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### Wind vs Twilight

In the article “Twilight Princess Is Great, but the Wind Waker Is a Masterpiece” Brett Cardaro states, “The cel-shaded graphical style introduced in Wind Waker is so timeless that it would even go on to inform the one used in BOTW and TOTK” (Cardaro). It’s been nearly 40 years since the release of *The Legend of Zelda* and since then over 20 games have been released in the *Zelda* series. *Breath of the Wild* (BOTW) and its sequel *Tears of the Kingdom* (TOTK) are the latest major releases on Nintendo’s latest console, and both are easily among the best games on this console. *Twilight Princess* (2006) and *The Wind Waker* (2002) were both released on a console two generations older. With few exceptions, each major *Zelda* release is a masterpiece, making better use of its respective console’s hardware than practically any other game. Many also bring innovations in gameplay and game design. With so many great titles to choose from, the topic of which is the best is naturally hotly debated. The “cel-shaded” style of Wind Waker is an innovative computer graphics style that makes the game look similar to hand drawn cels of a hand-animated movie. This is just one of the reasons Cardaro touts Wind Waker.

In this article, Cardaro discusses many similarities and differences between the two *Legend of Zelda* games released for the Nintendo GameCube. He discusses the design, story, and characters in each game. *The Wind Waker’s* graphic design looks like it jumped off a comic book with particular detail put into expressive faces. This is a deep contrast to *Twilight Princess* with its more realistic graphics. Cardaro explains *The Wind Waker’s* graphics allow for more

emotional range than its counterpart while *Twilight Princess* has a gloomier tone. He argues this expressiveness as well as *The Wind Waker's* open world feel shaped the latest *Legend of Zelda* games. In the end, Cardaro is trying to convince his readers that *Wind Waker* is the better *Legend of Zelda* game (Cardaro).

In the video “Twilight Princess VS The Wind Waker,” the YouTuber Hud talks about which game is better in a few distinct categories. The first category is dungeons. For each dungeon he discusses what he likes and dislikes and gives each a score out of 10. Based on the numbers, he gives *Twilight Princess* the win in this category. He then compares exploration within each game. He says *The Wind Waker* is better in this category. Finally, he rates the story. There are many things that he likes and dislikes in each game, however Hud decides that he likes *Twilight Princess's* story better (Hud).

Cardaro claims that *The Wind Waker* is better while Hud finds that, although close, *Twilight Princess* is better. That said, both reviewers praise both games. Where they differ is how they approach the subject. This difference highlights a very interesting question. What criteria should be used to judge? Should it be how it was received in its time, or how it stands up?

Cardaro's main point is how *The Wind Waker* brought new concepts to *The Legend of Zelda* series which made impressions on future games. He says, “the Zelda series tends to push the limitations of what is possible in game design for their time. ...Wind Waker, a game that wasn't afraid to push boundaries, has gone on to be seen as a timeless masterpiece.” While he mentions Wind Waker's whimsical moments are looked back fondly, he seems to define standing the test of time as which parts of the game were copied and built upon. Seeing the art influencing the latest games is just one example. He also cites game mechanics including combat system and open world design.

Hud's argument was supported by discussing which was a better game rather than focusing on which one had a greater influence on the rest of the series. In focusing on how the game stands on its own, he gets into rating specific elements. These ratings are a matter of opinion, some of which he supports with details and others are by feel. The difference in approach can be seen clearly in how Hud barely mentions in passing the games' combat mechanics, while Cardaro uses this as a piece of evidence. Hud's lack of interest in combat is another opinion.

Hud's argument is the better way to decide which game is better. Although I disagree with some parts of the rating, I do agree that I prefer *Twilight Princess*. Despite disagreeing with Cardaro's conclusion, I appreciate that his argument is more fact-based. It might not be the correct criteria for judging a game, but he has the more interesting argument. Regardless of how you do it, the ranking of *Legend of Zelda* games is all part of the fun.

Works Cited

Cardaro, Brett. "Twilight Princess Is Great, but the Wind Waker Is a Masterpiece." *CBR*, 7 Sept.

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Hud. "Twilight Princess VS The Wind Waker." *YouTube*, 12 Mar. 2024