Shooting. The Passion Never Fades.

The concept of shooting things has always been a favorite past-time for many people. The thrill and rush that is obtained from all shooting related activities – whether it be a sport such as paintballing or dodge ball or a real war. This passion has translated from real life activities to video games quite well because video games do not impose the negative effects that a real war causes. They allow gamers to experience war and play with it in their own way without having to carry all the major burdens that holding a gun in war comes with. As a result the shooter genre has exploded in video games and is continuing to grow to the point that shooter video games are now the bestselling video games in this generation.

Why is that this genre has continued to expand? One could say that there isn’t much variation in the mechanics from the early shooter games to the current generations’ shooters. Ironically it is because of this very reason that shooters continue to captivate the audiences of those that play them. I’m sure almost every single little boy has dreamt of being a warrior of some kind as a kid, and in the real world the closest role models that fit that description are those who serve in the army. Since war utilizing guns has existed for hundreds of years, the way in which it occurs has reached a standard that seems to serve its’ purpose best. Since shooting video games are simulations of real wars, (which of course can be combined with other genres as the creator deems fitting) it makes sense that the main mechanics of these video games don’t need to change very much over time.

Comparing an early shooting game such as *Doom* to a modern best seller *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves*, one can see that the game play mechanics remain fairly similar with the main exception being the advancements made in the technology that allow for a much more intricate experience. Even the elements of game play seem quite similar with modern games such as the above mentioned retaining features such as the following from *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves*: Different difficulty settings ranging from very easy to crushing; unlockable secret areas scattered throughout the campaign and multiplayer levels; thousands of environmental hazards everywhere you look in the campaign and even some more in the multiplayer levels; different weapons to give more customizability to the player, whether it be through picking up guns during game play or unlocking them from a weapon selection window; and destructible terrain which is everywhere in the campaign but becomes all the more noticeable in the multiplayer modes.

A major difference from *Doom* in *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves* is the ability for the player to associate with their character a thousand fold. Firstly *Uncharted* is in third-person view which allows the player to always see the full character while they’re playing. This means every injury, trip and flinch is shown to the player creating a bond with the player. This bond is strengthened even further through the use of customizability. In *Uncharted* what the player does has an effect on how the character behaves. Being able to change the look of the character in *Uncharted* not only adds a layer of customizability but affects how the character acts. In *Doom* if the ability to change the look of the character existed the events of the game would not change but in *Uncharted* it does. If your character wears jeans and falls into a river the other characters in the game may walk up to you to either help you out or laugh at the characters’ “squidgy jeans”. Finally in *Doom* story was not so much a driving factor as it was the game play, but what Naughty Dog (the creator’s of the *Uncharted* series) has done is mastered the game play so well that they could divert their full attention towards story, to the point that every single player has their own experience with the game, and has different feelings for each of the characters in the game. It’s this upcoming standard of intricate detail in a game that is pushing the industry forwards towards perfection, which is clearly shown with *Uncharted: Drake’s* Fortune netting the 2007 Game of the Year Award and *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves* receiving the 2009 Game of the Year Award along with 38 perfect scores.