

# Binders Full of Women

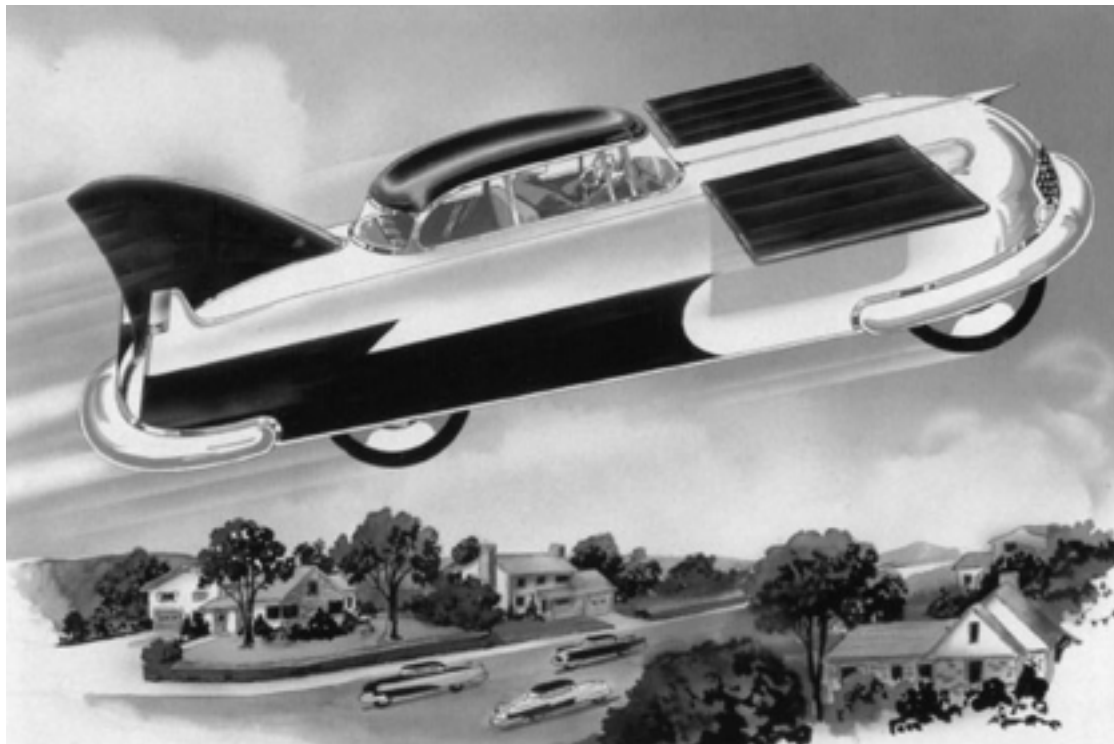
**Jill Murray**  
Dir. Narrative Design,  
Ubisoft Québec



# Who I am

- Writer of books and games featuring interesting female characters:
  - *Assassin's Creed III: Liberation* (2013 Writer's Guild of America Award winner!)
  - *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*
  - *Assassin's Creed IV: Freedom Cry (DLC)*
  - 2 young adult novels, *Break on Through*, and *Rhythm and Blues*
- Happy to be here!

# The future



- Games feature a representative balance of complex, interesting characters of each sex and gender
- We move beyond common archetypes and find new inspiration for a greater variety of games



# This talk



- Non-exhaustive survey of women from all walks of life and many times in history
- All examples are fast and easy to find
- Sources are listed on every slide- mainly online finds, and people I've met or heard about from friends

# Takeaways

- Abundant Variety
  - Women's stories are varied, interesting, hard to reduce to a short list
- Compelling Motivations
  - Women's motivations include: revenge, power, status, justice, curiosity, peace, the potential of others, hope, self-preservation, survival, defence, ambition, political belief, selfishness, protectiveness
- Inspiring Actions and Mechanics
  - Flying, bombing, motorbiking, fundraising, murder, strategy, management, horseback riding, archery, sword play, shooting, combat, mob vigilanteism, tower defence, investigation, logic problems, relationship building, driving, and crossword puzzles



# Lt. Colonel Nadezhda Popova



*"I can still imagine myself as a young girl, up there in my little bomber. And I ask myself, 'Nadia – how did you do it?'"*

- Soviet 48th Regiment "Night Witch", in WWII
- Flew 1920s wood-and-canvas bi-planes under German radar, at night-- without radio, with bombs strapped to the plane with wire
- source:

<http://www.seizethesky.com/>

# Rani Lakshmibai



*“The most dangerous of all Indian leaders” - Hugh Rose*

- Leading force in Indian Rebellion, 1857
- British called her the Jezebel of India
- Defended Jhansi against the British before fleeing on horseback to join more rebels
- Often pictured riding with her infant son on her back
- Source: Wikipedia / AC Initiates



# Empress Wu Zeitan

*"Her rise to power was steeped in blood" - [Ann Paludan](#)*



- Entered court as a 13-year-old concubine
- Claimed her own “Zhou” dynasty
- Greatly expanded Chinese Empire
- Impact on education, religion, the arts
- May have committed infanticide
- source: book- Women Firsts



# Marie-Anick Paulhus



*"I wanted to stay."*

- diagnosed with terminal cancer, refused to go to hospice.
- went on a rad motorcycle adventure instead
- raised \$34K, died when she was ready

*Source: family friends/  
local legend*

# Asnakech Thomas



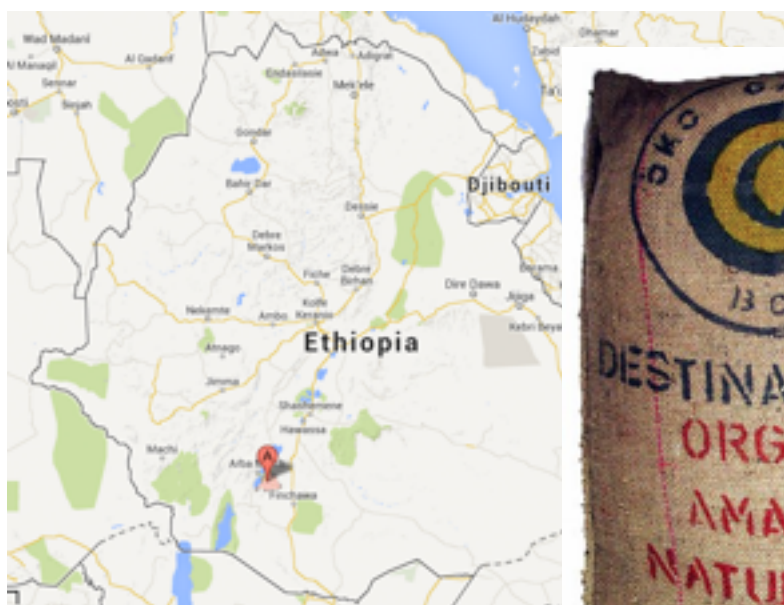
*“Before, I only knew coffee in the cup. Now I know exactly how many hands the coffee has to go through to get there.”*

- Ethiopia's only triple-threat coffee miller/producer/exporter

- Devoted to health and education in Amaro Gayo

- Source:

<http://amarogayocoffee.com/>





# Abbie Burgess



*"It has almost seemed to me that the light was part of myself."*

- "the friend and guide of sailors through dark nights."
- As a teenager, kept the whale-oil lamps burning in the lighthouse on Manticus Rock for four stormy weeks, waiting for supplies

• <http://www.lighthouse.cc/matnicusrock/history.html>





# “Janice”

*"Every time I'm with you, I get arrested!"*

- force of chaos in my old neighborhood
- sometimes seen panhandling, covered in tabby cats
- often heard dictating vengeance schemes to attentive companions
- always accompanied by her pet puggle
- attracts a lot of police attention



# Françoise-Marie Jacquelin



*“Neither the perils of the sea, the dangers of war nor the horrors of a long siege could still her courage.” - George Macbeath*

- Resourceful and commanding Acadian heroine
- Twice escaped to Europe to secure supplies for Fort Latour
- Personally defended Fort de Latour in 3-day standoff

• Source:

<http://www.biographi.ca/>



# “Guevara”



*“I said 'my boy, I promise that I am going to defend your future'. Now, I will not forget my children's blood and I promise to take revenge.”*

- Syrian sniper of Palestinian origin, trained in Lebanon by Hamas
- Originally motivated by the deaths of her children, in an airstrike
- Was always politically active. Left first husband for "not being revolutionary enough"
- Remains simultaneously horrified by the death and the violence
- Source: *The Telegraph*



# James Miranda Barry



VS



*“After he was dead, I was told that (he) was a woman . . . I should say that (she) was the most hardened creature I ever met.” - Florence Nightingale*

- First woman medical doctor in the UK
- Born female, lived as a man until death
- Innovations in sanitation, surgery, pain relief
- Feuded with Florence Nightingale
- Source: the Daily Mail

# My Great Aunt Alma



*“The way young people dance these days is just terrible, don’t you think?”*

- drove herself from Montreal to Pheonix every year until she broke her leg figure skating at age 88
- took interesting detours
- sharp in many senses-smart but suffered no fools

# Hedy Lamarr



*“I can excuse everything but boredom. Boring people don’t have to stay that way.”*

- Actress
- Inventor of spread-spectrum frequency-hopping
- Source: found during research for Assassin’s Creed IV: Black Flag



# Questions?



To follow-up on Twitter: @codejill