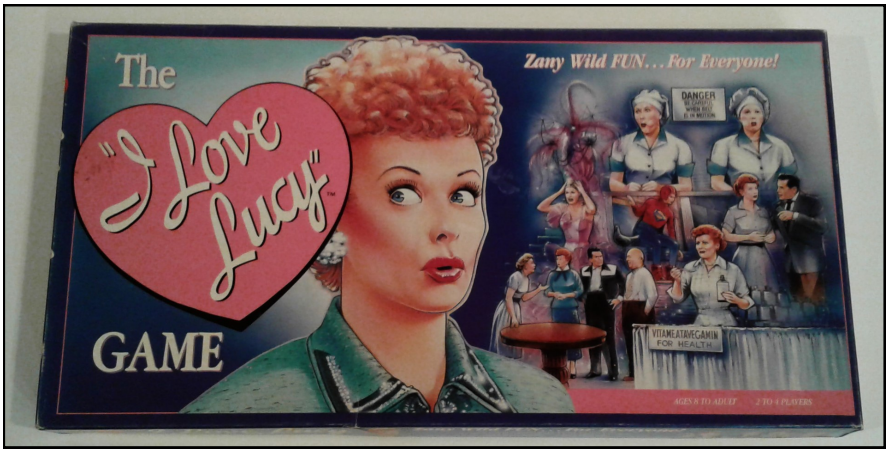
National Capital Radio & Television Museum

Artifact of the Week:

I Love Lucy Game



In the 1950s "I Love Lucy" was one of the most popular programs on television. Polls showed that its star, Lucille Ball, was almost everyone's favorite comedienne.

In the early days of television, companies that made board games rushed to bring new games to market based on hit shows. Several different "I Love Lucy" games were offered to fans. This one, from Talicor Games, is a more recent version, with a 1997 copyright. There was even a special edition of Monopoly based on the Lucy characters.

TV games, all somewhat similar, draw upon designs of traditional board games such as Parcheesi or Monopoly. Players roll dice and move tokens along a path on the board. Here, players begin with $100 in play money and seven "Character" cards representing characters on the show. The object is to be first to arrive at the Mertzes' apartment with at least $100 in cash, and all four of the main character cards (Lucy, Ricky, Fred, and Ethel) in hand. "Bonus cards" may direct the player to draw another card, or to give money to other players or have them pay that player, or to discard a character card. Sometimes a player is directed to act out a famous scene from the show, so this is not a game for shy introverts.

Internet reviews do not give this "I Love Lucy" game high marks.

The museum currently exhibits a number of other TV show games, among them, "Leave it to Beaver," "Twenty-One," and "Charlie's Angels." Most are on loan, not in our permanent collection. TV games in good condition sometimes bring a high price on eBay. If you find one in your attic and are not desperate for money, consider donating it to the museum!

We appreciate your support of the museum so that historical artifacts like this one, and the stories that go with them, can be preserved for future generations. THANKS!