

Finding Aid to the Heap Folk Art Monopoly Papers, 1901-2010

Summary Information

Title: Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers

Creator: John W. Heap (primary)

ID: 110.4372

Date: 1901-2010 (inclusive); 1975 (bulk)

Extent: 0.4 linear feet

Language: The materials in this collection are in English.

Abstract: The Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers accompanied the museum's acquisition of the John O. Heap Folk Art Monopoly game board, c. 1914. These papers include photographs, copies of the game design sheet and playing rules, and deposition-related documentation. The bulk of these materials are from 1975.

Repository:

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong
One Manhattan Square
Rochester, New York 14607
585.263.2700
library@museumofplay.org

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Use: This collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and by users of its library and archives. Though intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) have not been transferred, The Strong has permission to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Custodial History: The Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers were received by The Strong from John W. Heap in 2010. The papers accompanied the handmade board game created by John O. Heap, which was cataloged under Object ID 110.4372.

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Controlled Access Terms

Personal Names

- Anspach, Ralph, 1926-
- Heap, John O.
- Heap, John W.
- Heap, Roy W.

Corporate Names

- Parker Brothers, Inc.

Subjects

- Board games--United States--History--20th century
- Games--Research
- Monopoly (Game)
- Monopoly (Game)--History

Historical Note

Monopoly began its life in 1904 as The Landlord's Game, created and patented by Elizabeth Magie. The Landlord's Game, designed to highlight social pitfalls of unequal wealth, circulated informally and by word-of-mouth. As people copied their own versions of Magie's game, it morphed into what we now recognize as Monopoly. Charles Darrow of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, produced a commercial version of Monopoly, selling it in department stores in 1934. Parker Brothers soon purchased the rights to Darrow's game, and it became the best-selling board game of all time. However, several handmade versions of Monopoly pre-date Darrow's game; the most notable, which came to light in 1975, is the Heap Folk Art Monopoly game.

In 1974, economics professor Ralph Anspach published a game called "Anti-Monopoly." The game found a niche, and Anspach eventually sold more than one million copies worldwide. Along the way, the manufacturers of Monopoly brought a lawsuit against Anspach, claiming that Darrow had invented and registered the name "Monopoly," preventing Anspach from using the word. Among the evidence presented by Anspach were several folk art versions of Monopoly. During the trial, Roy W. Heap provided photographs of his father's game, created between 1910 and 1917, and gave a deposition that he'd played Monopoly while in his teens. The street names in the Heap Folk Art Monopoly game board represent places in Altoona, Pennsylvania, where Heap grew up, with many other details of the board and the playing pieces directly related to the game Monopoly as we know it today. Anspach eventually won the ten-year-long lawsuit in the Supreme Court, and the Heap Folk Art Monopoly game was declared the "second oldest known version of the world's most popular board game."

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers accompanied the museum's acquisition of the John Heap Monopoly game board, c. 1914. These papers include photographs, copies of the game design sheet and playing rules, and deposition-related documentation. The bulk of these materials are from 1975. A letter from John W. Heap, grandson of John O. Heap, is housed in Folder 1 and contains information about both the Heap family and the design of the Heap Folk Art Monopoly board game.

The Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers are arranged into one series. The collection is housed in one archival document box.

System of Arrangement

Series I: Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers, 1901-2010

Contents List

Series I: Heap Folk Art Monopoly papers, 1901-2010

Scope and Content Note: This series holds a detailed letter and enclosures submitted by John W. Heap, grandson of John O. Heap, creator of The Strong museum's Heap Folk Art Monopoly board game [[Object ID 110.4372](#)]. These items were labeled as denoted by John W. Heap and remain in their original order. The letter to Nicolas Ricketts, games curator at The Strong, contains information about the Heap family and a description of the items included with the Heap folk Monopoly board game.

Box 1

- Folder 1 Background letter from John W. Heap to Nicolas Ricketts, July 16, 2010
- Folder 2 "Enclosure 1" - Heap Folk Art Monopoly game board photograph, n.d.
- Folder 3 "Enclosure 2"- Game design sheet and rules for Heap Folk Art Monopoly game board, n.d. [copies]
- Folder 4 "Enclosure 3" - Deposition of Roy W. Heap in Anti-Monopoly trial, February 5, 1975 [copies]
- Folder 5 "Enclosure 4" - Deposition request letter to Roy W. Heap, January 24, 1975 [copy]
- Folder 6 "Enclosure 5" - Deposition verification letter to Roy W. Heap, September 3, 1975 [copy]
- Folder 7 "Enclosure 6" - Photographs of John O. Heap and Roy W. Heap, 1901, 1908, and n.d.