

Infidelity in marriages from gone girl, by gillian flynn and shakespeare's othell...

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Infidelity is a leading cause to marital breakdowns. To be successful in a marriage, it requires two people to make it work. There are factors of things that can make a marriage fall apart but infidelity in marriages is the most major one, as it can impact the individuals themselves.

Infidelity in marriages from *Gone Girl*, by Gillian Flynn and Shakespeare's *Othello* brings out the emotions that can lead to outbreaks of sociopathic acts, which can affect the livelihoods of their relationship. After infidelity occurs, an outbreak is bound to happen. The three courses of action that lead to outbreaks result from loneliness, and that comes from the lack of communication, feeling powerless, this comes from one partner dominating the other partner and lastly jealousy is the breaking point in both the novels, and that determines the fate between the two couples in *Gone Girl* and *Othello*.

In order for a strong and healthy relationship, communication is a key component. In *Gone Girl* and *Othello*, the protagonists both lack communication skills within each other. As their spouses were suspected of infidelity; it was their loneliness that made them not communicate within one another, as it can do serious damage to those around them and themselves. In *Gone Girl*, Amy knew that her relationship with Nick was going downhill when things started to change. Nick and Amy both knew that they truly were not happy. Amy saw Nick with a younger woman, and came to a realization that " her husband threw her over for a younger woman" (Flynn 234). Although, she knew about the affair she never confronted him about it, as she hid her emotions underneath her.

Relationships are based off of trust, compromises and understanding each other. Betrayal in marriages is one of the quickest and the most painful ways to break an individual's trust. Nick was "desperate to please [his] wife [. . .] for two years, [he] tried as [his] old wife slipped away [. . .] [he] tried so hard —no anger, no arguments" (Flynn 211). This shows that marriage requires an equal amount of attention for each other for it to be stable and healthy. Both partners should communicate and compromise with one another, rather than avoiding the truth, because eventually it will all build up and create chaos. When this is not taken into account it can cause a great abundance of unhappiness in the relationship.

Amy and Nick were not supportive of each other, as they were unable to confront the other about how they truly felt. They both tried making an effort but it was not enough. In the novel, it portrays how poor communication affects a relationship. Although their spark is gone, they did once love one another, but their lack of communication made them feeling lonely. Just like Amy from *Gone Girl*, Othello lacks the key component of his communication skills in his marriage.

Othello and Desdemona are newlyweds that love each other dearly. In a snap of a finger, Othello's entire view of his wife changes as Iago corrupts his mind causing him to doubt his marriage. Iago assures Othello that his beloved Desdemona has been unfaithful to him, by having an affair with Cassio. Though he does not believe him at first, he later trusts Iago's judgment rather than him seeing the evidence himself. He tells Iago "if more thou dost perceive, let me know more" (Shakespeare 3. 3. 245). Rather than

confronting Desdemona or even Cassio, he assigns Iago to gather more evidence, when he could have simply just asked them. Othello never demanded Iago enough to get concrete evidence of Desdemona's supposed affair. He is rather satisfied with jumping to conclusions and not knowing the whole truth. If Othello had not been so ignorant, and asked Iago to give him concrete proof instead of implications, he might have been able to catch Iago's selfish scheme. As Othello suspected his wife of infidelity, he never spoke directly to her about it, but when he did approach her, he hinted it at her by telling her to swear that she has been faithful to him when she assures him by saying "Your wife, my lord. Your true and loyal wife" (Shakespeare 4. 2. 36). Desdemona confused when he approached her. He accused her for lying and disrespected her by implying that she is a whore.

Although he was not able to confront his wife, he also refused to talk to Cassio after taking his position away, had he done so, Cassio would not have had to go through Desdemona to get his position back and Iago would not have a way to initiate that she was being unfaithful. In both *Gone Girl* and *Othello*, infidelity in their marriages leads them to feel lonely and desperate from their lack of communication. It shows that marriage is hard work and requires two people for it to function properly; a key factor of it requires good communication. Without it they fall apart. Not only does infidelity in marriages bring out the sense of loneliness because of the lack of communication, it can also bring out feelings of despair and being powerless.

In most relationships there is always one partner that dominates the other. The roles of are reversed between the two novels, In *Gone Girl*; Amy Dunne

has control and power over her husband, whereas in Othello, Othello has complete dominance over his wife, Desdemona. The feeling of being ineffectual and powerless is what Nick and Desdemona experience from their spouses, who lead them to have a reputation of infidelity. Amy and Othello display their dominance in contrasting ways. In *Gone Girl* Amy controlled her husband's life from the day she disappeared. Before she disappeared, Nick "took everything from her until she no longer existed" (Flynn 367); he had her wrapped around his finger. Nick was the one that dominated early in the relationship, which made her do everything, and anything just to please him. Amy felt powerless, but the tables turned from the day she left as she gained power over the relationship. From the day she left, she had Nick's entire life planned out for him. For their fifth anniversary gift she presented Nick with Punch and Judy dolls "giving [Nick] the narrative of [his] frame-up" (Flynn 363). The Punch and Judy dolls carry a meaning behind them.

The original story of the dolls is that Punch kills his child his wife Judy. In the Punch and Judy story, Punch kills his child, and then murders Judy when she discovers the crime. "That's the way to do it," is the catchphrase of the story in which Punch, utters every time he gets away with murder. Amy is using the puppets as a way to describe what was going to happen to her dear husband and as a metaphor. They're used in a way to portray Amy's manipulative actions in an attempt to control the people around her. Nick was basically her puppet on a string; she controlled everyone from that point on. He was trapped from every step he takes; she controls his life and how others view him as a person. Even after Amy's return she was still in control.

Nick however was convinced that he was going to get a divorce but with Amy's controlling and manipulative mind, she got him to stay with her.

However, the roles of dominance in Othello are different. Although both the novels portray that there is one partner that dominates the other the men dominate the women. Primarily the women in the play have no role of dominance, whatsoever. Desdemona is an obedient and submissive wife, as she continues to obey Othello's orders from the beginning of their relationship. She replies to Othello with very obedient words like, " I will, my lord" (Shakespeare 4. 3. 9) or " commend me to my kind lord" (Shakespeare 5. 2. 139), speaking to him as if he is above her, showing that he has power above them.

Brabantio speaks of women as the proper Venetian ideology on how women should be. As the Venetian Senate, he sets the traditional expectations in women. It is known to be natural if a woman is feminine, but anything else from that is " against all rules of nature" (Shakespeare 1. 3. 104).

Desdemona was expected to perform an endless of compromises and sacrifices so that it was a convenient option for her husband.

Society makes women feel the need to always have to support from their husbands even if their actions are questionable. The women of Othello act accordingly to the ideological expectations, as it is the norm. In the end of the play, Desdemona knowing the fact that she herself was going to die, she chose to proceed in her role as the subordinate and obedient wife. Othello has all the power and control over his wife; he believes that he has the right

to determine his wife's fate as he murders her. The act of killing Desdemona made Othello gain a higher sense of power because of his wife's infidelity. In addition, Amy and Othello have power over their spouses. They both control their lives. Both Desdemona and Nick are living their lives dominated by their significant others. Amy Dunne from *Gone Girl* and the men in *Othello* show similar dominated characteristics as they control their spouse's life and as result, it benefits them. Infidelity can make you vulnerable to lead to jealousy and hatred.

In *Gone Girl* and *Othello*, the two major character's fate is determined by their spouse. However, the two characters have similar motivations behind their actions. Amy and Othello are both insecure and jealous because of their spouse's betrayal and that is what provokes their minds. Despite Amy's actions and choices, she loves her husband dearly. Nick destroys their relationship by cheating on Amy with his student Andie. Even though the marriage felt collapsed on Amy's side of the relationship, she is enraged with anger because he disrespected her. She cannot admit the fact that her husband feels unhappy with her and that he replaces her with a younger girl. This makes her jealous of Andie because "cool girls are above all hot. Hot and understanding. Cool girls never get angry [. . .] and let their men do whatever they want" (Flynn 222).

Amy was once the "cool girl," but when she stopped pretending to be what she was not, her marriage fell apart. She pretended to be the girl that Nick wanted her to be and whatever anyone else wanted her to be. Now Andie is his new "cool girl." As a result, Amy handles the situation in an ingenious

manner. The cheating is the motivation that drove her to create her master plan to get revenge on her husband. Amy and Nick's marriage failed and is the reason of Amy's psychotic scheme.

The infidelity in Nick and Amy's marriage brought out the emotions that led to her psychotic outbreak. Amy uses Nick's flaws as a bait to destroy him, by impregnating herself with Nick's sample that she saved from the fertility clinic, so that she could " hold [herself] to him like a climbing, coiling vine until [she] [has] invaded every part of him and made him [hers]" (Flynn 400). By getting herself pregnant she knew that she would have Nick in for good, and that he would not be able to leave, not without looking like a jerk, after his wife comes home pregnant with his child. If Nick no longer belonged to Amy, he will belong to no one other than her.

In the novel, it portrays how Nick's infidelity in their marriage leads to her anger, resulting in her final outbreak. With the help of her psychotic masterminded plan, her objective was accomplished. Amy trapped Nick under her skin. Nick had no choice to stay with Amy because he did not want to abandon his unborn child and make him grow up without a fatherly figure, like he did. This shows how love can and will make you do anything no matter the consequences. Similarly, Othello is driven to his psychotic outbreak from envy, caused by Cassio. Othello blinded from the lies that Iago planted into his brain, " the Moor [']s already changed with [his] poison. Dangerous conceits are in their nature's poison which at the first are scarce found to distaste" (Shakespeare 3. 3. 335-337). Othello loves his wife so much that when he found out about the affair he reacted with

extreme anger, envying the both of them. Othello's envy continues to grow as Iago provides him with more evidence that Desdemona has been unfaithful, the handkerchief in Cassio's room was enough for Othello to prove that Desdemona had cheated on him, because Othello views it as if she threw away their marriage.

Othello values love while Iago sees love as a game and knows exactly how to play it. Resentment in marriages is a common barrier to having an unhealthy relationship. Othello's jealousy was so strong "thus when thou art dead, and [he] will kill thee And love after. One more tie and this is the last" (Shakespeare 5. 2. 19-21). Bitterness and anger are an individual's emotional reactions to believing the scenarios planted into the brain that may or may not even be true. He was so caught up in thinking about the affair, Othello never once tried to hear Desdemona's plea of innocence. As a result he killed his wife to get rid of her uncommitted sin. He loved her so much that no one else can have her and he realized that he could not live without her and results in his suicide.

Overall, *Gone Girl* and *Othello* share similarities because of infidelity in their marriages. Indignation in marriages is a central barrier to having a healthy relationship. Both Amy and Othello believe that if they cannot be with their spouses, then no one else can. There are a number of factors that can lead to outbreaks of sociopathic acts. In this case, the feeling of loneliness, powerlessness and resentment are what drive Amy Dunne's, Othello's to their outbreaks. In both these novels, jealousy was what opens the door to their sociopathic acts. They want to destroy each other and would do

anything in order for them to satisfy their ambition. In conclusion, Infidelity in marriages from *Gone Girl*, by Gillian Flynn and Shakespeare's *Othello*, brought out the emotions of loneliness from a lack a communication, feeling powerless from spouse dominance and jealousy that lead to outbreaks of sociopathic acts, which affect the livelihoods of *Othello* and *Desdemona's* relationship along with *Nick* and *Amy's*.

The two novels had similarities and differences in the major theme. In *Gone Girl* it is shown that *Nick* does have an affair whereas in *Othello*, *Desdemona* is only suspected of infidelity, when in reality she had remained faithful to the moor the entire time. In addition *Othello* and *Amy's* actions benefited themselves, but however ruins their partners' image, and results in a downfall for each of them.

Lastly, the novel shows differences in the purpose of events. In *Gone Girl*, *Amy* made her psychotic plan to ruin her partner because of jealousy. However, in *Othello*, he did it out of love no matter what the consequences were. In the novels it is portrayed that *Othello* and *Amy* both had the same motivations, if they couldn't have their loved ones, then no one can. Their selfish needs brought them to this outcome. *Othello* made it clear by killing *Desdemona*, resulting in him killing himself because he couldn't live without her. *Amy* however manipulated *Nick* into staying with her, because she impregnated herself with his child. Although *Othello* and *Amy* had ulterior motives, everything revolved around their spouse's infidelity in their marriages and their actions lead to them having a sociopathic outbreak in their marriages.