

Othello, a story of
rejection, prejudice,
envy, and revenge
essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The play "Othello" moves around the story of a Moor who has just run away with the beautiful Desdemona and leaves Venice to command the Venetian armies against the Turks on the island of Cyprus. Othello is accompanied by his new wife and his lieutenant, Cassio. When they arrive, they find that the weather has destroyed the Turkish fleet. Iago, the evil antagonist, repeatedly tries to destroy Othello because he is upset Othello gave the position he wanted to achieve to another soldier. Iago finally succeeds when he is able to leave Desdemona's handkerchief on Cassio's room convincing Othello that his wife has been unfaithful and has cheated on him. Othello kills Desdemona out of jealousy. Before, Iago's wife eventually reveals that Desdemona's affair was just an invention of her husband. Iago immediately kills his wife also, and Othello then commits suicide in grief. At the end, Iago is captured to be tortured and executed. What can we see in the middle of this story? "Othello" is a clear representation of some common human characteristics that are always present in our lives: rejection, prejudice, envy, and revenge.

What is rejection? You feel rejected when you experience the sense of being unwanted. You want people to love you, but you believe they do not. You want to be considered part of the group but you feel excluded. You want to find a good husband or a beautiful wife, but your mind tells you, you do not deserve it. Sometimes rejection is so wounding and hurting that the mind refuses to focus on something else. You may experience loneliness, self-pity, misery, depression, hopelessness, and even the presence of death. All of these aspects are present in Shakespeare's masterpiece "Othello". They are perceived all over since the beginning of the play. Othello, the protagonist,

shows and reflects the attitude society has towards those who are different in color, race, and language. At the time the play was written, white people were the majority and all other races were thought to be inferior.

Iago, Othello's antagonist, sets his clear rejection ideas against him when he states: " I hate the Moor"(379). Without any doubt, the main reason behind Iago's hatred towards Othello is the color of his skin. It is hard for Iago to accept the fame and reputation Othello had and the way he had reached success in spite of the fact he was a black person. The effect of prejudice, rejection, and racism on Othello is evident and it is the main cause for his insecurity about himself and his marriage. Othello becomes vulnerable to manipulation and he is easily deceived and tricked by Iago. Othello experiences the true symptoms of rejection. He does not accept himself. He still does not believe he is a famous and well known among the people. His low self-esteem betrays him. He was an easy prey. A prey that can be easily devoured by a mean and evil predator, Iago.

" Othello" is all about the jealousy of one man, Iago. Jealousy is a very dangerous force. If you ever think you deserve more other people have, something better you can get yourself, you have been trapped by it. It is Iago's jealousy what leads him to provoke the same feeling in other people, to use them to his own advantage. " I follow him to serve my turn upon him"(9: 45). Since the beginning, Iago has a cruel idea; he wanted to destroy Othello. He lost his expected position in the army. Another soldier (Cassio) gets it, so Iago blames Othello for that. Iago gets so deep into it and his lies that he even starts to think Othello has even slept with his own wife Emilia.

He was so obsessed with his revenge that he loses his mind. He does not care what happens to anyone else as long as he is happy.

Jealousy and revenge trying to hurt Othello lead Iago to have Roderigo killed, Cassio severely injured, his own wife Emilia and Desdemona dead, and Othello committing suicide. Finally, Iago ends up being tortured and killed for his great conspiracy. After reading this story, can we ask ourselves, is it really worth it? Iago's motivation is his love of evil. He has no conscience. He is not able to feel love. Iago treats others as fools and has no sign of repentance. Ironically, Shakespeare portrays him as "honest Iago." "Shakespeare has built the character of Iago from an idea already existing in the theatrical culture of his time. The devil in religious morality plays." [1] Evil, hatred, and revenge can only lead you to one direction, self-destruction and death. The saddest part of this story is you do not die alone. You can destroy other people's lives in the process even those of innocent people like Desdemona or Emilia who are secondary characters in the story.

During Shakespearian time, women were rarely seen as equal. They were often seen as inferior people who needed to be taken care of by men. "Othello" shows how women are owned by men. They can also be "stolen". Men can play with them. Women are seen as prizes men can get. Desdemona, Othello's wife, can be defined as a human being with no free will. She cannot make her free choices. She cannot love. She can only be owned. Even her father sees her that way, as we say in Spanish: "Fue dada al mayor postor." When Iago thinks Othello has slept with his own wife, he thinks Othello has trespassed his own property.

In the story, there is no love within the relationship between men and women. There is only possession and dominance by the men and submission by the women. Both women in this story end up being murdered by their husbands. Men are the ones in power; women are to be used and discarded. Why does not Othello trust Desdemona when she cries out she is innocent? It is simply because men are to be trusted above women. Women are unable to tell the truth. Othello and the other men do not care about whether or not they love the women. It is a matter of property and invasion. Othello is the masculine. He is powerful, angry, physical, strong, and the leader. Desdemona plays the feminine. She is weak, submissive, and she chooses to die in order to keep everybody away from violence. She does not even try to defend herself. Desdemona is a martyr.

Is this conflict only portrayed in Shakespeare's works? Let us just recall what we see every day on the news. There are always many cases of jealous husbands thinking their wives have cheated on them and if not murdering them, they have at least brutally beaten them. Prejudice, jealousy, and evil have always been present among us since the beginning of time. Jealousy arises when a person feels that a relationship is threatened by some external issues. It is not a rare emotion. All of us feel it. I personally think jealousy can be a signal that it is the time to make a change; a change in your life that is going to make you move on the next stage of your emotional growth. You should use it as a reason to work on yourself and to understand the fears which motivate it. If Othello had applied this theory, he would have had good self-esteem, he would have heard his wife, and he would not have killed her.

This is the same story of many women who die around the world as victims of jealousy and evil.