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## **Court rules on "deeply rooted perception" about women still persisting in the workplace**

When we consider gender harassment, we usually think about situations where gender bias is clear - unequal pay for the same work, where the only difference between the workers is gender; or direct (and often derogatory) comments about gender (i.e., statements like "this is a man's world," or excuses for mistreatment of women workers in "male-dominated" workplaces).

In the recent case [Parker v. Reema](#), the gender discrimination was far more subtle in nature. Rumors about the plaintiff, Parker, were being circulated by a jealous male coworker, Pickett. Word was being spread that Parker essentially slept her way to the top, and Pickett went as far as filing a hostile work

environment complaint against Parker for her alleged "inappropriate behavior." Consequentially, Parker's coworkers began to alienate her and her manager blamed her and derailed her career progress. When Parker complained to human resources, they failed to stop or even investigate the rumors, allowed Parker to be the victim of a truly hostile work environment orchestrated by Pickett, and shortly fired her.

Thankfully, the court astutely identified the gender stereotyping in this case as "***a deeply rooted perception - one that unfortunately still persists - that generally women, not men, use sex to achieve success.***" The court went on to point out the double standard in which "***women, but not men, are susceptible to being labelled as 'sluts' or worse, prostitutes selling their bodies for gain.***"

If you are a victim of gender stereotyping in your workplace, please call us at (404) 487-0922 for a complimentary consultation and information about steps you can take to protect yourself.

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## **Get To Know Our Team**

### **Kathy Harrington Sullivan**

**Partner, Barrett & Farahany, LLP**



Kathy Harrington Sullivan is a Partner at Barrett & Farahany, LLP and manages the firm's case evaluation team. Because knowledge truly is power, Kathy and the Atlanta employment attorneys on her team regularly consult with and empower potential clients by helping them to understand the law, clarifying what their rights are as employees, and determining what steps they can take to protect themselves and their jobs.

Prior to joining Barrett & Farahany, LLP in 2015, Kathy was a practicing patent attorney and also volunteered with a variety of local & national legal

organizations, including the Georgia Association for Women Lawyers (GAWL), Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF), Atlanta Legal Aid Society, and the CARA Pro Bono Asylum/Immigration Project. [Read more.](#)

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