

# Othello Topic Tracking: Jealousy

Jealousy 1: The play opens with a discussion of jealousy. Iago is upset because Othello selected Michael Cassio as his lieutenant. He is jealous of Cassio's position both in the military and with Othello's service. This initial jealousy is the catalyst for the play's sequential plot of mixed jealousy and destruction.

Jealousy 2: Brabantio is partially jealous of the Moor for stealing his daughter's love. He no longer may be the most important man in Desdemona's life. Furthermore, Roderigo is in love with Desdemona, and is slightly jealous of her relationship with Othello.

Jealousy 3: The lovesick Roderigo has trouble with his hidden feelings for Desdemona and is jealous watching the two in love. He follows Iago's directions easily, perhaps partially because of his jealousy of Othello's relationship with Desdemona.

Jealousy 4: Iago openly divulges his plan of destruction, which incorporates jealousy as the key factor. He intends to create a strong sense of jealousy in Othello by setting up the mirage of an affair between Desdemona and Cassio.

Jealousy 5: Iago plants seeds of jealousy in Othello and then speaks of the 'green-eyed monster' as a force to be feared. Jealousy is personified as a monster.

Jealousy 6: When Iago tells Othello of the handkerchief, he has the evidence necessary to prove Desdemona's unfaithfulness. It is now that the jealousy sinks deep into Othello's soul and starts to vividly destroy his psyche.

Jealousy 7: Bianca, Cassio's common lover, also becomes sick with jealousy. She sees the planted handkerchief in Cassio's room and believes him to also have taken a lover. Her jealousy exists on a much smaller scale, but illustrates that the sentiment is universal.

Jealousy 8: As the play concludes, all causes of jealousy are proved false. Desdemona was never unfaithful, but Othello realizes the truth too late. Jealousy is the source of pain and death for these tragic characters; the green-eyed monster has succeeded in killing them.

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