

ARTH #362

RENAISSANCE WOMAN: PROSPEROUS ENTREPRENEUR OF SEX TRADE.

GENDER + SEXUALITY IN RENNAISANCE
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BUSINESS MODEL / DEC. 2019



PROJECT SYNOPSIS

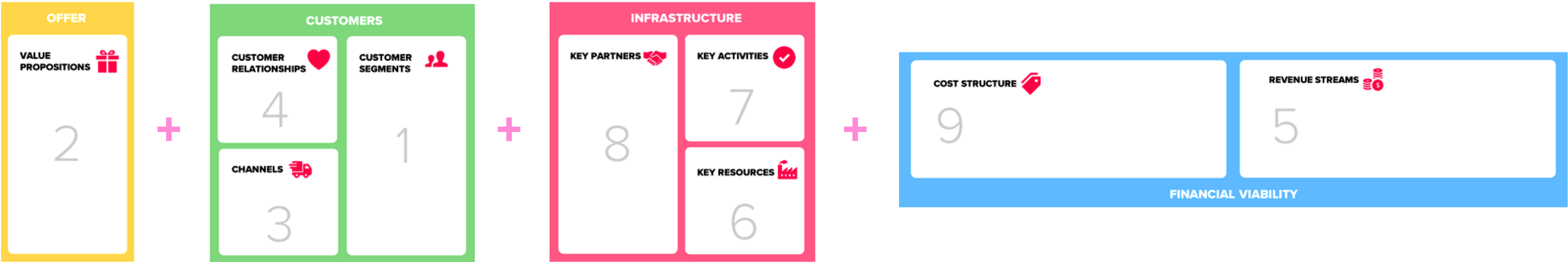
Black Plague, gender separation, homosocial behavior, and several other factors during the early Renaissance have encouraged the Italian government to legalize and promote prostitution. While it had a negative impact on sex-workers and their status in society, the encouragement of prostitution had also opened a lot of opportunities for women: in Venice, women would run brothels and many high-level courtesans used the opportunity of sexual work to establish their financial and social independence. In 1358 Venetian government established an office to encourage prostitution, and in my project, I want to **explore the business possibilities** that the state of Venice could have considered along with the social implication of such legislation.

I will create a business project proposal (using **Business Model Canvas**) to capture the context in which the Renaissance brothel business was established. I will describe the customer segment and how, where and when the services were offered. This proposal will also include the understanding of gender differences and will suggest an entrepreneurial structure to fit the social model of renaissance time.

WHAT IS BUSINESS MODEL?

A **business model** describes the thought behind of how an organization creates, delivers, and captures value, in economic, social, cultural contexts, which is a part of a business strategy.

Business Model Canvas is a visual tool to convey all the business elements to the viewer. It captures core aspects of a business, including purpose, business process, target customers, offerings, strategies, infrastructure, organizational structures, sourcing, trading practices, and operational processes and policies including culture. It **tells the story** of a certain segment of business in a certain time.



ENVIRONMENT SCAN

- a) 1350-1450 - the bubonic plague **slows down the economy of cities**
- b) 1358 - **legalization of prostitution** in Venice
- c) Venetian and Florentine **reproduction concern**.
- d) Public **interest increased in sodomy**.
- e) Prostitution **is not taxed**.
- f) **Women of lower class** are looking for the ways to make money.



INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Prostitution has been considered one of “the oldest professions”. It is clear that the brothels have been around for centuries and 14th-15th century Venice is not an exception. However, before the legalization of 1358, prostitution was more spread around Venice, and both the council (Quarantia or “Council of Forty” - Venetian judicial body) and Capisestieri (mayor of 6 districts) had very little control and power over brothels and the income of such businesses. Through the series of legislations in 1358, 1406, 1410 and 1423, Quarantia monetized prostitution to serve a bigger social purpose of controlling an unethical behavior that goes against the church and “avoiding sodomitic sexual practices”. Soon enough it was called a “**necessary evil**”.



CUSTOMER - MARKET FIT

1. The inability for families to pay dowries, gender separation and prefixed roles - all of it had increased homosocial practices. Many young boys are assaulted on the streets as older men try to reduce their sexual frustration. These men are the **primary target audience**.

2. An increase in trade is drawing more tourists and merchants to the city of Venice who travel far from their families. They are looking for ways to entertain themselves and spend quality time in the city. This is the **secondary target audience**.



ABOUT

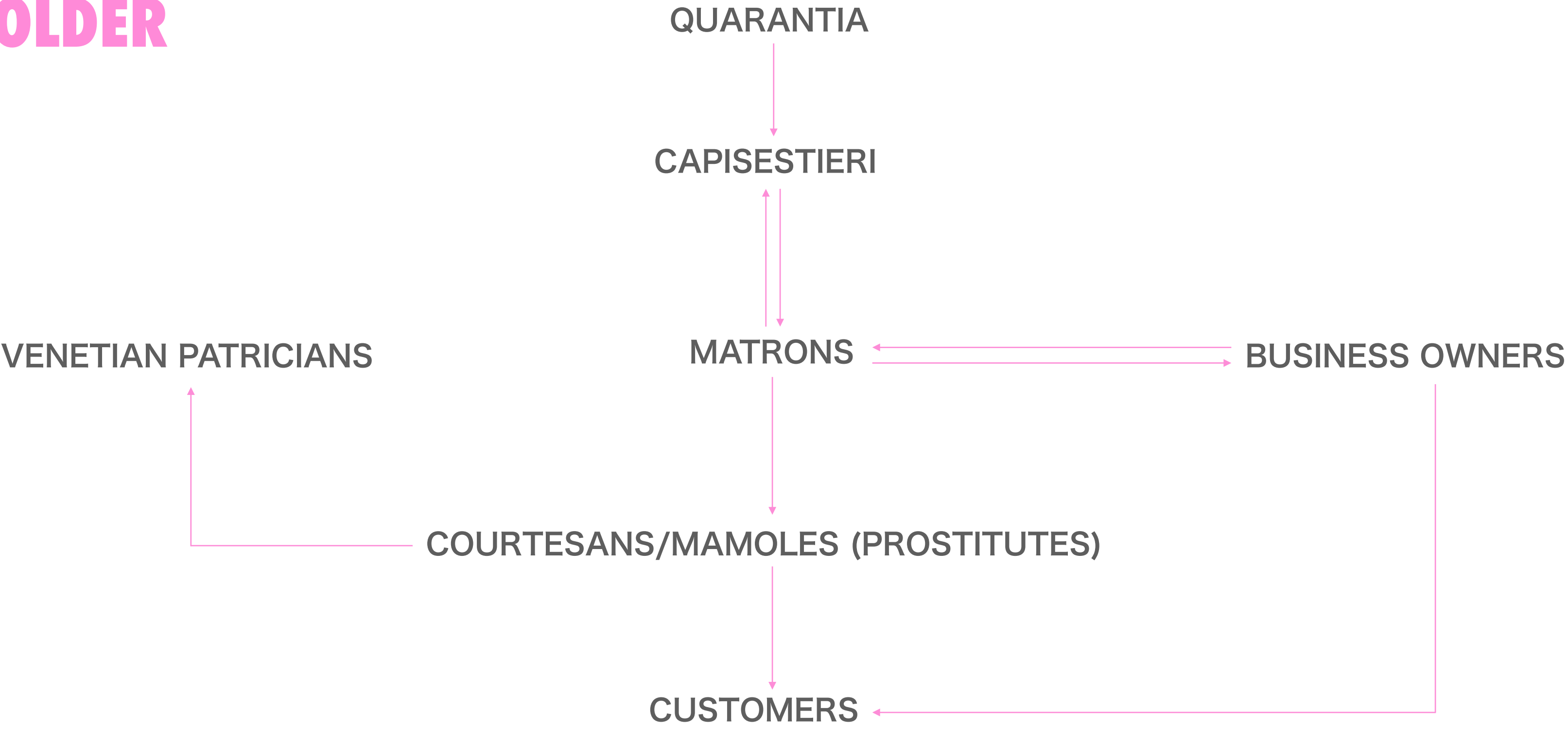
The network of brothels "**Quasi Santo**" aims to create a more balanced and more socially responsible Venetian community as well as to decrease the temptation of the sin of sodomy. "Quasi Santo" will do so by providing affordable sexual services to men of different socio-economic statuses.

ENTREPRENEUR










Located in Rialto area of Venice, "**Quasi Santo**" is managed by a middle-age and experienced in sex-trade business **matron**. Even though the government has established the rules of prostitution, the matron is responsible for day-to-day operations, financial and human capital management. She is also in charge of the interior design of brothels, trying to create a feeling of beauty and luxury. She is well connected and therefore can find good deals for everyday assets that are needed to run the business smoothly.



STAKEHOLDER
MAP



BMC

<div>Key Partners</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Church</div><div>2. Capisestieri (mayor of Venice)</div><div>3. Small local businesses</div><div>4. Taverns</div><div>5. Stuazzaroli (second-hand retailers for furniture, dresses, fabrics)</div></div>	<div>Key Activities</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Management of resources: accounting, HR, assets assessment.</div><div>2. Communication strategy to report to Capisestieri and his notary.</div><div>3. Negotiation</div><div>4. Marketing (client-service match)</div></div>	<div>Value Propositions</div> <div></div> <div><div>"Quasi Santo" aims to create a more balanced and socially responsible Venetian community as well as to decrease the temptation of the sin of sodomy. "Quasi Santo" will do so by providing affordable sexual services to men of different socio-economic statues.</div></div>	<div>Customer Relationships</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Strictly professional</div><div>2. Romantic (preferred by church, as an excuse to “save” prostitutes from sinning lifestyle)</div></div>	<div>Customer Segments</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. 23 - 47 y.o. males</div><div>2. Upper - lower class</div><div>3. Middle class</div><div>4. Lower - upper class</div><div>5. Visitors, inns. merchants, travelers.</div></div>
	<div>Key Resources</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Trust with local businesses to give credit</div><div>2. Connections</div><div>3. Human capital</div></div>		<div>Channels</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Matrons/small business owners’ connections</div><div>2. Streets near Castelletto</div><div>3. Rialto Area “alle volte de Rialto”</div><div>4. Taverns / Night visits</div><div>IF AT NIGHT OR OUT OF RENTED PLACES ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY MATRONS</div></div>	
<div>Cost Structure</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Brothel rent</div><div>2. Furniture and interior</div><div>3. Outfits</div><div>4. Security</div><div>5. Taxes</div></div>			<div>Revenue Streams</div> <div></div> <div><div>1. Service Sale</div><div>2. Partnership with taverns</div><div>3. Loans</div></div>	

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CONCLUSION

Analyzing the socio-economic and cultural forces of 14th century Italy, it is evident that the sex-trade business is a profitable sector. It does not only provide work opportunities for many females, who otherwise could not have been able to attain any income, but also develops brothel related businesses such as gambling, wine selling, tourism, and trade.



THANK YOU.