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## The Stoic Who Didn't Know It: The University of Wyoming College of Law's First Woman Graduate Hazel Bowman Kerper

Lindsay Hoyt

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## THE STOIC WHO DIDN'T KNOW IT: THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING COLLEGE OF LAW'S FIRST WOMAN GRADUATE HAZEL BOWMAN KERPER

*Lindsay Hoyt\**

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Whatever happens to you has been waiting to happen since the beginning of time. The twining strands of fate wove both of them together.

—Marcus Aurelius<sup>1</sup>

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\* Assistant Dean and graduate of the University of Wyoming College of Law. I want to thank my parents for teaching me the value of education, and for their unwavering love. I want to thank Nate, Sam, and Romy for giving me purpose and the gift of family. Thank you to TaLise Hansen for her help in bringing this article to publication. Last but not least, I want to thank Jill Kerper Mora, whose stories and information about her mother, Hazel Bowman Kerper, brought this article to life.

<sup>1</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, MEDITATIONS 188 (Gregory Hays trans., Modern Library ed. 2002).

Brutus kept waking up with night sweats, and Porcia knew something was wrong. He had been going through something, she knew that much. But when Porcia asked what troubled Brutus, he put her off. Understanding that as his wife, *just a wife*, she was not to be trusted with matters of importance. Porcia took issue with that common sentiment, and determined to prove herself to Brutus, she stabbed herself in the leg with a barber's knife. The gash in her thigh was so deep there was consistent blood flow, which she let continue for the day. As a result of the wound, she suffered from violent pains, chills, and fever.<sup>2</sup>

After an afternoon of bleeding out, Porcia went to Brutus and at the height of her suffering, she showed him her self-inflicted wound. She explained she wanted to prove to Brutus that she could be trusted with even his most dangerous secrets, under duress and even torture. This would exemplify both Porcia's trustworthiness and fortitude. Brutus marveled at Porcia's suffering, and as a result Brutus entrusted Porcia with his great secret—the famous conspiracy to assassinate Julius Caesar on the Ides of March in 44 BC. Porcia's self-inflicted stab wound symbolizes modeled Stoicism, the ancient Greek philosophy that is “a tool in the pursuit of self-mastery, perseverance, and wisdom.”<sup>3</sup> Having been introduced to Stoicism by her father, Cato the Younger<sup>4</sup>, Porcia dedicated herself early to the philosophy.<sup>5</sup> She is only one of a few women consistently named as an ancient woman stoic. More notable Stoic figures are recognizable names like Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and Seneca. While physics and logic configured into the initial and early components of Stoic philosophy, the more practical (and popular) side of the philosophy is Stoic ethics.<sup>6</sup> To be a Stoic is to pursue wisdom and virtue, and in their pursuit, the practicing Stoic is protected from things outside their control. Instead, Stoics focus on what they are can control, including their emotions and their intellect.<sup>7</sup>

While Porcia devoted herself to Stoicism, it likely did not cross Hazel Bowman Kerper's mind when she became the first female law student at the University of

<sup>2</sup> PLUTARCH, *THE PARALLEL LIVES* (Loeb Classical Library ed. 1918), reproduced at [penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Brutus\\*.html](https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Brutus*.html) [https://perma.cc/89M3-SDJG].

<sup>3</sup> *What Is Stoicism? A Definition & 9 Stoic Exercises to Get You Started: Stoic Exercises, Wisdom, and More*, DAILY STOIC, [dailystoic.com/what-is-stoicism-a-definition-3-stoic-exercises-to-get-you-started/#what-is-stoicism](https://dailystoic.com/what-is-stoicism-a-definition-3-stoic-exercises-to-get-you-started/#what-is-stoicism) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/5DFY-8ZY8] [hereinafter *What Is Stoicism?*].

<sup>4</sup> Cato the Younger, otherwise known as Marcus Porcius Cato, was a politician and enemy of Julius Caesar. *Who Is Cato? Roman Senator. Mortal Enemy of Julius Caesar.*, DAILY STOIC, [dailystoic.com/cato/](https://dailystoic.com/cato/) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/DM95-FB2A].

<sup>5</sup> RYAN HOLIDAY & STEPHEN HANSELMAN, *LIVES OF THE STOICS: THE ART OF LIVING FROM ZENO TO MARCUS AURELIUS 154* (2020).

<sup>6</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, *supra* note 1.

<sup>7</sup> *The Stoics*, BRITANNICA, [www.britannica.com/topic/ethics-philosophy/The-Stoics](https://www.britannica.com/topic/ethics-philosophy/The-Stoics) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021).

Wyoming.<sup>8</sup> Maybe it did. While we will never know whether Hazel intentionally lived Stoically or not, Hazel's life embodied Stoicism. Although women did not typically go to law school in the early twentieth century, let alone work outside the home, these norms had little consequence to Hazel. They actually became her route to leading the life she desired. Marcus Aurelius said, "The mind adapts and converts to its own purposes the obstacle to our acting. The impediment to action advances action. What stands in the way becomes the way."<sup>9</sup> Hazel Bowman Kerper's life lived out this idea.

Through the lens of ancient Stoicism to its applications in modern times, this paper focuses on how Hazel Bowman Kerper, the first female graduate of the University of Wyoming College of Law, lived a Stoic life. First, it briefly describes the history of Stoicism. Second, it explains the four Stoic virtues. Third, it discusses three modern day examples of Stoic women. Finally, it concludes by exploring how Hazel embodied the four Stoic virtues throughout her life.

Objective judgement, now at this very moment. Unselfish action, now at this very moment. Willing acceptance – now, at this very moment – of all external events. That's all you need.

—Marcus Aurelius<sup>10</sup>

## II. STOICISM—A BRIEF HISTORY

Stoicism is a philosophy founded over 2,000 years ago.<sup>11</sup> Originating in the teachings of Socrates and Plato, Zeno of Citium founded Stoicism in Athens in the early third century, BC, when he wrecked his ship, lost everything, but discovered the philosophy in the process.<sup>12</sup> Although discovered by Zeno, a triad of the most prominent ancient Stoics, and some of the most prolific followers of the philosophy, are from the later Stoic era: Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and Seneca.<sup>13</sup>

Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher king of the Roman Empire, became the most well-known of these three men.<sup>14</sup> Born in 121 CE, Marcus Aurelius' life was defined early by the loss of his father.<sup>15</sup> He became king of Rome by the

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<sup>8</sup> University of Wyoming College of Law Records.

<sup>9</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, *supra* note 1, at 116.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* at 174.

<sup>11</sup> Massimo Pigliucci, *Stoicism*, INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY, iep.utm.edu/stoicism/ (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/2XT6-2SAU].

<sup>12</sup> WILLIAM B. IRVINE, A GUIDE TO THE GOOD LIFE: THE ANCIENT ART OF STOIC JOY 4 (2008).

<sup>13</sup> HOLIDAY & HANSELMAN, *supra* note 5, at 184, 250, 278.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 280.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

age of forty-one.<sup>16</sup> Renowned for his honor, honesty, compassion, generosity, and dignity, this quote best embodies his philosophy: “Do the right thing. The rest doesn’t matter.”<sup>17</sup> His book *Meditations* lives and breathes as one of the most famous Stoic texts. Far from perfection but always striving to be the ultimate pragmatist, Marcus Aurelius remains a Stoic role model even to this day, as his book *Meditations* is still known for its modern-day accessibility.

An early influence on Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus predates him by almost fifty years. Born into slavery, Epictetus could not have lived a more different life than Marcus Aurelius.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, his unique outlook coupled with his sheer persistence made him “the ultimate symbol of the ability of human beings to find true freedom in the darkest of circumstances.”<sup>19</sup> His commitment to freedom translated into him becoming a teacher who preached humility, and whose teachings were translated by students who loved and revered him.<sup>20</sup>

Even before Epictetus came Seneca, born in 4 BC, evidently destined for greatness as the son of a wealthy writer, Seneca the Elder.<sup>21</sup> Seneca the Younger made major contributions to Stoic philosophy.<sup>22</sup> He became a statesman, a dramatist, and Rome’s leading intellectual figure in the mid-first century. While Seneca’s writings consist of part discussions of ethical theory and part practical advice, Seneca had extremely practical views on Stoic philosophy—he considered it “a balm for the wounds of life.”<sup>23</sup>

These three philosophers demonstrate how universal the application of Stoicism is intended to be. Stoicism is designed for a spectrum of extremes, from extreme adversity to extreme success and everything in between. Rather than just a theoretical practice, Stoicism may be practically integrated into everyday life.

But where are the Stoic women? In Ancient Rome, society reduced women to their roles as wives, mothers, and daughters, giving them little to no opportunity of forging their paths as men did, through teaching, writing, and politics.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> ANTHONY R. BIRLEY, *MARCUS AURELIUS: A BIOGRAPHY* 31, 116 (2000).

<sup>17</sup> *The Important Thing Is to Do the Right Thing*, DAILY STOIC, [www.dailystoic.com/the-important-thing-is-to-do-the-right-thing/](http://www.dailystoic.com/the-important-thing-is-to-do-the-right-thing/) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/AT5B-TYJ3>].

<sup>18</sup> *Who is Epictetus? From Slave to World’s Most Sought After Philosopher*, DAILY STOIC, [dailystoic.com/epictetus/](http://dailystoic.com/epictetus/) (last visited Apr. 20, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/TN7T-6LSH>].

<sup>19</sup> HOLIDAY & HANSELMAN, *supra* note 5, at 252.

<sup>20</sup> HOLIDAY & HANSELMAN, *supra* note 5.

<sup>21</sup> Seneca the Elder was a wealthy Roman writer.

<sup>22</sup> HOLIDAY & HANSELMAN, *supra* note 5, at 191.

<sup>23</sup> MARCIA L. COLISH, *FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES: I THE STOIC TRADITION FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES* 14 (1985).

<sup>24</sup> Mark Cartwright, *The Role of Women in the Roman World*, WORLD HIST. ENCYCLOPEDIA (Feb. 22, 2014), [www.ancient.eu/article/659/the-role-of-women-in-the-roman-world/#:~:text=](http://www.ancient.eu/article/659/the-role-of-women-in-the-roman-world/#:~:text=)

Although the Stoic philosophers intended Stoicism to be, truly, for everyone, society forced women like Porcia Catonis to resort to grandiose gestures to be seen and heard.

Similar to Porcia, society forced another ancient stoic woman named Fannia to make a grand gesture despite Pliny the Younger describing her as a woman of “fortitude and respectability.”<sup>25</sup> As part of the “Stoic Opposition” against Nero, historians describe her as a political rebel.<sup>26</sup> Fannia followed her husband Helvidius Priscus twice into exile, once for sympathizing with Brutus, and she was actually exiled herself after requesting another Stoic, Herennius Seneco, to write a biography in praise of her late husband.<sup>27</sup> Herennius was executed for entertaining this request, but during his trial, when Fannia was asked if she commissioned the biography, she confidently admitted it was her doing, and that she even provided her husband’s diaries to Herennius for the book.<sup>28</sup> Pliny the Younger wrote that Fannia “did not utter a single word to reduce the danger to herself.”<sup>29</sup> He further extolled her Stoic nature:

Only her spirit is vigorous, worth of her husband and father . . .  
It pains me that so great a woman will be snatched from the eyes  
of her people, and who knows when her like will be seen again.  
What chastity, what sanctity, what dignity, what constancy!

. . .

How pleasant she is, how kind, how respectable and amiable at once – two qualities rarely found in the same person. Indeed, she will be a woman whom later we can show our wives, from whose fortitude men too can draw an example, whom now while we can still see and hear her, we admire as much as those women whom we read about. To me, her very house seems to totter on the brink of collapse, shaken at its foundations, even though she leaves descendants. How great must be their virtues and their accomplishments from her not to die the last of her line.<sup>30</sup>

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Women%20In%20Wider%20Society,any%20position%20of%20political%20responsibility.&text=Lower%20class%20Roman%20women%20did,to%20work%20for%20a%20living [https://perma.cc/SCB2-YNQ2].

<sup>25</sup> *Lady Stoics #2: Fannia*, DONALD ROBERTSON (Apr. 14, 2017), donaldrobertson.name/2017/04/14/lady-stoics-2-fannia/ [https://perma.cc/9PJM-CEPW].

<sup>26</sup> JO-ANN SHELTON, *THE WOMEN OF PLINY’S LETTERS* 55–68 (2017).

<sup>27</sup> *Id.*

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> Letter from Pliny the Younger to Priscus (A.D. 107) (on file at diotima-doctafemina.org/translations/anthologies/womens-life-in-greece-and-rome-selections/vi-public-life/172-on-fannia/) [https://perma.cc/6XA6-NNEE].

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

Fannia’s “vigorous” spirit embodied the central virtues of stoicism.<sup>31</sup> Facing repeated exile, her strength in the face of hardship solidifies her as one of the few historical examples of a Stoic woman. Even though her house “totter[ed] on the brink of collapse,” she knew the crises she faced were temporary and a matter of perception. Fannia’s calm demeanor and ability to guard her emotions modeled self-control—she accepted her fate with true Stoicism.

Today, the term “stoic” can colloquially describe someone who remains calm under pressure, or even someone who is emotionless. The modern definition is to be “not affected by or showing passion or feeling.”<sup>32</sup> Yet, the general idea behind Stoicism, the *philosophy*, is simply to not worry about things outside of one’s control—weather, death, and other people’s opinions, for example. Instead, control the things you can. Marcus Aurelius stated, “Objective judgment, now, at this very moment. Unselfish action, now, at this very moment. Willing acceptance—now, at this very moment—of all external events. That’s all you need.”<sup>33</sup> He says in his book *Meditations*:

You take things you don’t control and define them as ‘good’ or ‘bad.’ And so of course when the ‘bad’ things happen, or the ‘good’ ones don’t you blame the gods and feel hatred for the people responsible—or those you decide to make responsible. Much of our bad behavior stems from trying to apply those criteria. If we limited ‘good’ and ‘bad’ to our own actions, we’d have no call to challenge God, or to treat other people as enemies.<sup>34</sup>

Marcus Aurelius believed Stoicism appears “to leave no room for human free will or moral responsibility.”<sup>35</sup> In reality, the Stoics resisted accepting such an arrangement and attempted to get around the difficulty by defining free will as a voluntary accommodation to what is in any case inevitable. According to this theory, “man is like a dog tied to a moving wagon. If the dog refuses to run along with the wagon he will be dragged by it, yet the choice remains his: to run or be dragged.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> *Stoic*, MERRIAM-WEBSTER, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stoic](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stoic) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/S4TM-DHRE>].

<sup>33</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, *supra* note 1, at 175–77.

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at 134.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.* at 15.

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

## III. THE FOUR VIRTUES OF STOICISM

So, to run and not be dragged, Stoicism gives its followers a framework to follow. Stoicism centers around four fundamental cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance.<sup>37</sup> The idea is that life hinges on these four virtues and having the ability to face every situation with at least one of these qualities improves the situation.

First, said by some to be the most important virtue, and the source from which the other virtues flow, is wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to make the best decision under any circumstance and “our ability to discern the value of different external things rationally . . . knowing the nature between good and bad.”<sup>38</sup> Wisdom is the ability to see things as they are, with objectivity. Stoics define wisdom as “the knowledge of things good and evil and of what is neither good nor evil . . . knowledge of what we ought to choose, what we ought to beware of, and what is indifferent.”<sup>39</sup>

Second, courage—courage is the mettle to face unpleasant situations or people. Courage is probably the most basic virtue, because it is the most simply explained. Courage is the act of being brave and facing challenges head on. Simple as that idea is, life is full of challenges, which the Stoics knew full well. Seneca said it best—“Sometimes even to live is an act of courage.”<sup>40</sup>

Maybe most resonant in the legal field, justice is the third Stoic virtue. But this “justice” differs from the modern definition—Stoic justice is simply doing the right thing, and centers around social justice—goodwill. It is the shared pursuit toward a “common welfare of mankind.”<sup>41</sup> To pursue justice is to endeavor to help others, in capacities large and small. Justice is best summed up by Marcus Aurelius, who said, “Do the right thing, the rest doesn’t matter.”<sup>42</sup>

Finally, the fourth virtue, is temperance, which simply means balance.<sup>43</sup> Temperance is knowing what to do, what not to do, and when. Temperance is not

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<sup>37</sup> Zeno used Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato’s writing. PLATO, *REPUBLIC* bk. IV 426–35; see also *What Do the Stoic Virtues Mean?*, DONALD ROBERTSON (Jan. 18, 2018), [donaldrobertson.name/2018/01/18/what-do-the-stoic-virtues-mean/](https://perma.cc/52L4-W4DX) [https://perma.cc/52L4-W4DX].

<sup>38</sup> *What Do the Stoic Virtues Mean?*, *supra* note 37.

<sup>39</sup> *The Highest Good: An Introduction to the 4 Stoic Virtues*, DAILY STOIC, [dailystoic.com/4-stoic-virtues/](https://perma.cc/79V2-TLHG) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/79V2-TLHG].

<sup>40</sup> Massimo Pigliucci, *The Philosophy of Stoicism*, TED ED, [ed.ted.com/lessons/the-philosophy-of-stoicism-massimo-pigliucci](https://perma.cc/MBQ7-X8EL) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/MBQ7-X8EL].

<sup>41</sup> Donald J. Robertson, *The Stoic Virtues and Code of Honor*, MEDIUM (Aug. 23, 2019), [medium.com/stoicism-philosophy-as-a-way-of-life/the-stoic-virtues-and-code-of-honor-2141ceae095f](https://perma.cc/5VVD-5P9P) [https://perma.cc/5VVD-5P9P].

<sup>42</sup> *The Important Thing Is to Do the Right Thing*, *supra* note 17.

<sup>43</sup> *What Is Stoicism?*, *supra* note 3.



eating too much or too little. Temperance is not arguing too much or too little. Temperance is not working too much or too little. Finding true balance might be the most Stoic act of all.

Just remember: you can endure anything your mind can make  
endurable, by treating it as in your interest to do so.

—Marcus Aurelius<sup>44</sup>

Stoicism is enjoying a resurgence in pop culture, thanks in large part to the book *The Obstacle is the Way*, by Ryan Holiday, and celebrities who have adopted the philosophy— actor and former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, rapper LL Cool J, and New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick.<sup>45</sup> Not only is its celebrity following increasing, Stoicism’s online platform is only growing— large Facebook and Reddit groups are devoted to Stoicism; and thousands of YouTube videos highlight the philosophy. There is even Stoicon, an annual conference for “fans” of Stoicism to gather and listen to speakers and experts on Stoicism.<sup>46</sup> For easy, quick, twenty-first century style consumption, the original academic writings that comprise Stoic philosophy are boiled down to quotes and snippets, useful creeds that add up to a belief system.

While Stoicism was “built for hard times,” it is just as applicable today as it was in ancient Rome.<sup>47</sup> Stoicism today is a true lifehack—it offers a promising path out of challenging times, or at the very least, a way of addressing them in the moment.

#### IV. MODERN DAY STOIC WOMEN

As history progressed, more modern examples of Stoic women began to appear, though in less fatalistic ways. Rather than stabbing themselves to earn trust and further evolve, women started to advance their place in society and greater civilization. Three women embody modern day examples of Stoic women: Amelia Earhart, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

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<sup>44</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, *supra* note 1, at 186.

<sup>45</sup> Greg Bishop, *How a Book on Stoicism Became Wildly Popular at Every Level of the NFL*, SPORTS ILLUSTRATED (Dec. 7, 2015), [www.si.com/nfl/2015/12/08/ryan-holiday-nfl-stoicism-book-pete-carroll-bill-belichick](http://www.si.com/nfl/2015/12/08/ryan-holiday-nfl-stoicism-book-pete-carroll-bill-belichick) [https://perma.cc/7E7K-8YLG]; Jerry Barca, *The Philosophy Book LL Cool J, Schwarzenegger, a Patriots Assistant and Everyone Is Reading*, FORBES (Dec. 13, 2015, 9:19 AM), [www.forbes.com/sites/jerrybarca/2015/12/13/the-philosophy-book-ll-cool-j-schwarzenegger-a-patriots-assistant-and-everyone-is-reading/?sh=54c6ff12cb62](http://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrybarca/2015/12/13/the-philosophy-book-ll-cool-j-schwarzenegger-a-patriots-assistant-and-everyone-is-reading/?sh=54c6ff12cb62).

<sup>46</sup> *Stoicon*, MODERN STOICISM, [modernstoicism.com/stoicon/](http://modernstoicism.com/stoicon/) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/CG97-C57Y].

<sup>47</sup> Kare Anderson, *Five Reasons Why Stoicism Matters Today*, FORBES (Sept. 28, 2012, 7:47 PM), [www.forbes.com/sites/kareanderson/2012/09/28/five-reasons-why-stoicism-matters-today/?sh=5788f56e7a64](http://www.forbes.com/sites/kareanderson/2012/09/28/five-reasons-why-stoicism-matters-today/?sh=5788f56e7a64).

A. *Amelia Earhart*

The most effective way to do it is to do it.

—Amelia Earhart

On June 17, 1928, Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic, but on a conditional offer to do so.<sup>48</sup> She would not be permitted to fly, nor would she be paid, but she accepted the duty of keeping the flight log for the flight in a Fokker F7 dubbed “Friendship.”<sup>49</sup> After the flight, she described herself as a mere passenger by comparing herself to a “sack of potatoes” and vowed to one day try the same flight alone.<sup>50</sup> By taking the figurative and literal backseat on the Friendship, doors opened for Earhart after that flight and she realized her life’s passion. From there, her life revolved around flying, and on May 20, 1932, Earhart flew her own plane across the Atlantic.<sup>51</sup> From that point forward, she continued to set many aviation records all over the world, many of which were also “first woman aviation records,” until her disappearance during the summer of 1937.<sup>52</sup> Earhart saw no other way around entering the aviation field except as a backseat passenger, but she turned a passive opportunity into an active one, and as she said, to do it, she did it.

B. *Eleanor Roosevelt*

You do the thing you think you cannot do.

—Eleanor Roosevelt<sup>53</sup>

A friend of Amelia Earhart’s,<sup>54</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt is the second example of a modern era Stoic woman. Early in her life, Roosevelt’s overwhelming shyness majorly hindered her: “afraid of the dark, afraid of mice, afraid of practically everything.”<sup>55</sup> Compounding her diffidence, her parents and one brother had all

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<sup>48</sup> DORIS L. RICH, *AMELIA EARHART: A BIOGRAPHY* (1st ed. 1989).

<sup>49</sup> MARY S. LOVELL, *THE SOUND OF WINGS, THE LIFE OF AMELIA EARHART* 103 (1st ed. 1989).

<sup>50</sup> *Medal, Amelia Earhart, First Woman to Cross the Atlantic by Airplane*, SMITHSONIAN NAT’L AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM, [airandspace.si.edu/collection-objects/medal-amelia-earhart-first-woman-to-cross-the-atlantic-by-airplane/nasm\\_A19640152000#:~:text=Although%20she%20was%20promised%20time,who%20actually%20flew%20the%20plane](http://airandspace.si.edu/collection-objects/medal-amelia-earhart-first-woman-to-cross-the-atlantic-by-airplane/nasm_A19640152000#:~:text=Although%20she%20was%20promised%20time,who%20actually%20flew%20the%20plane) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/R2NX-H74D>].

<sup>51</sup> LOVELL, *supra* note 49, at 189.

<sup>52</sup> *See generally* LOVELL, *supra* note 49.

<sup>53</sup> ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, *YOU LEARN BY LIVING: ELEVEN KEYS FOR A MORE FULFILLING LIFE* (1960).

<sup>54</sup> LOVELL, *supra* note 49, at 217.

<sup>55</sup> *Id.*

died by the time she reached ten years old. Yet, her persistence to over-come her weakness was dogged. “Painfully, step by step, I learned to stare down each of my fears, conquer it, attain the hard-earned courage to go on to the next. Only then was I really free.”<sup>56</sup>

Overcoming her shyness helped Roosevelt carve her way to greater success during her role as First Lady—a job she never wanted.<sup>57</sup> She shifted notions about the role as a President’s wife and the internal sexism inherent to the job.<sup>58</sup> The job she initially rejected allowed her to transform the role of First Lady from hostess to activist. But Roosevelt’s activism started well before she became First Lady—during the first world war, she volunteered for the Red Cross in New York City and France.<sup>59</sup> Moved by her experiences on the front lines, Roosevelt’s crusade shifted to peace.

While Roosevelt’s activism shifted as First Lady, she also had immense influence on her husband as President, asking him to appoint women to positions of power.<sup>60</sup> She looked beyond FDR’s cabinet, too, and became a champion of racial justice as an advocate for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and National Urban League.<sup>61</sup> Roosevelt overcame a childhood reticence of speaking, and speaking up, to become one of the most revered women in history—and did it all with remarkable Stoicism—“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face.”<sup>62</sup>

### C. *Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

I just try to do the good job I have to the best of my ability and I really don’t think about whether I’m inspirational. I just do the best I can.<sup>63</sup>

—Ruth Bader Ginsburg

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<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ELEANOR ROOSEVELT* 160 (7th ed. 2014).

<sup>58</sup> *Id.* at 164, 171.

<sup>59</sup> *FAQ*, COLOMBIAN COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIS., [erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/faq](http://erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/faq) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/J483-N494>].

<sup>60</sup> Debra Michals, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, NAT’L WOMEN’S HIST. MUSEUM, [www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/eleanor-roosevelt](http://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/eleanor-roosevelt) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/XD6A-49QH>].

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*

<sup>62</sup> ROOSEVELT, *supra* note 53.

<sup>63</sup> IRIN CARMAN & SHANA KNIZHNIK, *NOTORIOUS RBG: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF RUTH BADER GINSBURG* 1 (1st ed. 2015).

Perhaps the most modern, widely recognized embodiment of persistence, and the most relevant example of a modern Stoic women for this audience, is Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Similar to Earhart and Roosevelt before her, her life's facts are well told. Ginsburg enrolled in Harvard Law School in 1956 as one of only nine women—in a class of 500 men.<sup>64</sup> She eventually transferred to Columbia and graduated tied for first in her class in 1959.<sup>65</sup> After graduation, she did not experience an easy path. She had difficulty finding work until a district court judge hired her as a clerk.<sup>66</sup> From there, her career took off and she worked as a professor, lawyer, judge, and finally justice.<sup>67</sup> Her career is famously praised for her broad look at gender discrimination, but in all aspects of her career, people knew Ginsburg best for her calculated and measured approach to the law.

While pursuing her career, Ginsburg raised a family. “You can’t have it all all at once. Over my lifespan, I think I have had it all, but in given periods in time, things were rough.”<sup>68</sup> In an op-ed to the *New York Times* in 2016, Ginsburg pointed out that the term “work-life balance” had not yet been coined when her children were little.<sup>69</sup> She credits the birth of her daughter to her academic success—she was forced, essentially, to compartmentalize her life, and in doing so, she focused on each—motherhood, and work—separately.

When I started law school, my daughter Jane was 14 months. I attribute my success in law school largely to Jane. I went to class about 8:30, and I came home at 4 o'clock. That was children's hour. It was a total break in my day. And children's hour continued until Jane went to sleep. Then, I was happy to go back to the books. So, I felt each part of my life gave me respite from the other. . . . Having Jane gave me a better sense of what life is.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> *Id.* at 31.

<sup>65</sup> *Id.* at 37.

<sup>66</sup> *Id.* at 39.

<sup>67</sup> *Id.* at 39–41. Ginsburg also lived in Sweden to research her book on Swedish Civil Procedure practices.

<sup>68</sup> Elahe Izadi, *Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Advice on Love and Leaning In*, *WASH. POST* (July 31, 2014, 1:07 PM), [www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2014/07/31/ruth-bader-ginsburgs-advice-on-love-and-leaning-in/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2014/07/31/ruth-bader-ginsburgs-advice-on-love-and-leaning-in/).

<sup>69</sup> Ruth Bader Ginsburg, *Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Advice for Living*, *NY TIMES* (Oct. 1, 2016), [www.nytimes.com/2016/10/02/opinion/sunday/ruth-bader-ginsburgs-advice-for-living.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/02/opinion/sunday/ruth-bader-ginsburgs-advice-for-living.html).

<sup>70</sup> Katie Hintz-Zambrano, *Quoted: Ruth Bader Ginsburg*, *MOTHER* (Sept. 18, 2020, 6:00 PM), [www.mothermag.com/ruth-bader-ginsburg-on-motherhood/#:~:text=Quoted%3ARuth%20Bader%20Ginsburg&text=%E2%80%9CWhen%20I%20started%20law%20school,That%20was%20children's%20hour](http://www.mothermag.com/ruth-bader-ginsburg-on-motherhood/#:~:text=Quoted%3ARuth%20Bader%20Ginsburg&text=%E2%80%9CWhen%20I%20started%20law%20school,That%20was%20children's%20hour) (quoting Ruth Bader Ginsburg in *THE ATLANTIC*, 2017) [<https://perma.cc/8QPV-YDXD>].

Over her career, Ginsburg remained matter of fact and resolute to having it all in both family and work, just having each thing in its own time—even if by “in its own time,” that meant one hour for work, and one hour for family. Her unwavering commitment to the law and to her family are legendary. Her ability to compartmentalize showed Stoicism that will epitomize Ginsburg’s character forever.

## V. HAZEL BOWMAN KERPER

This path brings us to Hazel Bowman Kerper, the University of Wyoming College of Law’s first female graduate—and its first female Stoic, not that she ever knew it. The road from Porcia Catonis to Hazel Bowman Kerper is perhaps not linear, and certainly, the comparison between the two women is imperfect. Nevertheless, similarities abound, as do similarities between all of the aforementioned women—all persevering, trailblazing women who lived Stoically. The life and career of Hazel Bowman Kerper is modeled Stoicism. Unbeknownst to Hazel, she lived a Stoic life without classifying it as such. Here is her story, told through the four Stoic virtues of courage, wisdom, temperance, and justice.

### A. *Courage*

Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace, the soul that knows it not, knows no release from little things; Knows not the livid loneliness of fear, nor mountain heights where bitter joy can hear the sound of wings.

—Amelia Earhart<sup>71</sup>

Once the 1920s rolled around, women had started appearing in the field of law, but only intermittently, especially in Wyoming. In 1868, Grace Hebard became the first female lawyer in Wyoming.<sup>72</sup> Esther Hobart Morris became the first female judge in Wyoming in 1870.<sup>73</sup> In 1927, a female lawyer, Laura Bicknell Harris, argued a case before the Wyoming Supreme Court.<sup>74</sup> But in 1925, the University of Wyoming College of Law saw its first female matriculant, a full five years after it opened its doors.

That year, Hazel Bowman walked into the Aven Nelson Building on the west end of the University of Wyoming campus. The east top floor of the Aven Nelson

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<sup>71</sup> AMELIA EARHART, *COURAGE* in Marion Perkins, *Who is Amelia Earhart?*, SURVEY GRAPHIC, July 1928, at 60.

<sup>72</sup> *In Memoriam, Grace Raymond Hebard, 1861-1936*, UNIV. WYO. LIBR., [uwdigital.uwyo.edu/islandora/object/wyu%3A67577#page/8/mode/2up](http://uwdigital.uwyo.edu/islandora/object/wyu%3A67577#page/8/mode/2up) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/KT98-UM2A>].

<sup>73</sup> KATHRYN SWIM CUMMINGS, *ESTHER HOBART MORRIS: THE UNEMBELLISHED STORY OF THE NATION’S FIRST FEMALE JUDGE* (2019).

<sup>74</sup> 5 WYOMING BLUE BOOK, STATE PARKS AND CULTURAL RES. DEP’T (Phillip J. Roberts ed. 2008), [wyoarchives.wyo.gov/pdf/BlueBookFinal.pdf](http://wyoarchives.wyo.gov/pdf/BlueBookFinal.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/47XV-HK6N>].

building housed the College of Law.<sup>75</sup> Hazel entered as the first female student in the school's history and was the sole woman in her class of three.<sup>76</sup> Notably, she is said to have written the "finest examination ever written in [Wyoming] for admission to the bar."<sup>77</sup> During law school, Hazel met and married her husband, Wesley N. Kerper, who also subsequently became her law partner in Cody, Wyoming.<sup>78</sup> They stayed in Cody for almost thirty years, raising their family and practicing law.

A native of Laramie, Hazel wanted to be a lawyer from a young age. Her mother's example lived large in Hazel's household growing up. Clara Bowman raised Hazel, her only child, as a single mother in Laramie after divorcing her husband when Hazel was eight years old. Clara taught at the University of Wyoming and became a prominent pioneer Wyoming educator as the first student to study special needs children in Wyoming.<sup>79</sup> She also became the first woman to register at the University of Wyoming, and the first woman to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education at the University of Wyoming.<sup>80</sup> She consistently stressed the value of reading, education, and the importance of being a lifelong learner to her daughter.<sup>81</sup>

Hazel benefited from her mother's guidance. She became valedictorian of her Laramie High School class, her grade point average "being easily the highest of the twenty-five class members."<sup>82</sup> Hazel graduated from the University of Wyoming College of Law as the first woman graduate in 1928. As the first of

<sup>75</sup> Phil Roberts, *University of Wyoming: A History Walking Tour of the West Campus (Structures Located West of 15th Street)*, WYO. ALMANAC (July 2017), [wyomingalmanac.com/?page\\_id=1116](http://wyomingalmanac.com/?page_id=1116) (click on "Univ-of-Wyo-walking-tour" link to download paper) [<https://perma.cc/LJC4-QKDA>].

<sup>76</sup> University of Wyoming College of Law records.

<sup>77</sup> *Law School Brevities*, CASE AND COMMENT, Sept.–Oct. 1928, at 29, [books.google.com/books?id=HuUMAQAAMAAJ&pg=RA6-PT47&lpg=RA6-PT47&dq=hazel+bowman+kerper+%22case+and+comment%22&source=bl&ots=ws0RLmaN6r&sig=ACfU3U0XqmK8nvSdiNYmhK8pHvBcN\\_DGfg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewip2Kq3raHvAhURVc0KHZrLAOQQ6AEwAHoECAEQAw#v=onepage&q=hazel%20bowman%20kerper%20%22case%20and%20comment%22&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=HuUMAQAAMAAJ&pg=RA6-PT47&lpg=RA6-PT47&dq=hazel+bowman+kerper+%22case+and+comment%22&source=bl&ots=ws0RLmaN6r&sig=ACfU3U0XqmK8nvSdiNYmhK8pHvBcN_DGfg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewip2Kq3raHvAhURVc0KHZrLAOQQ6AEwAHoECAEQAw#v=onepage&q=hazel%20bowman%20kerper%20%22case%20and%20comment%22&f=false) [<https://perma.cc/ZK2V-CT3S>].

<sup>78</sup> Telephone and Email Interviews with Jill Kerper Mora (Dec. 2020–Feb. 2021) [hereinafter Interview with Jill Kerper Mora].

<sup>79</sup> LARAMIE DAILY BOOMERANG, Jan. 20, 1961, at 18, [wyomingnewspapers.org/?a=d&d=WYLD19610120-01.1.18&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxCO%7ctxTA-%22clara+bowman%22----1961--0-----](http://wyomingnewspapers.org/?a=d&d=WYLD19610120-01.1.18&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxCO%7ctxTA-%22clara+bowman%22----1961--0-----) [<https://perma.cc/2QUB-DLTC>].

<sup>80</sup> BILLINGS GAZETTE, Jan. 20, 1961, at 29, [www.newspapers.com/image/410706936?article=b653a4ed-b00a-4480-8667-44c2c33f0653](http://www.newspapers.com/image/410706936?article=b653a4ed-b00a-4480-8667-44c2c33f0653) [<https://perma.cc/2M7G-L62E>].

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.

<sup>82</sup> *Miss Bowman Will Be Valedictorian*, LARAMIE REPUBLICAN, May 18, 1922, at 5, [wyomingnewspapers.org/?a=d&d=WYLRP19220518-01.1.5&srpos=4&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxCO%7ctxTA-%22hazel+bowman%22+valdictorian-----0-----](http://wyomingnewspapers.org/?a=d&d=WYLRP19220518-01.1.5&srpos=4&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxCO%7ctxTA-%22hazel+bowman%22+valdictorian-----0-----) [<https://perma.cc/JG5W-MLLB>].

only twelve women in the first thirty years of the College of Law, she paved the way for those twelve women, two of whom became well-known Wyoming lawyers, themselves pioneers in their own right: Margaret “Margie” Meacham<sup>83</sup> and Elizabeth “Betty” Kail.<sup>84</sup> Though there were no women in the University of Wyoming College of Law before Hazel, that never impeded her application or her entrance. To do it, she just had to do it.

### B. *Wisdom*

Don't just say you have read the books. Show that through them you have learned to think better, to be a more . . . reflective person. Books are the training weights of the mind. They are very helpful, but it would be a bad mistake to suppose that one had made progress simply by having internalized their contents.  
—Epictetus<sup>85</sup>

After attending law school in Laramie, Hazel moved to California for a short time. Immediately after earning her LL.B. Degree at the University of Wyoming in 1928, Hazel received her J.D. degree from Stanford University in 1929 and eventually earned a Master's Degree in Criminology from Florida State (M.S. 1965).<sup>86</sup> She was a member of the Wyoming, California, and Texas state bars over the course of her life.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> College of Law Records; *see also* *Obituary: Margie Millhone Meacham*, RAWLINS TIMES (Nov. 30, 2018), [www.wyomingnews.com/rawlinstimes/record/obituaries/obituary-margie-millhone-meacham/article\\_873d8f44-aa7f-5d4d-87f5-afa7247a858b.html](http://www.wyomingnews.com/rawlinstimes/record/obituaries/obituary-margie-millhone-meacham/article_873d8f44-aa7f-5d4d-87f5-afa7247a858b.html) [<https://perma.cc/NCL9-G2K4>]. Judge Meacham graduated from the University of Wyoming College of Law in 1954 as the only woman in her class. *See id.* She worked as an attorney and then a judge in Park and Carbon Counties. She helped found the National Association of Women Judges and served as a member of the House of Delegates for the American Bar Association.

<sup>84</sup> College of Law Records; *see also* *Elizabeth Ann Kail*, HUDSON'S FUNERAL HOME, [www.hudsonsfuneralhome.com/obituary/elizabeth-kail](http://www.hudsonsfuneralhome.com/obituary/elizabeth-kail) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/U662-CLH6>]. Judge Elizabeth “Betty” Kail graduated from the University of Wyoming College of Law in 1959 and practiced with her father in Lander after graduating. She became the first female county court judge in Wyoming and then the first district court judge in Wyoming in 1982, until her retirement in 1994. *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> EPICETUS, *THE ART OF LIVING: THE CLASSICAL MANUAL ON VIRTUE, HAPPINESS, AND EFFECTIVENESS* 31 (Sharon Lebell trans. 1995), [avidano.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the-art-of-living.pdf](http://avidano.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the-art-of-living.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/9QTY-3JXB>].

<sup>86</sup> An historical note is appropriate here. Hazel began her law studies while still an undergraduate. After graduating with her bachelor's degree in 1926, with two more years of law study, she gained an LL.B. (Bachelor of Law's Degree). Not satisfied with her LL.B., Hazel attended Stanford University for one more year to earn her J.D. (Juris Doctor) in 1929. While many law schools awarded the J.D. degree much earlier, the University of Wyoming College of Law dropped its LL.B. degree and began to award the J.D. in 1966. *See* LARAMIE DAILY BOOMERANG, Feb. 19, 1966, at 3, [wyomingnewspapers.org/?a=d&d=WYLDDB19660219-01.1.3&srpos=19&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxCO%7ctxTA-LLB---1966---0-Albany----](http://wyomingnewspapers.org/?a=d&d=WYLDDB19660219-01.1.3&srpos=19&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxCO%7ctxTA-LLB---1966---0-Albany----) [<https://perma.cc/QY3Y-FBAP>].

<sup>87</sup> *Women Who Shaped SHSU*, ISSUU, [issuu.com/shsumarcom/docs/2020\\_shsu\\_heritage\\_summer\\_sngl/s/10825052](http://issuu.com/shsumarcom/docs/2020_shsu_heritage_summer_sngl/s/10825052) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/HVP2-6DLM>].



In 1959, the Kerpers decided to leave behind their lives in Wyoming to live in Costa Rica.<sup>88</sup> They wanted to “see the world” and they chose Costa Rica for one main reason—the education of their two youngest daughters. The Costa Rican educational system impressed them, and after months of research of potential places they could live abroad, they chose Costa Rica. The Kerpers wanted their daughters to learn another language and expose them to other cultures. While staying true to their Wyoming roots, Hazel wanted her daughters to be “multicultural, bilingual, and leaders in the modern world.”<sup>89</sup>

Leaders, they were. Wes and Hazel’s four daughters went on to be educators, lawyers, and pillars in their communities. Minabelle Kerper Milodragovich (1929–2020), the oldest Kerper daughter, a “staunch believer in equality,”<sup>90</sup> received degrees in social work from the University of Montana and education from the University of Arizona, and published baseline evaluation tools in the areas of chemical dependence and domestic violence.<sup>91</sup> The second oldest daughter, Loujen Kerper (1931–1990), attended Stanford University and became a world-traveling poet and short-story writer. She died at the age of fifty-eight.<sup>92</sup> Janeen Kerper (1946–2003) also attended Stanford University from 1963–1967 and earned her degree in French.<sup>93</sup> Afterward, she gained her master’s degree in romance languages from Harvard.<sup>94</sup> She graduated from Hastings Law School in California and taught at California Western School of Law for nineteen years.<sup>95</sup> Finally, the youngest Kerper daughter, Jill Kerper Mora (b. 1947), is a retired bilingual educator who engaged in scholarship, leadership, and teaching throughout her distinguished career.<sup>96</sup> She taught at San Diego State University for twenty-one years, and is the source of much of the personal information relative to Hazel throughout this article. She currently lives in California.

Hazel instinctively passed along her love of learning and reading, and ultimately, her wisdom, to her daughters. Hazel remained a student her entire

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.

<sup>89</sup> *Id.*

<sup>90</sup> *Minabelle Kerper Milodragovich*, MISSOULIAN (Sept. 10, 2020), [missoulian.com/news/local/obituaries/minabelle-kerper-milodragovich/article\\_fb5d1b6-ac8d-52cb-9255-dfd83bddd6d.html](https://www.missoulian.com/news/local/obituaries/minabelle-kerper-milodragovich/article_fb5d1b6-ac8d-52cb-9255-dfd83bddd6d.html) [https://perma.cc/C7Z9-BY3F].

<sup>91</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78; *see also Minabelle Kerper Milodragovich*, *supra* note 90.

<sup>92</sup> HONOLULU ADVERTISER, Jan. 20, 1990, at 6, [www.newspapers.com/image/263199916/?terms=loujen%20kerper&match=1](http://www.newspapers.com/image/263199916/?terms=loujen%20kerper&match=1) [https://perma.cc/YNJ2-HQ8S]; *Descendants of Alexander Balcom*, BALCOMS, [www.balcoms.info/a\\_balcom/d10.htm](http://www.balcoms.info/a_balcom/d10.htm) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/Z7A5-E52N].

<sup>93</sup> *Obituaries – July/August 2003*, STAN. MAGAZINE, [stanfordmag.org/contents/obituaries-9421](https://stanfordmag.org/contents/obituaries-9421) (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [https://perma.cc/4TB9-83TS].

<sup>94</sup> *Id.*

<sup>95</sup> *Id.*

<sup>96</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.



life as well, pursuing true wisdom until the end of her life through writing and teaching.

### C. *Temperance*

Perfection of character is this: to live your last day, every day, without frenzy, or sloth, or pretense.

—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*<sup>97</sup>

Hazel never swayed from having a family after graduating law school. She wanted a big family, but her personal dreams were not negotiable. She was resolute to find the balance between motherhood and career, or at least continue the pursuit of it.

As stated above, after law school, Hazel taught her four daughters early and often about the value of having a career. She modeled motherhood in much the same way her own mother did—she was “present, loving, and attentive.”<sup>98</sup> But she also went to work forty hours a week.<sup>99</sup> All four girls identified early what it looked like to have a mother who did not work from home, but instead went to work as a lawyer. Hazel always intended to lead her daughters through both her words and her daily example.<sup>100</sup>

Hazel worked in the law office eight hours a day, but always came home for lunch and dinner.<sup>101</sup> During her lunch breaks, Hazel spoke to her daughters about her morning and about the cases she took.<sup>102</sup> Hazel spoke often to her children about what it meant to be a woman as both a mother and a professional. One role did not solely define her. However, she did not sugarcoat the challenge of doing both well—she spoke to her family about the “constant challenge” that she always felt torn between the two, but of “the immense pleasure” she took in both.<sup>103</sup>

Through Hazel’s own statements, her daughters were aware of the “difficult juggling act” of motherhood vs. work life.<sup>104</sup> Hazel, though, was unwavering, Stoic even—she never said that her daughters had to make a choice—but a balancing act existed and sometimes it caused guilt or longing for one single

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<sup>97</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, *supra* note 1, at 152.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.

<sup>99</sup> *Id.*

<sup>100</sup> *Id.*

<sup>101</sup> *Id.*

<sup>102</sup> *Id.*

<sup>103</sup> *Id.*

<sup>104</sup> *Id.*

path.<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, Hazel's message remained: the simultaneous paths were worth it. She balanced her life and career with ease.<sup>106</sup> The balance she found as a mother and as a lawyer came from doing the right thing at the right time in the right amount, the right way—Hazel personified temperance.

#### *D. Justice*

Indifference to external events. And a commitment to justice in your own acts. Which means: thought and action resulting in the common good. What you were born to do.

—Marcus Aurelius<sup>107</sup>

Hazel voraciously read books her entire life. As another sign of her Stoicism, as a young girl, Hazel read Plato's book *Laws*, developing a lifelong interest in fairness, objectivity, and justice.<sup>108</sup> In Plato's *Laws*, he philosophized that no one is exempt from the rule of law.<sup>109</sup> Plato believed the law guards against tyranny, an idea that Hazel embedded in her own mind as a young girl. She became enamored with criminal law, especially criminal defense, and valued equality and fairness, but also redemption.

As a practicing attorney in Cody, Hazel put her ideals to work often, both through the cases she chose and the clients she represented. Anecdotes from her practice have passed from generation to generation, but two live large. The first tale starts with, "Once upon a time, the Harlem Globetrotters came to Cody."<sup>110</sup> The story goes that the Globetrotters were slated to stay at a local hotel, but the hotel denied the team when they got to town.<sup>111</sup> The team asked Hazel to intervene as their attorney, and she did.<sup>112</sup> The "case" never made it to court—instead, through Hazel's power of persuasion, the hotel gave the Globetrotter's their rooms as reserved.<sup>113</sup>

In the second tale, the theme of racial injustice continued. Hazel became very familiar with the Heart Mountain Relocation Center, located just outside of Cody, because her law partner worked as an administrator there. Heart Mountain

<sup>105</sup> *Id.*

<sup>106</sup> *Id.*

<sup>107</sup> MARCUS AURELIUS, *supra* note 1, at 178.

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.

<sup>109</sup> Plato: The Laws, INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA PHILOSOPHY, iep.utm.edu/pla-laws/ (last visited Apr. 15, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/NPQ2-SYEA>].

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.

<sup>111</sup> *Id.*

<sup>112</sup> *Id.*

<sup>113</sup> *Id.*

Relocation Center housed Japanese Americans during World War II, and Hazel and Wes often represented Heart Mountain residents.<sup>114</sup> Relationships between Hazel and Heart Mountain residents often became personal, and Hazel visited the residents of Heart Mountain to take food and other necessities.<sup>115</sup> Hazel and Wes also sponsored Japanese families who wanted to visit Cody.<sup>116</sup>

Hazel's commitment to helping people and changing their lives for the better never waned. Her interest in and commitment to Criminal Law eventually led to Hazel teaching criminology and law at Sam Houston State University from 1966 until her death in 1975.<sup>117</sup> Hazel authored and co-authored three academic books on different aspects of the criminal justice system.<sup>118</sup> She even wrote one of her books, *Legal Rights of the Convicted*, with her daughter, Janeen, as her co-author, and in its dedication, they noted their "rewarding place" in the practice of law.

## V. CONCLUSION

Hazel Bowman Kerper always wanted to be a lawyer. She grew up with the notion that everyone was welcome in the academic and professional world by observing her mother as a successful educator. Hazel repeated this blueprint for her four daughters. Porcia Catonis, long before Hazel, embodied the four virtues of Stoicism, but of course the virtues manifested differently for each woman. However, the execution was similar for both—each woman lived authentic lives, on their own terms by ignoring societal norms. As a lawyer, Hazel simply believed she belong in the profession, not as a woman, but as a *contributor*. As she once said to her daughter Janeen: "I have never competed with a man in my life. I have competed with professionals from time to time, however, on the merits of law."<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> *Id.*

<sup>115</sup> *Id.*

<sup>116</sup> *Id.*

<sup>117</sup> *Women Who Shaped SHSU*, *supra* note 87.

<sup>118</sup> GEORGE GLENN KILLINGER, HAZEL B. KERPER & PAUL F. CROMWELL, PROBATION AND PAROLE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM (1st ed. 1976); HAZEL B. KERPER, INTRO TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM (1979); HAZEL B. KERPER & JANEEN KERPER, LEGAL RIGHTS OF THE CONVICTED (1974).

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Jill Kerper Mora, *supra* note 78.

**The Old Stoic**

*By Emily Bronte*

Riches I hold in light esteem,  
And Love I laugh to scorn;  
And lust of fame was but a dream,  
That vanished with the morn:  
And if I pray, the only prayer  
That moves my lips for me  
Is, "Leave the hear that now I bear,  
And give me liberty!"  
Yes, as my swift days near their goal:  
Tis all that I implore;  
In life and death a chainless soul,  
With courage to endure.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> ANNE BRONTE, CHARLOTTE BRONTE, & EMILY BRONTE, POEMS BY CURRER, ELLIS, AND ACTON BELL (1st ed. 1846) (*The Old Stoic*, by Emily Bronte, appeared in the Bronte sisters' 1846 collection POEMS BY CURRER, ELLIS AND ACTON BELL under Emily's *nom de plume* 'Ellis Bell.').

