

Shakespeare's Othello is solely responsible for his downfall

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There are several themes present in Othello, but the downfall of our hero, Othello, is at the middle of it all. While the average reader might be quick to blame Iago for this tragedy, in this essay I will show you how Othello was actually responsible for his downfall for a variety of reasons. To start with, Iago seems to be Othello's friend, but when you look closely at their relationship, you will see that Iago is actually very manipulative and allowing himself to be manipulated is one reason for Othello's eventual downfall. This part of Othello's character makes him gullible and more susceptible to being mistreated by Iago.

The more time that goes by, the more Iago manipulates Othello and this gives Iago more and more control over Othello as he gains Othello's absolute trust. In addition to being manipulated by Iago, Othello is entirely too trusting of him. He places his trust in Iago without realizing that his so-called friend is actually mistreating him. Many will say that this trusting nature means the blame can be given to Othello for his own downfall. Combined with Iago's manipulation, Othello may never have stood a chance of preventing his own tragic ending. Because Othello is not a native Venetian, Iago has another bit of control over him.

Othello isn't privy to all of the nuances and cultural ideals in Venice, which gives Iago another way to keep him in the dark and control his actions to some degree. Rather than giving Othello the truth, Iago misleads him about Venetian culture and Venetian women, making Othello look silly and naive. This eventually leads to jealousy and a questioning of his wife, Desdemona. This jealousy takes over Othello's existence and Iago exploits these feelings by keeping Othello in the dark about the culture in Venice so that he never

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really knows what is going on. Over time, Iago's manipulation and lies cause Othello to kill Desdemona in an effort to keep her from doing the things that Iago has been telling him she has been doing.

That includes having an affair, which Iago makes Othello believe is a normal part of the culture in Venice. However, he loves Desdemona and doesn't want to think about her in the arms of another man. Killing her seems to be the answer to keeping her from doing the same to him again. While Othello is a noble and upstanding man with the experience of being a soldier, his ultimate downfall comes from the traits that go with those things. He's trusting and believes the best of people, which blinds him to the fact that Iago is using and manipulating him for Iago's own benefit. Othello may be the cause of his own downfall because he fails to understand that not all people are as good as he is and that everyone isn't out for the good of others.

Othello should have been a bit more open minded to whether or not Iago had his best interests in mind so that he could have been more aware of what was truly going on, allowing him to place his trust in Iago even though he was up to no good. In this essay, I have demonstrated why Othello could possibly take the blame for his own downfall. He wasn't prepared for the person Iago was and his love of Desdemona and his gullibility and naivete got in the way of his true understanding of the whole picture. What do you think? Can we as readers blame Othello and say that he got what was coming to him? Or was he simply the victim of the evil Iago?