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## 2500 Years of Selling Sex: How Much Has Changed?

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Oral Presentation O12.2

**2500 YEARS OF SELLING SEX: HOW MUCH HAS CHANGED?**

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This paper examines the business of prostitution in ancient Greece and contemporary America. How much has changed in 2500 years? Focusing narrowly on the human aspect of the industry, this paper argues that there is continuity, not only in the type of women who engage in prostitution but also in the stigma placed upon such women from antiquity to today. Women engaging in prostitution today, particularly the lower class "streetwalkers", bear attributes similar to the pornai of ancient Greece, as women of less than full citizen status. Unable to utilize or access the privileges of citizenship, these women turn towards prostitution as a means of survival. In addition, the passage of 2500 years has not erased the stigma placed upon women in the sex trade. Women now, as in antiquity, are faced with hostile reactions towards their profession by a shame based society. These striking parallels indicate the continuity of the human aspect of prostitution.