L.A. Noire Review

After racking my brains trying to properly categorize this game, I am still at a loss. What I can say is that it is *not* “Grand Theft Auto with Fedora’s”. This is video game story telling at its best. As you play *L.A. Noire* you will come to think that you are in a cross between the movies *Chinatown and L.A. Confidential.* The designers at Rockstar Games left no stone unturned when designing this masterpiece. From putting combat on the back burner, to the art direction, and the sound; they all combine to create a very sublime and satisfying game play experience.

Everything begins in 1947, and you are playing Cole Phelps, a decorated WWII hero. Phelps is the textbook definition of a straight-arrow cop. That is probably my only real gripe with the game, is that Cole is just too much of a goodie-goodie at times. The plot of the game takes place over four different desks (divisions) of the LAPD. As you work your way through each crime, you will be promoted from Traffic, to Arson, to Homicide, and finally to Vice. Each step of the way the game is also weaving in parts of the famous Black Dahlia murder; plus you have the chance to run into famous historical figures like the gangster Mickey Cohen.

L.A. Noire has so many different stories and mini-cases in it; that it is one of the more re-playable games to come out in some time. While you are working on your main case, you can accept any number of mini-cases too. Weather you accept all of them or none of them; won't affect the overall plot of the game. They are there to add a nice richness to your style of play and to the story as a whole.

The real highlight of noire is the interrogation. You will find this to be unlike anything available in any other game. You must make sure that you are paying attention to the suspect. Each one will give off different subtle hints; that will tell you if they are being truthful or not. If you do not answer correctly; they will either clam up and not talk anymore, or you will be forced to take a different direction in solving the case. You can still make it to the conclusion, but your choices will determine what path that takes. In *L.A. Noire* the player is asked to pay attention to what is happening more than ever before. In this game the term "blink and you could miss it" carries a whole new meaning.

L.A. Noire transcends genre and the expectations of what a game can be, and casts a spell that I have yet to shake. This game is everything I thought it would be and more; when I first read about it 18 months ago. Is it the end all be all of every game ever made? The answer is no, but then again which game is? What *L.A. Noire* is, is a total immersive experience of what post WWII life was pretending to be. Where on the surface everything was manicured lawns and rose gardens, but right under the surface you had a level of violence not really seen since.

Rating:

5 out of 5
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