

Pick Up & Deliver 787

July / August 2025 Movie Roundup

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Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step out for a walk and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around. I'm Brendan Riley.

Good afternoon, listeners. It's a lovely day here in suburban Chicago and I am out for my daily constitutional. In between bouts of grading, so much grading. So I thought I would talk to you a little bit about the various kinds of things I've been playing lately. Actually, things I've been watching lately. That's right, it's time for the movie roundup.

The last movie roundup that I did was June of 2025. So today I'm going to do July and August. I'm doing July and August because the I only watched two movies in July, so and I'm not doing July, August and September because I watched like eight in September. So you're getting like six in this one.

For those of you new to the podcast, the movie Round-Up episode is not actually board game themed, despite the fact that this is a board game podcast. In the movie Round-Up episode, what I'll do is I'll talk about movies that I watched in a particular time period. In this episode, July and August. And then sometimes I'll talk about if you were going to do like a movie night where you watch a movie and play a game, you combine the two. So that's that's what I'm doing here. All right. July and August.

In July, I watched two movies. The first was a sort of a dumb documentary. Netflix has gotten really good at making these documentaries about contemporary issues, and they're generally, uh, they're basically just like above this. They sort of fill in what would have been like Inside Edition special episode or something like their interviews with people and quickly put together documentaries. I'm sure they take a lot of work. No, no criticism for the creators. They're just not sort of the deep and empathetic and carefully crafted work of sort of higher end documentary fare.

Instead, they're sort of an explanation of something that happened. I'm thinking of the Fyre Festival documentaries, for example, or the Ocean Gate documentaries, both of which, you know, I'm sure took a ton of work, but I don't see people citing them as the height of documentary art. Well, this this one certainly does not even rise to the level of those. This is *Trainwreck: Poop Cruise*.

So this is a really kind of silly documentary about the catastrophic failure on board a large ocean liner in which there was a brief fire and the fire burned out all the electrics. And so even though they put the fire out, they couldn't turn anything back on. And so because of that, the ship was just dead in the water. And because of where it was, they had a lot of trouble getting a hold of anybody. When they did get Ahold of people, they were really far from shore. So they had to try to figure out the best place to take them. The current was pushing them north already. there in the Gulf of Mexico, ended up being towed to Galveston, I think. And the towing took days, a couple days. They had food, not a ton. They had enough food, I guess, for everybody. Although it was all pre-prepared, it wasn't great food. They had plenty of alcohol, but they locked it up. Apparently for a little while, they tried having alcohol available, but people went a little crazy with the alcohol.

So what happened was the ship died and everybody started freaking out. And the reason it was called the 'poop cruise' is that part of how the ship operated is that all the toilets were electrical, like the pumps and everything that made the toilets work properly were electrical. So when the ship stopped working, the toilets stopped working. And so at first they told people they could pee in the shower and the showers in the rooms, but that actually didn't work either. They backed up and then you started having pee slopping around in the bathrooms. And then they gave people these red plastic bags and told them they had to poop in these plastic bags. But people didn't want to. So they tried pooping in the toilets, which were overflowing. And that just made them overflow more. And so then there's like poop floating around, and hence it became called the Poop Cruise. It sounds absolutely disgusting and horrifying.

I'm sure it was scary if you were on board. The people who were, you know, the depictions they had did talk about, it was scary. But it sounds like it was mostly monotonous. Like, I don't know that people were really afraid they were going to die. I don't think it ever got that bad, but they were certainly upset and scared and sad and grossed out and hot. So, uh, I don't know that it's worth watching.

I don't think it probably is an interesting combo piece to watch with Poop Cruise would be, I think, Perseverance, The Castaway Chronicles, which is about a cruise ship that accidentally sails through a portal to another dimension. And then the ship runs aground on an island, and the people in the other dimension have to make the best of it and make a life in this new place. And I imagine that bathroom facilities were a problem early on, because in the beginning, you're all kind of using the ship as a home base as you start to build your encampments. So I'll say that poop crews could go nicely with Perseverance to Castaway Chronicles.

Next up, I got to I went to the theatrical release rerelease of This Is Spinal Tap, the 1984 movie that sort of pioneered the mockumentary style. It is a like a like a concert film documentary of a fake rock band called Spinal Tap, starring Rob Reiner and Christopher Guest and Michael McKean and Harry Shearer and a whole bunch of other people who would go on to become comic titans of various sorts. I love this as Spinal Tap. I've watched it many, many times. It was really fun to see it in the theater. Most of the people I was seeing it in the theater with had seen it before. One of the people who had not was my daughter, which was really fun to introduce her to that movie. I think she thought it was okay. She said some parts were funny and some parts were weird. Which makes sense. I think a lot of the jokes don't land as hard if you have no memory of the 1980s at all. And rock and roll culture isn't really part of your vocabulary. I think she does know a bit about concerts. You know, she goes to a fair amount, number of concerts, and she is kind of aware of that piece of it. So that part is not entirely foreign, but as it existed in the eighties, it kind of is.

That said, that was a really fun theater opportunity. It was really fun to see that on the big screen and to see other people kind of who enjoy the movie laughing along with it. I didn't get to see the second one yet. I did have a friend who saw it and said it was surprisingly heartfelt, like it was. There were funny parts, but it was a little more sincere than he thought it was going to be, which he appreciated. So I'm looking forward to seeing that at some point. Now, if you're going to if you're going to do a game day and play and watch This Is Spinal Tap, I think there's two choices. The first would be maybe before you play the game, you play the light.

The very light This Game Goes to Eleven, which is very much modeled to look like a Spinal Tap branded game. But it is not, in fact, doesn't say Spinal Tap on it. Uh, and then in conjunction with that, you could also play after you watch the movie, maybe you could play Rock Hard, the new game from Devir, which is about being in a band in the nineteen seventies. It seems fitting and like, right on target. So. So that is This is Spinal Tap.

Next up, we have Most Dangerous Game. This is a 2020 movie in which a man discovers that he has a fatal cancer and he is strapped for cash. He's in trouble, and he gets this offer to basically play the most dangerous game to be hunted. And every hour that he survives, his family gets more money. If he survives the full twenty four hours, he his family ends up with twenty four million dollars and he walks free. It's an interesting, sort of silly B-movie take on the original premise of the short story The Most Dangerous Game. This one takes place in a city. There are like five hunters chasing the guy, and part of the gimmick is he has this phone and he has to carry the phone with him the whole time, and if he ever gets rid of the phone, then he is out and they will hunt him forever. If he leaves the city, then he's out and they'll hunt him forever and once an hour for 30s or fifteen seconds the phone will broadcast his position to the hunters. So it's an interesting movie. Not great, but like I said, a fine B action movie. If you're just looking for something to have on while you're folding laundry or something, there are worse ways to waste your time.

It includes... I can't remember his name. It's not Michael Fassbender. It's the guy who plays the really nasty Nazi in Inglourious Basterds. He's also in the latest season of Only Murders in the Building. I can't remember his name, but he's amusing and he's very funny. He's hamming it up quite good in this scene. [harp sound to indicate an inserted sound] Future Brendan here: the actor I'm thinking of is Christoph Waltz. [harp sound to indicate the end of the insert] I don't think anybody else in this movie. I don't think there's anyone else recognizable. All the other characters are actors I've not seen before. I don't know. I wouldn't call it low budget, but it feels low budget. It's well made, though. So that is the most, most dangerous game.

The game to play with that. Maybe Specter Ops, which is a game about four people hunting one person. They're not trying to kill them, though. Beast maybe would be it. I just played that recently. I haven't talked about it in the pod yet, but, um, beast is a game where one person is a monster and the other people are hunters trying to kill the monster. So that's the same pattern. Even if, the in the most dangerous game you're a person. But I don't know. Perhaps the beast is the most dangerous game.

Next up, I watched The Wicker Man. This is the 1973 original movie. It takes place in a remote island in Britain. The idea is that someone has reported a girl missing, and this police officer comes to investigate and he flies in on a water plane. And basically the whole town starts gaslighting him. "Oh no, there's no girl missing." And this is a folk horror, sort of, thriller horror movie in the nature of a of midsummer. In fact, if you watch Midsommer, you are watching The Wicker Man in a lot of ways it's very similar. There are a lot of differences as well. Midsommer, I think, is much scarier. But Wicker Man has its own eeriness. The police officer is sort of being run around getting the run around from these townsfolk. He is. I don't I don't know if in the in the seventies when the movie was made, if he was supposed to be sympathetic. I find him really officious and obnoxious, and, I mean, I don't want him to get killed, but I don't really mind that they're tormenting him. There's some interesting sex scenes in the movie. Being in the seventies, it's got a kind of libertine aspect to it that's really good. And of course, Christopher Lee is hamming it up like nobody's business. Uh, that one's great. Really interesting. That's Wicker Man.

As for a game to play, the closest I can think of my family and I are currently playing the festival of Harvest Vale. [harp sound to indicate an inserted sound] Future Brendan here again, I mistakenly described the name of this game as the Festival of Harvest Vale. It's the Feast of Hemlock Vale Campaign in Arkham Horror The Card game [harp sound to indicate the end of the insert]. The link to that is in the show notes. And when we started playing, I'm like, oh, this is The Wicker Man as a Lovecraftian tale. And of course, Harvest Vale is a Lovecraftian tale itself, which is sort of baby. The Wicker Man is emulating the Lovecraft story, but they all overlap in crucial ways that make them be about the about similar things city folk and folk horror all wrapped up together in The Wicker Man, 1973.

Next up, we have Deep Cover. This is a 2025 comedy starring Bryce Dallas Howard and the guy who plays Nate in Ted Lasso and Orlando Bloom. These play three different people who are all part of an improv troupe, and they get hired by the cops to to perform a sting, and it goes wildly wrong. It is a fiasco movie, but a delightful one. It's really fun, very funny, and very dangerous. It's very entertaining. Funny and well made. I really enjoyed it. So if you like a good fiasco movie, especially one where it isn't the darkest of dark things, you know, like Fargo or A Simple Plan, these are tragedies. This is a comedy at its heart, but there it is, dramatic and exciting. You should check out Deep Cover 2025. Really good.

I... this is the one I don't know, I guess. Fiasco. There you go. What would you play with this or to do that, you'd play Fiasco. The kind of story that you tell in Fiasco is very much the story being told in deep cover. Bing bang boom! We got it. I got two left.

Kpop Demon Hunters. If you haven't watched K-pop Demon Hunters, you're really missing out. This is a very entertaining cartoon about a group of K-pop stars who are secretly demon hunters also, and a rival group of K-pop stars who are secretly demons. And there's a love story involved. There's a big, uh, snow leopard and a small crow involved, which is, I guess, a part of folk Korean folklore. The songs are bangers. It is really very entertaining to watch. It's got great animation, great action sequences, really, really good. If you haven't seen K-pop Demon Hunters, I don't know what you're doing. You should. It's really fun.

I have no idea what game I would play. Here's the game. I would suggest to go with this Free Radicals. Wait, Brendan, Free Radicals doesn't have anything to do with K-pop or demons. That's true. But its style in K-pop Demon Hunters, the style of the movie is the sort of purple neon cyberpunk future, and the style of Free Radicals is the same. Free Radicals is also the sort of neon hyper pop cyberpunk future, but with a positive spin. And that's this. K-pop Demon Hunters has that kind of feel of that positive spin. It's great, and I think I don't know that it fits exactly, but I think it's as close as we could hope to get. So that's K-pop demon Hunters.

And finally we got a chance to watch Dante's Peak. We watched this because we actually stayed at a hotel in the town where the town scenes from Dante's Peak were filmed. So we got to see all the streets and stuff from Dante's Peak. Of course, they all get destroyed by this volcano. Sorry if I spoiled the movie from 1997. There are some ridiculous action scenes in this movie. It's hard to even fathom how they could put them in, except that it was the 90s and people said, yeah, sure. Um, lots of weird, like really improbable physical adventure. Also, there was like this acid lake that was incredibly acidic to the point that it was like boiling away the boat they were riding in, which was, uh, scary and hilarious. Dante's peak was very silly and not great, but amusing. It was a bombastic thrill ride and I enjoyed it. I haven't gotten around to watching volcano yet, so I really have been missing out.

And of course, if you're gonna play a game about a volcano destroying a town, you've got to play The Downfall of Pompeii, which is, of course, about a town and a volcano. And all the people in the town having to run away from the volcano or getting killed by it. So you should definitely play that along with watching Dante's Peak.

Well, that's about it for me today. I want to say thanks for walking with me. Please reach out and let me know what you think of those games or those movies over on BoardGameGeek and Guild 3269 or what you watched in July and August. And otherwise, I look forward to talking with you next time. I hope that your next walk is as pleasant as mine was.

Bye bye.

[beep – out take start] Starring Blake. Uh, not Blake Lively. Blake. Blake. Uh. Bryce. Dallas. Bryce. Bryce. Dallas. Howard. [beep – out take stops]

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