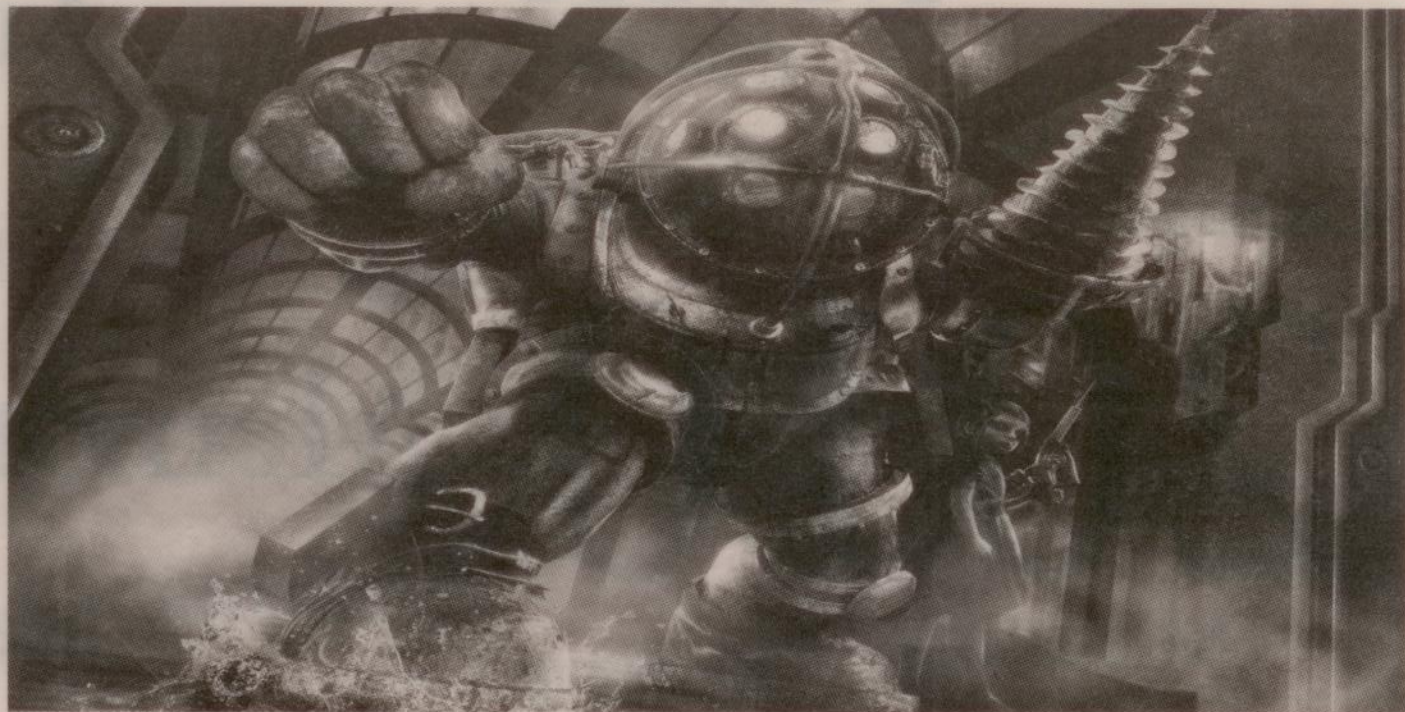


Bioshock 2 lives up to the hype

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When the first Bioshock title was released on August 21, 2007, many people were first hesitant to pick up the game, pointing out how violent, dark, and sinister the game actually was. However, once players got their hands on the title, it was evident that the game would supersede all expectations and become one of the greatest First-Person Shooter RPG's ever. Bioshock 2 is no different; after almost three years of refinement, additions, and enhancement, Irrational Games and 2K Marin (developers of both games) have created an amazing sequel to their original success.

Bioshock 2 not only takes the gameplay from the first game, it also adds a multiplayer mode, a new storyline that takes place eight years after the original Bioshock, and refined combat and customization. The multiplayer mode is the first huge difference from the first game, which only had the single player campaign. With customizable loadouts (just like classes from COD), 7 game modes, and a handful of different maps to play on, the multiplayer is almost as good as the single player, especially when playing with friends. The multiplayer allows for a laid-back environment where the players don't care a lot about ranks or achievements and really brings out the essence of video games: to have fun. One extremely unique aspect of the multiplayer is that it actually has a storyline. Taking place before the events of the first game, the



multiplayer explains why Rapture (the place where the series takes place) became what it looks like in the first and second games.

If you're a fan of the series however, you already know that Bioshock single-player is the reason you buy the game, and the sequel is no let down. The storyline, like the first game, is a little complicated and confusing at times, but is as amazing as the first game's storyline too (no spoilers here). Some of the great features that return in this game are the customizable character (weapons, tonics, weapon attachments, types of ammo, plasmids, etc.), the in-game choices that determine the

way the story of this game ends, and audio logs that clue the player in on characters, events, and things in the world of Rapture. Although this game may seem very similar to the first one, there are a few major differences in terms of gameplay; you play as a Big Daddy (an enemy in the first game) whose default weapon is a giant drill on your right arm. On the left arm you control your plasmids (magic), which used to be on the right arm with all the weapons. This allows for a much more fluid combat system where the player isn't switching weapons and plasmids every few seconds. Also, being a Big Daddy gives you a diving suit, which

in turn allows you to walk on the ocean floor in some parts of the game.

Although Bioshock 2 has a lot in common with the first game, Irrational Games and 2K Marin have refined all aspects of the game as well as adding a few new ones in the form of multiplayer and underwater travel. Overall, Bioshock 2 is definitely one of the year's best games and one of the best RPG's of all time. I definitely recommend this game to any fans of RPG's like Fallout or just shooters in general. And if you haven't played the first game yet, pick it up at GameStop; it's usually around \$20 and you'll easily get your money's worth.