

Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the Podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step off the train and deliver an episode to you while I walk home.

I'm Brendan Riley.

Well, this is an experiment episode based on the theme of the episode.

Greetings friends.

It is a lovely afternoon here in suburban Chicago.

The sun is out.

It's chilly.

It's cold enough I'm wearing a toque but warm enough that I don't need gloves.

I probably could get away without the toque but I'd be a little chilly and I don't want to be chilly.

This week in my board game club I am going to be hosting a real-time extravaganza.

I'm bringing a number of games to the board game club that are played in real time.

And so with this podcast I'm out walking on a wire because I'm not going to edit it at all. [Transcription note: I have edited the transcription for clarity, but not length or repeated words]

What you're going to hear is the exact amount of time between when I say "Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver" and when I say whatever it is that I say at the end of the podcast.

So that means that all the uncomfortable pauses and anytime when I go "Ugh" -- which is more than I like to admit -- will be in the podcast.

I don't do this to you very often--in fact rarely--but I thought it would be interesting for you to see what is this podcast like in real time without the editing.

I'm also not going to run the "truncate silence" function on Audacity which I use to cut down the amount of silence in the episode.

So if this one feels a little bit drawn out, my apologies. But now you'll know what it's like to actually walk with me rather than walking with me slightly massaged.

So this will be interesting.

Like I said for my board game club in my college I am doing a real-time extravaganza so I thought I would talk about what I like about real-time games which real-time games I like and what I like about them.

I'm going to start with quick reactions.

So what I've done is I've picked out a number of different kinds of real-time games and made a list of games that I have played or enjoyed or both played and enjoyed that fit that category.

So I'm going to start with favorite real-time games.

Oh so quick reactions.

These are games where a big part of playing them is reacting quickly to what's going on on the table and hopefully winning because you react faster than the other players.

The height of this game for me is Anomia.

Anomia is a real-time quick reaction game where you are facing off against other players.

I've talked about a number of times here on the podcast.

It is weird and delightful because it's paralyzing in its speed because you can react quickly and put yourself in the position of okay I need to react.

You have to react twice.

You have to react once by saying okay I have to react and then you have to come up with a word with which to react.

You have to do both of those things faster than your opponent does those same two things.

It's a really interesting game and very frustrating.

It can be kind of almost debilitating to play and it's a delightful kind of stress.

That's Anomia.

Another game that I put in the quick reactions category is Heist.

This is a cooperative game in which you are working together to try to react quickly to voice commands.

Each player has a variety of things around and you're going to work together to try to react to the voice commands in the game quickly.

So it will say each person has a name so you're the money man or you're the safe cracker or demolitions expert and it will say demolitions expert give the goggles to the safe cracker and it sort of gives you these commands and there's always a little tokens around the table.

he's passing around, you have to hit buttons, you have to move stuff around.

And, when you've done all of those things, then, if you do them correctly, then the game rewards you by leveling up.

And you win after a certain amount of time.

You're earning money as you go along.

That's Heist.

Designed by Rob Davieau, I played it at Gen Con one year.

And I ended up finding a copy.

We got a copy for our game club,

but then ended up buying a copy myself at,

I think, Goodwill.

And it's a fun game to play occasionally.

A couple more fast reaction games that I'm generally not good at.

SET is another one.

This one, you are trying to solve a problem as quickly as you can.

And then when you see it, you say set,

and you grab the collection that you see.

So there's an element of making your brain work quickly, which I'm really bad at.

Dutch Blitz is a game where you're sort of playing

a simplified version of solitaire,

but you're building your cards into the middle of the table

and trying to do that as quickly as you can.

The person who gets the most cards into the middle of the table

is going to get the most points,

but you also need to

whittle down this one pile that's on the side of the table

because that is how you end the round.

And if you end the round with nothing left in that pile,

then you don't lose any points.

Everybody else will lose points
because they have things in that pile.
If you haven't played Dutch Blitz, it's really good.
It's very intense, really fun, pretty fast.
Two more games that I put in this category are
Dropolter and Taco cat goat cheese pizza.
Taco cat goat cheese pizza is a real time card game
kind of like slap jack.
And you are putting it on cards in order.
And if you play a card and it doesn't match
the word that you're saying, then you have to slap it
or someone else might slap it and they win the card.
So it's a race game or a response game
that has to do with what you're seeing come up.
Or maybe it's the other way around if you,
you're saying "Taco cat goat cheese pizza"
or "Taco cat goat cheese and pizza."
And if the thing that you say comes up with the word,
maybe that's when you slap it, I don't remember.
It's been a while, but it is a real time game
where you're slapping stuff.
And then Dropolter, I have talked about not that long ago,
but it's one of the oink games where you are using

hand-dexterity to try to grab things off the table

or drop things so that you have the right things in your hand.

You're trying to move quickly, but you have to be accurate as well.

The last game I'll put in this quick reactions.

Category is Stay Cool.

This is a game published by Iello,

I don't remember who designed it,

but it is a brutal brain melter.

The way the game works is that on your turn,

you have to answer two kinds of questions at the same time.

You have questions that you're answering out loud

and questions that you're answering with these letter dice.

And you're being asked the questions

both at the same time, you have to get through all of them.

And there are two people asking it,

and they're both asking you over and over again,

sort of loud and annoying.

It's really quite masterful.

And then on the second level, you have to do the same thing,

but there's a timer.

Oh, on the first level, I think there's a timer,

and you have to tell someone to flip the timer,

and you can see the timer.

On the second one, there's a timer behind a shield,
and you can't see the timer.

And you have to tell someone to flip the timer.

So it gets more difficult as the game goes along.

That's stay cool.

So those are all games that involve quick reactions,
sort of really being on your toes.

The next couple are games that I would call

"Shouty Games."

Games where a big part of the real-time element
is how quickly and how loud you can shout.

The preeminent version of this is pit.

Pit is a classic card game, literally like 100 years old.

And in it, you are trying to corner the market
by trading with people, and you're doing that by shouting,
like in the old-timey stock market.

Then when you corner the market, you yell "Pit,"

and you get to ring a bell to stop trading.

That's pretty cool.

Another game that involves sort of shouting
and trading is "Happy Salmon."

"Happy Salmon" is an excellent little game
where you are trying to match with people,

and trade with them as you do the same thing.

So you fist bump, you do a high five.

There is a thing called a "Happy Salmon,"

which is a sort of weird hand shake.

It feels like you're joining the Monty Python Illuminati

when you do a "Happy Salmon," or you run around the table.

Those are really interesting to do

because you're trying to do them quickly,

you're trying to match with other people,

but you are shouting to do it.

On a related note, the call of the wild

and dude are both games that involve saying things

and matching in real-time, but they aren't "shouty" per se.

So those I would sort of say are kind of honorable mentions.

Next up, the next kind of real-time game I would talk about

are "Fast Action Games."

There are two categories, two subcategories here.

I'll say "Fast Action, Co-op Games" and "Fast Action Competitive Games."

In both cases, these are games where there's a fairly complicated

amount of stuff to do.

The Co-op ones, you're all kind of working together as you do them.

And I guess I point to these as different from the quick reaction

games because there's more like you're doing a thing

against a timer, whereas the quick reaction games
you're following after somebody says something
in particular to you or something happens,
you're reacting to it.

In the "Fast Action Games," there's a timer
and you're trying to work against it.

So my favorite version of "Fast Action,"

Co-op would be "Escape Curse of the Temple."

This is a "Fast Dice Rolling Game"

where you're trying to get your characters out of the temple.

You're reacting.

There's a music soundtrack that's playing that's very ominous
and you have to roll dice to move your character through.

If you get stuck, you have to ask for help.

And as you go through, you are trying to find these gems
and get yourself out of the temple.

Three times during the game, there's this gong.

And then everybody has to get back to the safe room.

If you don't get back to the safe room,
you lose one of your dice, which is really brutal.

The third time, if you don't get back,

if you, the first two times, you have to get back to the safe room.

The third time, hopefully your group will have found the exit.

And when you find the exit, then everybody has to get out.

The beauty of the exit is you have to have done well

throughout the temple to get out the exit

because the way you get out is to roll enough of the exit keys

and the exit keys you have to roll as many as there are gems plus one.

So if the group has not found and removed all the gems,

then you won't be able to get out of the temple.

It's really clever and very interesting.

So that is Escape Curse of the Temple.

A couple other fast action games that I would point to

as really interesting are Fuse,

which is a dice rolling game where you're trying to put

combinations of dice on these cards.

Again, you're playing for time, trying to complete the cards

like you're just disarming bombs.

London Dread is a really interesting planning game

where during the real time phase you are talking to each other

and making plans about what you're going to do.

Then when the real time phase is over, you resolve it

to see how well you did on those plans.

Another version of that or another game like that is Space Alert.

Space Alert is another game where you make plans

and you go in real time and then you see what happens

to see how well you resolve those plans.

Finally, Illiterati is a real time spelling game

where you are trying to spell words as quickly as you can

that meet goals.

And everybody is trying to meet their goals at the same time.

But if you don't as a group use all the letters,

then these penalties come in that get worse and worse

and the game sort of ramps up to making you lose

because you didn't account for all the penalties

or didn't adequately resolve all the penalties.

That's Illiterati.

There's another category of fast action games.

These are fast action competitive games.

These ones are particularly fun, but I find very hard

to find people who want to play them with

because they are incredibly intense

and often debilitatingly difficult

because they demand that you make choices quickly.

One that I think was a grand scheme

but didn't ultimately succeed for a lot of people

was pendulum.

I thought pendulum was pretty fun, but nobody else liked it.

So it didn't stay in my collection.

But this one had the real time element of trying to take turns
and do things while the timers are clicking
or the sand timers are running
and the difficulty of keeping track of the rules
and doing that is pretty interesting, I thought.

But a lot of people didn't like that.

Galaxy Trucker is another one.

This one, there isn't a timer at the beginning.

You're just racing with other players to build your ship.

And one person when they decide they're done building their ship
can declare that they're done
and then they start a timer.

And I think timer is one or two minutes
and everyone has to stop when the timer runs out.

So I have never actually played this one properly
because my children always wanted to take their time
and build really robust ships.

So there was never really a racing element.

I would love to play this sometime
with people who are actually racing
because I imagine it would be hilarious.

(sighs)

Two other real-time competitive games

that I enjoy bullet heart or bullet star

or whatever, there's a bunch of different bullet games.

This is a real-time puzzle solving game

where it's kind of like Dr. Mario,

the better you do on your board,

the more penalties you give to your opponent

that they after resolve in the next round.

(laughs)

Sidereal Confluence is a trading and negotiation game

that also has a really interesting real-time element.

It is not quite as rushed or dramatic

as some of the other real-time games,

but the trading element is in real time.

So there's no taking turns making offers.

It's just, hey, I'll trade this with you.

You want to trade this with me?

Hey, hey, hey, let's go, let's go.

So there is an element of wanting to get your deal made

before other people make trades and take away

the resources you need to make your deal.

That one works pretty well.

Finally, the last form of real-time game I wanted to mention here

would be real-time co-op games in which you're taking turns.

Kites is the best example.

You have these sand timers running

and you have to take turns taking your turns.

And so sometimes I can solve a problem,

but it's your turn and I have to wait for you to solve it.

There's a really interesting feeling of go-go-go,

get it done, get it done.

That I like.

Magic Rabbit is another one of these.

It is a card manipulation game that has a real-time element

and we're all working together, but you also can't communicate.

You have to, you're limited in how you communicate

with one another for that one.

And then finally, bomb busters is a puzzle solving game

where you are trying to solve puzzles again in real-time.

It's great.

Well, I feel like I mostly just listed games.

I didn't tell you a lot about what I liked about them,

but it is the tension that's created when you are

trying to do a thing quickly

that I find make real-time games have that extra something.

So what are your favorite real-time games?

Share over in boardgamegeek guild #3269.

And let me know.

I'd love you to hear from you.

Until next time, thanks for joining me on my walk today.

I hope you next walk is as pleasant as my walk.

Goodbye.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

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Brought to you by Rattlebox Games.

(soft music)

(dramatic music)