of citizens’ daily encounters (Brickell, 2014: 1259; Dowler, 2012). These insights are especially relevant for our examination of intrusion and (in)security in the Falklands, concepts that are almost exclusively discussed in relation to 1982 and post-war concerns with the military deterrent stationed in the Islands and its role in warding off future Argentine aggression (despite the intentions of the FIG to move beyond such limited understandings). And yet, the interventions of non-state actors in the intimate relations and spaces of Falkland Islanders, and their subsequent representation in diverse forms of popular culture, are an extreme source of insecurity, not least because of how difficult they can be to detect. Despite their seemingly trivial nature, these kinds of intrusions are extremely unsettling and can connect to/animate governmental debates concerning appropriate state security measures (as outlined in the introduction). They can also challenge conceptualisations of threat and (in)security by drawing attention to slower and less-spectacular forms of violence (see Marshall, 2014) that are enacted in, for instance, the making of a film like *Fuckland.* There are resonances here with Rob Nixon’s (2011: 2) concept of slow violence, developed to account for the threat of global climate change on vulnerable communities:

‘[a] violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all. Violence is customarily conceived as an event or action that is immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, and as erupting into instant sensational visibility.’

Slow violence draws attention to temporal registers but in this paper we explore *Fuckland* through its insidiousness. Our use of insidious here recognises the gradual and subtle layering of violence (see Nixon, 2011), by casting a particular light on its covert qualities, the insecurities it can produce and the emotional and psychological effects and after-effects on the bodies that unevenly experience it (see Benwell, 2017b; Botterill *et al.,* 2016; Fluri, 2009; Sjoberg, 2015).

Feminist scholars have demonstrated how experiences of security and insecurity are profoundly gendered (e.g. Enloe, 1993; Cockburn, 2004) and layered. As Fregoso and Bejarano (2010: 1) observe in relation to ‘the low intensity warfare waged on women’s bodies that is now routine across Latin America’, it is imperative to question how (and where) particular ‘gender norms, inequalities, and power relationships increase women’s vulnerability to violence’ (*ibid*: 4) For Sjoberg (2016: 55), ‘gender analysis can reveal more depth, showing the importance of a feminist-inspired understanding of insecurity as felt, sensed and experienced’. The covert production of *Fuckland* with its derogatory and intimate sexualised representations of Islander women*,* as well as the conflation of women’s bodies with the geopolitics of the territorial dispute make sensitivity to this gender-security nexus especially pertinent. The pioneering work of Enloe (1993) and Yuval-Davis (1997: 23) emphasises strategic concerns with women as reproducers of the nation, positioned as, ‘symbolic border guards and as embodiments of the collectivity’ (also see Cockburn, 2004). As part of nationalist and geopolitical projects, the control of ‘girls and women becomes a man’s way of protecting or reviving the nation’ (Enloe, 1993: 239). Geopolitics is framed as overtly patriarchal and embodied here given that, ‘control of women’s reproduction carries with it control of women’s bodies and of women’s behaviour, for women’s bodies (along with territory) are where the nation constructs its identity’ (Mayer, 2004: 156-7). The appropriation of women’s bodies in reaffirming territorial claims, and their explicit representation in films like *Fuckland*, results in acutely gendered experiences of (in)security that we explore below.

Smith (2012: 1513) takes this notion of embodied geopolitics further in the context of India’s contested Jammu and Kashmir State, exploring ‘how reproductive bodies and potential babies are caught up in geopolitical projects, as entities that can not only be territory but can also make territory’. She underlines the mundane practices of territoriality that occur in everyday spaces of the region, acknowledging women’s bodies as ‘a critical site through which territorial sovereignty can be defended’ (*ibid:* 1516). Of course, they can also be the subjects of territorial ambition and numerous studies have charted the disturbing use of rape as a weapon of war in the pursuance of geopolitical objectives (e.g. Diken and Laustsen, 2005; Enloe, 1993; Mayer, 2004; Smith, 2009). In line with feminist geopolitics, then, this body of work is critical of traditional ‘studies of territoriality and of boundaries [that] have often centred on big issues of sovereignty and security in ways that seem to make gender irrelevant to the concepts’ (Wastl-Walter and Staeheli, 2004: 141). For Diken and Laustsen (2005: 126),

‘Bodily margins cannot be understood in isolation from other margins. As land is penetrated by enemy troops, so is the body and vice versa: the concern for the unity and order of the body politic is mimetically reproduced in the preoccupations about the purity and impurity of the physical body.’

In the case of the Falkland Islands, the ‘engineering [of] territory through bodies’ (Smith, 2012: 1515) has been largely confined to fictionalised (sexual) fantasies manifest in popular culture, as opposed to state-sponsored projects or violence examined in the examples cited here. Despite this, we argue that the representation and popular circulation of troubling sexualised narratives explored in *Fuckland* are significant for the emotional geopolitics of Falkland Islanders (Pain, 2009). Work from scholars of popular geopolitics has effectively challenged assumptions that geopolitical artefacts come into being though a linear process of production and reception, as well as the artificial separation of these into distinct stages (see Dittmer and Bos, 2019). There is broad acknowledgement that, ‘we can no longer afford to simply view popular geopolitics as a “passive reflector of geopolitical processes”’, that ignores the influence of film within broader policy formulation and response (Ridanpӓӓ, 2009, cited in, Pickering, 2017: 88). Saunders’ (2010) extensive examination of *Borat*, a fictitious Kazakhstani journalist who records real-life interactions with Americans in the US, is illustrative of how film can ripple through diplomatic networks folding popular geopolitics into practical and formal geopolitical knowledges. The example has further parallels with *Fuckland,* given the people who star in the interviews *Borat* conducts are not fully in on the joke or aware of how the recordings will be circulated. Building upon literatures that explore the affective qualities of film (Carter & McCormack, 2006; Dodds, 2008), we consider *Fuckland*’s depiction and perpetration of sexual violence as an active geopolitical object/text that exists in a perpetual state of re-production, and its violence perpetually re-enacted, through its consumption by audiences. The audience are not just ‘active’, but are made complicit in Fabián’s voyeurism, surveillance, stalking, and possible rape of Falkland Islands’ women, as well as complicit in the (re)production of the threat of invasion. Viewers of the film witnessing Fabián’s unsolicited interactions with real Falkland Islanders are produced as an ‘unethical audience’; enrolled as active geopolitical agents in the islands’ reinvasion through the act of viewing. As well as re-enacting and re-producing the violation associated with territorial and intimate invasions, these kinds of geopolitical artefacts erode confidence in the diplomatic and practical efforts to build trust and cooperative relations between the Falkland Islands and Argentina.

***Vignette 1:* Bodies, territory and biopolitical conquest**

 ‘Precocious, precursor, pioneer. It’d take lots like me, in 20 years they’re ours. If other patriots follow my example in a few years the islands will be full of Argentines. They want to be English, let them be English but the next generation will be the one that decides and then I want to see you, think about it a little.’ (Extract from Fabián in *Fuckland,* 2000)

This verbal monologue features towards the end of *Fuckland* and is juxtaposed with the fairly innocuous scene of Fabián walking through the departure gate at RAF Mount Pleasant (MPA) in the Falklands (a restricted military area where filming is forbidden that doubles as the Islands’ main international airport), on his way to boarding a return flight to Argentina. Although less shocking than some of the graphic and offensive scenes that feature earlier in the film, the words recited here are reflective of the intimate, lingering and slower forms violence that can reveal particular kinds of security concerns in a place like the Falklands. On the one hand, there is a striking sense of self-congratulating triumphalism on the back of Fabián’s short-lived seduction and sexual ‘conquest’ of Falkland Islander Camilla (discussed in more depth below). On the other hand, however, the quote emphasises the need to focus on the *longue durée* in Argentina’s efforts to claim territory in the South Atlantic. Fabián’s fantasy of genetically altering the Falkland Islands’ populationwill supposedly bear fruit in 20 years, when the next generation of ‘hybrid’ Argentine-Falkland Islanders will decide to switch their geopolitical allegiances to Argentina.

Although wildly fanciful in this case, the notion of temporality has been a consistent point of concern in relation to how Argentina has pursued its Malvinas claim. Argentine diplomats and commentators regularly call for diplomatic restraint in favour of a longer-term strategy, while making optimistic projections about the number of years it will take for the Malvinas to be recovered (Alexander, 2014; Fernandez-Armesto, 2012). These calls reveal frustration with past impetuousness in Argentine foreign and military policy (which have often been shaped by short-term cycles in domestic electoral politics), most notably evident in 1982 – an event preceded by several years of Anglo-Argentine negotiations for joint sovereignty of the Islands (see Dodds, 2002). The infamous ‘charm offensive’ instigated by Carlos Menem’s Foreign Minister Guido di Tella in the 1990s, initiated contact between citizens from Argentina and the Falkland Islands for the first time after 1982 through phone calls and the sending of presents (including toys and Winnie the Pooh bears) and videos (Dodds and Manóvil, 2001a: 785). This strategy, which was met with bemusement by Islanders and produced no tangible diplomatic advances, was nonetheless implemented to woo the (next generation of) Islanders and rebuild trust in the Argentine government, in ways that might generate the conditions for an eventual acceptance of Argentine sovereignty. Similarly, the so-called ‘reconciliatory’ visits of groups of Argentines to the Falklands have received a markedly frosty reception from Islanders in recent years. Arguably the most sensitive of these was the visit of the organisation *Rugby Sin Fronteras* (Rugby Without Borders), which looked to organise a rugby match between citizens of Argentina and the Falkland Islands. Their intention to involve young people living in the islands by training on the fields adjacent to the secondary school and handing out t-shirts and other sporting paraphernalia, was interpreted as a sinister act of geopolitical interference designed to lure the next generation of Islanders towards Argentina (*Mercopress,* 2011). While the threat of an impromptu military invasion by Argentina may have subsided, the insecurities produced by these kinds of initiatives are significant. Despite the stated innocence of their intentions, these are read in the islands as insidious attempts to target future generations of Islanders for geopolitical ends, and serve as reminders of the enduring and diverse threats posed to their security.

Fabián’s self-identification as a pioneer is also loaded on many different levels and can be linked to historical ‘practice[s] of territoriality’ and state creation in other peripheral parts of Argentina, including Patagonia (Smith, 2012: 1515). These frontier zones have been central to the Argentine geographical imagination, a nation defined through violent colonial expansion, and the subsequent establishment and consolidation of its borders. Fabián imagines himself as the inheritor to these pioneering Argentine nation-builders, although his chosen frontier are the bodies of Islander women, overtly territorialised in *Fuckland*, constructed as sites of geopolitics to be controlled, struggled over, penetrated and exploited (Rose, 1993; Smith 2012). As the director makes clear, Fabián wishes to, ‘turn himself into the leader of the invasion after convincing his compatriots to follow in his mission… ‘Make the homeland [*haga patria*], get a kelper pregnant’’ [a term often used in Argentina and Latin America to refer to Islanders although rarely used in the Falklands themselves, see Niebieskikwiat, 2014] (Marqués, 2000: 12). While the Falklands are robustly defended by the British Armed Forces stationed at MPA, the only solution to the sovereignty dispute, according to Fabián, is to populate the islands with Argentines. The ‘territory’ of the islands, incorporating women’s bodies as ‘an extension of the landscape’ (Mayer, 2004: 166), is made vulnerable to violation and penetration, in intimate and insidious ways that are beyond the scope of military defence. As Mayer (2004: 166) contends,

‘the real boundary of the nation and its homeland is no longer a line drawn on a map or on the ground. Rather than being physically articulated, a national boundary can be imagined in men’s minds or drawn within women’s bodies’.

The biopolitical inferences are made clear through the securitisation of particular bodies and although they are the subject of sexualised fantasy in *Fuckland,* they map on to actual concerns in the Falklands and the UK related to the (un)sustainability and genetic composition of the islands’ population. This came to the attention of policy-makers following the publication of Lord Shackleton’s report in 1976, who identified a ‘shortage’ of women and a ‘surplus’ of men in the Falkland Islands, with all the attendant risks to the community’s long-term viability (Shackleton, 1976). One solution to this skewed demographic composition was brought to wider public attention with the creation of a so called ‘settler scheme’ targeted at British women in 1981 (*Daily Express,* 1981). It is also worth noting here, the popular and academic interest in Argentina at the annual publication of census statistics for the Falkland Islands (*Mercopress,* 2016; *La Opinión*, 2017; Peretti and Varisco, 2016). Although the press commentaries are never formally connected to the geopolitics of the sovereignty dispute, contributors to the comments sections underneath such reports regularly make insinuating remarks that serve as reminders of the close scrutiny placed on the changing demographic profile of the Falklands. In so doing, Argentine newspapers and their online commentariat revel in some of the same challenges identified by Lord Shackleton. Fabián’s mission is not unrelated to this political and popular interest in the demographic profile of the Falklands and arguably this awareness of the Islands’ demographic challenge helps to explain the context within which the film was conceived and consumed in Argentina, and the anxieties it (re)produces.

Through an exploration of the biopolitical strategies underpinning Fabián’s ‘pioneering’ work in the Falklands (and their parallels with biopolitical concerns about the Islands in Argentina), this section has highlighted the conflation of bodies and territories as objects for conquest. In the section that follows, we explore the tactics that Fabián deploys on the streets of Stanley in the realisation of that strategy.

***Vignette 2:* Surveillance, voyeurism and the everyday**

Throughout *Fuckland*, film footage gathered from Fabián’s concealed video camera reveals his strange routinized surveillance of real Falkland Island women as he tours everyday spaces of the community. In a supermarket he spots a young woman with a small child. The camera lingers on their bodies while they stand at the checkout waiting to pay for their groceries, and we are left in no doubt of Fabián’s interest in the seemingly fertile, child-bearing body of the young mother. Unwittingly, the small child—who is, perhaps, only about 18 months old—becomes the vector for the prolonged examination of his own mother by Fabián. Fabián approaches the pair by greeting the boy with an apparently playful, cooing ‘Hello’. During the awkward encounter that follows, the woman reluctantly reveals the boy’s name—Jack—but is clearly weary of Fabián’s somewhat overly-inquisitive presence and actively disengages from conversation. Fabián gives up and moves on, targeting next a female tour operator, originally from the Philippines. In the ‘West Stores’, Fabián strikes up a conversation with a young woman on the supermarket checkout by complimenting her nose piercing and engaging in some seemingly-gentle flirtation, before juxtaposing this conversation in the following scene with the cover image from Cate Haste’s account of British sexual moraes, *Rules of Desire* (1994, paperback edition), that he picks up in the supermarket’s book section. While in normal circumstances, these encounters and conversations might be considered to be commonplace, innocent examples of daily human interaction, the audience is, of course, aware of Fabián’s sinister intent as well as the potentially hazardous consequences of his febrile sexualised gaze. The profoundly discomforting experience of watching these events unfold is heightened by our knowledge as viewers of the covert nature of the filming and the denial of agency afforded to the women (and children) being surveilled, filmed and presented to us in the film without their own knowledge or permission. Taken as satire, the objective here is presumably to turn a mirror back on to Argentina’s objectification of the Island(er)s and non-recognition of Falkland Islander identities. However, this needs to be squared with the implications for us, as the audience, who are not only enrolled and made complicit with Fabián’s search for an unwitting sexual ‘conquest’, but are, through our own voyeuristic gaze, made unwitting participants in an ongoing cycle of bodily violence perpetrated against the film’s sexualised subjects.

Fabián eventually focuses his pursuit on a young Falkland Islander, Camilla, who he befriends following a chance encounter in an internet café. Camilla takes Fabián around Stanley in her Land Rover, they smoke and talk together, and she is even willing to echo his chants of ‘Malvinas Argentinas’. We witness Fabián and Camilla having dinner together and, eventually, returning to his hotel room, where they have sex. Unbeknown to Camilla, however, Fabián has also toured Stanley in the pursuit of condoms, which, in a preceding scene, he is shown repeatedly piercing with a needle. The encounter, while consensual, is, in reality, a gross act of sexual deception given its anticipation by Fabián. Fabián’s tactic of pricking a condom with an imperceptible hole draws our attention to the scalar linkages between micro, even unspectacular acts of violence, and their long-term, future-looking intergenerational and geopolitical consequences. The scenes that follow provide a stark visual contrast as we see images of Fabián taking a battlefield tour, juxtaposed between video of Camilla and Fabián happily enjoying a walk along a pristine beach at Gypsy Cove. As the tour guide’s description of the fighting in 1982 becomes more vivid and animated, so the scene on the beach turns increasingly violent. A series of rapid cuts, an intensification in background music, and glimpses of landmine warning notices, culminates in snapshots of an overtly violent sexual encounter that are strongly suggestive of Camilla’s rape by Fabián. Taken together these scenes remind us that while ‘spectacular’ acts of violence have the capacity to provoke immediate effects and outrage, slow/insidious violence can often go unnoticed, unchallenged or unrecognised as violence at all (see Nixon, 2011).

Unlike other woman shown in *Fuckland*, Camilla is in reality a ‘fictional’ character played by an English actress – although this is not revealed to the audience until the closing credits of the film, and in no way diminishes the profoundly disturbing sexualised violence and perverse fantasies enacted upon her body by Fabián. There are parallels here between *Fuckland* and, for example, the 16-minute short film *No Lies* (1973) in which the director, Michael Block, manipulates his audience into becoming unwitting witnesses of, and participants in, what Sobchack (1977: 16) has described as, ‘rape demonstrated’ and ‘rape experienced’. Sobchack, here, refers to the fictionalised account of film-maker, Alec, invasively filming a rape victim, Shelby, in her New York apartment:

‘Alec stalks and corners Shelby physically and emotionally. We watch him violate her privacy, her trust, her defenses, her space. He relentlessly probes and insensitively attacks, hurting and humiliating the young woman who seems unaware, caught off-guard, consistently blind to Alec's betrayal of her to the camera and the audience’.

While Alec (unlike Fabián in *Fuckland*) is not looking to perpetrate an overt act of sexual violence, his exploitation of Shelby’s confidence and trust, and his orchestration of her emotional breakdown for the benefit of his camera is tantamount to her re-traumatisation. By concealing the fictional nature of *No Lies* from its audience, Sobchack argues that ‘the only real rape’ has, in fact, been perpetrated upon ‘us’ – the humiliated, gullible, hubristic viewer. If we accept this argument, the geometries of violation in *Fuckland* are made even more complex by the blurring of fact and fiction, and the sinister and covert filming of real Falkland Islanders.

We argue, therefore, that *Fuckland* renders its viewers as active geopolitical agents because it involves them in Fabián’s voyeurism and his acts of insidious violence. This is a (perhaps unintended) consequence of the blurring of covert filming and the Dogme 95 approach, adopted by the makers of the film, and complicates conventional, linear understandings of film production and reception common to popular geopolitics. The film, we contend, is a lively, affective ‘text’ (re)produced through its consumption by audiences. The viewing of the film itself becomes an insidious act that reproduces the harmful emotional and psychological violence first enacted during its production. This voyeurism operates at the intimate scale of the body, and arguably even more intimate than that, as Fabián assesses the suitability and fertility of Islander women. While links to the surveillance of bodies by powerful institutions such as airports (see Adey, 2004) might be instructive here, this voyeuristic surveillance orchestrated by civilians (for the supposed entertainment of others) occurs in the spaces of people’s everyday lives and therefore challenges our understandings of the sites, spaces and agents of geopolitical violence and its associated insecurities.

***Vignette 3:* Framing the Falklands and the limits of satire**

So far, we have discussed the film’s voyeuristic gaze and surveillance of Falkland Islanders, and in particular the bodies of Fabián’s female victims. However, for much of the film the camera is turned back on the central protagonist, Fabián himself, either through reflections in mirrors or the deliberate positioning of the camera to place him at the centre of the unfolding scene. In one particular example, Fabián can be seen alone in his hotel room after spending several days in the Falklands having completed what he calls (in the voiced over monologue) ‘the exploration phase’ of his mission. Fabián’s body is subject to the affective conditions of his covert project: he’s visibly anxious, twitchy and lights a cigarette to calm his nerves before reflecting on the fact that time and options (i.e. suitable candidates) are limited. These anxieties are not entirely the work of an actor engaged in performance. The entire film crew involved in making *Fuckland* were convinced British military authorities were aware of their project, generating feelings of personal insecurity with affective consequences as the director explained:

‘From the first day I stepped on [the islands] until the day I left, I had a permanent paranoia attack…the embassy or the secret service of the UK only had to ask who’s travelling to the islands this week on LAN Chile [the airline that flies to the Falklands from Punta Arenas, Chile]. Oh look, an actor, a film director, a sound engineer, it was so obvious…But anyway, this didn’t happen. I spent the whole week with the sensation that we were being observed and that we’d get to the last day and they’d say give us all the cassettes’ (interview with José Luis Marqués, 23/03/14).

These embodied affects were heightened by the imagined notions of the Falklands as a highly securitised society where their presence would be easily detected by British military authorities. These ideas about militarisation correspond with how the Falkland Islands are framed by Argentina’s government who regularly accuse the UK of militarising the South Atlantic. Despite these preconceptions, the crew were far more likely to have been discovered by Islanders, given the level of contact and the filming that they conducted with them.

The introspective scenes of Fabián (outlined above) and the film crew’s imagined surveillance work, both on- and off-screen, to transform the voyeur into the viewed. In the case of Fabián this provides an opportunity to reflect on the stated intent of the film’s director to turn a satirical lens on the projection of Argentine masculinities within and beyond Argentina. We contend that *Fuckland* is only partially successful as a satire because of the inherent abuses that were perpetrated in the production of the film. What these and key scenes reveal is a certain Argentine geopolitical imagination that singularly frames the Falklands as a colony of the UK inhabited by British colonists who are fully supported by the British state (e.g. reinforced through Fabián’s discussion with a local guide about British support during and after the war), a powerful, hyper-securitised NATO base (e.g. revealed through glimpses of military infrastructure at MPA) and a distinctly anti-Argentine sentiment running through the society (e.g. manifest in anti-Argentine signs and hostile rhetoric directed towards Fabián). Viewed in this way the Falklands seem to be a legitimate target for this kind of satirical work. However, this fails to account for alternative readings of the Falklands as a site where the lives and livelihoods of Islanders have been remarkably precarious and often quite marginal to the interests and political priorities of the UK (Dodds and Manóvil, 2001b). In other words, there is a particular geometry of geopolitical power that is assumed and reproduced in the film: Argentina as the plucky, powerless claimant state and the Falkland Islands as the powerful, strategic foothold of the UK.

These power dynamics are revealedwhen Fabián at a number of points deploys his own taxonomy for the Islander women he is inspecting, using peculiarly animalistic terms (lambs, whales and sheep). Whilst this, once again, might be defended as a satirical take on Argentine hyper-masculine attitudes towards women it also conforms to “low intensity” modes of violence perpetrated against women in different countries and contexts across Latin America (Fregoso and Bejarano, 2010). Geopolitically, it serves to reproduce the delegitimating policies, practices and discourses directed towards the Island(er)s by successive Argentine governments. This might explain why *Fuckland* was not considered problematic (by the director and even international reviewers of the film) and connects with how Argentina has managed diplomatic relations (or the lack thereof) with the Falkland Islands. Argentine politicians have consistently stated that self-determination cannot apply to Falkland Islanders, who they allege are implanted colonists (as opposed to a ‘native’ community). More extreme statements and representations emanating from the Argentine government have even denied the Islanders’ existence altogether (McElroy*,* 2013). The foreign policies of the government, alongside the overriding conviction of most Argentines that the islands are an integral part of their national territory, inform the seemingly nonchalant attitude of the film crew to the multiple violations of the rights, sites and bodies of Islanders.

The politics and affective conditions of *Fuckland*’s production, explored here, draw our attention to the significance of films as lively geopolitical objects that materialise on-screen but which are bound up in a complex set of off-screen events, encounters and wider geopolitical discourses that have rarely been interrogated in popular geopolitical scholarship (Pickering, 2017). We contend that the anxieties felt by the film crew are just as revealing as the fantastical plotline in understanding the embodied affects and representational logics underpinning geopolitical narratives and imaginations. The film’s claims to satire are equally complicated by nuanced readings of the contested geopolitical context of the film’s inception in Argentina, production in the Falkland Islands and consumption internationally. This in turn exposes the embodied, quotidian and affective ways in which popular and practical geopolitical narrative-makings are entangled within and through, in this case, a contested territory such as the Falkland Islands.

**Conclusion**

As Jennifer Hyndman (2004: 319) notes, in modern warfare, ‘people’s bodies, homes, communities, and livelihoods have become the battlefields of contemporary conflict’. Hyndman makes this observation in specific reference to the recognition in international humanitarian law of sexual violence and in particular rape as a strategic weapon of war—a judicial act that, according to Hyndman ‘recasts’ public and private space in militarised and violent conflict. Although sexual violence was not weaponised in the context of the Argentine invasion in 1982 (unlike in the Balkans conflict in the 1990s, for example), the invasive sexual violence intimated in *Fuckland* is suggestive of the lingering threat to the inviolability of the Falkland Islands as a ‘lived’ community and individual women’s bodies. The bodies of Falkland Islands’ women have long been the source of geopolitical concern – particularly regarding their quantity and fertility, and therefore their ability to sustain and reproduce the islands as a viable British territory. Through these concerns, the bodies of Falkland Islands women have, themselves, undergone a process of geopolitical territorialisation – whereby their bodies have become the terrain for policy interventions, as well as the projection of sexualised fantasies and violence. *Fuckland*’s concluding scenes, which intersperse images of sexual violence, military battlefields and landmine warning notices, draw associations between military and sexual violence, and are suggestive of the lingering remnants of invasion. Landmines and Fabián’s unborn child (we see a heavily pregnant Camilla) become the unknown, uncharted, insidious and threatening legacies of Argentine territorial and bodily invasions.

Our analysis of *Fuckland* exposes the experiences of everyday (in)securities in the South Atlantic and their gendered dimensions, in ways that highlight their entanglement with military notions of (in)security. More inclusive framings of (in)security offer the opportunity to better comprehend the psychological and emotional effects of everyday intrusions, moving debates beyond an exclusive fixation with the military-security nexus (Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Koch, 2011). They can, as Dowler *et al.* (2014: 349) contend, help interrogate ‘(in)security in relation to the co-constitutive relationship between the embodied, intimate everyday, and national and global processes’. *Fuckland* also exposes the enmeshing of practical, popular and everyday geopolitics in ways that allow us to address popular geopolitics’ rather conventional approaches to ‘the cinematic’ (and other media). Rather than treating *Fuckland*’s production and consumption as distinctive temporal moments, we seek to account for how film can linger and reverberate in often subtle and sinister ways long after fading from mainstream public attention. We are attentive to Pickering’s (2017: 110) challenge that, for all of its achievements, popular geopolitics could do more to account for (i) the production of audiences as active geopolitical subjects through the process of viewing, (ii) the existence of films as lively geopolitical objects with ongoing emotional and other effects, (iii) the potential for film to ‘feed back’ into practical geopolitical and diplomatic relations (although, see Dodds, 2008; Saunders, 2010). We contend that *Fuckland* should not be understood simply as a passively-received geopolitical ‘representation’, but, instead, as an active geopolitical object/text that is being constantly re-produced (and its violence constantly re-enacted) through its consumption by audiences. Through the act of viewing, audiences experience Fabián’s voyeurism, surveillance, stalking, and possible rape of Falkland Islands’ women, and, in turn, are made complicit in the (re)production of an insidious act of invasion. Although it may be difficult to demonstrate the effect of any one artefact to the construction of foreign policy, our reading of *Fuckland* and the politics of its production shows that film can, at times, have lasting real-world consequences. The perceived intransigence of Falkland Islanders to improve their relationship with Argentina and Argentines needs to be seen in the context of interventions like *Fuckland* with their associated intimate and everyday violations. The covert approach to film-making used in *Fuckland* amplifies its geopolitical significance in the particular geopolitical context of UK-Argentine-Falklands relations. More broadly, it offers insights that have the potential to open up new directions in popular geopolitics by drawing our attention to the complicity of audiences in acts of violence, the ethics of spectatorship, and the legacies for communities unwittingly enrolled into the production of geopolitical objects and texts.

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1. Dogme (or Dogma) 95 was a filmmaking movement launched on 20 March 1995 by the Danish directors Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg. Films awarded Dogme 95 status were required to subscribe to a manifesto or ‘Vow of Chastity’ that broadly excluded the use of special effects or expensive technology (i.e. only hand-held cameras were to be used and temporal/geographical alienation were forbidden) (see Hjort and MacKenzie, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)