

ENGLISH: *AS YOU LIKE IT*

“Explore how perceptions of belonging and not belonging can be influenced by connections to Places.”

One's sense of belonging in regard to relationships and ideals are both determined by one's ability to adapt to place. One's location must act as a conduit to a healthy state of belonging. However, a place's ability to act as a conduit to connections depends on the community within the area. Depending on one's place, one can either discover a strong sense of belonging, or not belonging, depending on one's ability to adapt. One's ability to establish a connection to place can have an enormous impact on their happiness.

In Shakespeare's "As you...", place is shown as instrumental in one's ability to belong, with the characters experiencing a renewed sense of acceptance and connectedness once entering the paradise of the Forest of Arden. Once they leave this paradise, however, it is implied that they are to take their lessons learnt in the forest, back to the court, showing that to have a connection to a place, one does not necessarily need to be there physically, as a place can represent an ideal or a state of mind. "Submarine", by Richard Ayoade, is a coming of age story exhibiting a young man finding a sense of belonging in some places, while struggling in others, showing the importance of adaption to experience a true sense of belonging.

When one enters a new location, they can experience resurgence in their ability to belong. The characters of "As you..." experience an increase in their understanding of themselves and each other once they enter the forest of Arden. The lack of rules in the Forest allows the characters to reinvent themselves. Rosalind is able to "suit herself" as the male "Ganymede". Through dramatic irony, she is able to get closer to Orlando emotionally than would have been feasible within the repressive court- "What would you say to me now... (were I)...Rosalind?". The idea of Arden as a place of connections and acceptance is shown through song- "Under the Greenwood tree...here shall he see...no enemy". However, although it is a paradise, it is shown that one must be able to adapt to different locations in order to establish a sense of belonging- "Good manners in...court...ridiculous in the country as...behaviour of country...at court". Juxtaposition of country in courts shows that in order to establish a sense of belonging through place, one must adjust themselves to fit in with their locality. This idea of adaption is reinforced in "Submarine", Oliver is shown as connected with nature, exhibited through the peaceful environment, as well as the slow panning shots portraying him staring happily over the ocean. "I...wait for the sky to catch up with my mood..." However, within the social construct of school, Oliver shows a sense of not belonging, as shown through his miserable facial expression when among his classmates. He depicted as not "fitting in", as shown through the longshots of him walking in the opposite direction to his classmates. It is thus shown that place can have an enormous effect on one's ability to belong, as shown through the idyllic Arden. However, both texts convey that one must be willing to adapt if one is to establish a sense of belonging, showing that it is not always place, but one's response to it, that will make the difference between belonging and not belonging.

Relationships and ideals of the characters in both "As you...", and "Submarine", are shown to form more naturally in a location that is receptive to one's needs. Within "As you...", unconventional relationships are able to form in the freedom of Arden. Orlando grows close to his servant Adam within Arden, who promises to "follow...(Orlando)...to the last gasp", The servant/master relationship is shown as more equal outside the confines of the court, as shown through Orlando reciprocating this affection, encouraging Adam to "live a little...love a little". Likewise, Submarine's Oliver is able to establish a relationship with Jordana outside of the repressive environments- they are able to "engage in the mutual interest of arson", something that would not be possible within a conventional environment. Their mutually beneficial relationship is conveyed through montage, with imagery and non-diegetic music conveying the joy of their relationship. Arden is also shown as conducive to different ideas and opinions. The character of Jaques is shown as ill-fitting among his companions, viewing other people as "merely players", a metaphor that conveys his alienation.

However, the lack of criticism of Jaques by other characters shows that the freedom of Arden is perfectly conducive to his ideals. Jaques, at the end of the text, refuses to return to the court with the others, claiming “I am for other than dancing measures”, showing that he is to stay within the forest, where his own ideals are more accepted. It is thus shown in “Submarine”, and “As you...” that one’s environment can help one develop relationships and ideals more successfully than an environment that is not receptive to one’s sense of belonging. It is shown in “As you...” however, that it is the non-critical environment of Arden that enables Jaques to belong, showing that it is community that is the deciding factor.

One’s location must act as a conduit to attain a healthy and positive sense of belonging. Without a positive environment, one cannot thrive and thus one’s ideals and relationships will suffer as they will be suppressed. One does not necessarily need to be physically within a place to feel a sense of belonging with that particular place, as lessons learned can establish a sense of belonging. One must, however, also be able to adapt to different locations and communities, thus showing that belonging comes from within. Both “As you...” and “Submarine” present place as extremely important to determining one’s status as belonging or not belonging.