

Moving stories: who are they, where are they from, where are they going?

This dramatic picture could be the opening frame of any number of stories. The central figure looks anxious as she tries to navigate this busy space – where she does not, apparently, 'belong'.

Doreen Massey uses a powerful metaphor in her writing on progressive ideas about place: the notion of places as 'meeting points'. This relaxes the idea of places necessarily having boundaries (literally, in the case of countries) and introduces a more relational view: that we are all connected. No man is an island: a constant flow people, goods and ideas pass through all places, from your High Street to London's Docklands.

Intuitive understanding of this may be one reason for the popularity of the BBC series *Who Do You Think You Are?* Our family stories are fascinating, and few of us are a direct product of a single place: our ancestors come from all manner of places (and their stories are often moving, in a different sense).

Who is my 'family'?

Where do I belong?

Who are the people around me?

Where are they from and where might they be going?

These are *fundamental* 'big questions' in geography. According to some educationists, they are representative of all young people's fundamental curiosity. Geographical perspective offers a 'progressive' alternative to narrower, more instinctive ideas about identity.