

a different view

a manifesto from the Geographical Association



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Between heaven and earth: how do we get our food, water and energy?

This photographic family is redolent of another core concern of geography – if geography is the study of the earth as our home, it is (as has been said right back to and including the great philosopher educationist John Dewey) an essential component to understanding the ultimate 'bottom line' in human history. That is, our dependence on the environment: the land, the water, the air and the sunlight.

It is almost a truism now to say that this iconic image, taken from the Apollo spacecraft on its way to the moon in the late 1960s, gave birth to the modern environmental movement. Imagine: before this time we did not have an image of ourselves in space – and how fragile 'space ship earth' looks! Life on earth, together with all the achievements of human life on earth, are clearly dependent on that thin layer between the rock and outer space ... and this is the subject matter of geography.



This is why investigating forest destruction and making the deserts bloom are important topics, ultimately guided by a developing concept of what the relationship between people and the environment should be ... and how we should understand 'nature'.

How do we get our food, water and energy? This is at once a fairly mundane and yet a very *profound* 'big question' which geography helps us address.