= Robert Abbott (game designer) =

Robert Abbott (born March 2 , 1933) is an American game inventor , sometimes referred to by fans as " The Official Grand Old Man of Card Games " . Though early in his life he worked as a computer programmer with the IBM 360 assembly language , he has been designing games since the 1950s .

Two of his more popular creations include the chess variant Baroque chess (also known as Ultima) and Crossings , which later became Epaminondas . Eleusis was also successful , appearing in several card game collections , such as Hoyle 's Rules of Games and New Rules for Classic Games , among others . In 1963 , Abbott himself released a publication , Abbott 's New Card Games , which included instructions for all of his card games , in addition to Baroque chess . Abbott also invented logic mazes , the first of which appeared in Martin Gardner 's Mathematical Games column in the October 1962 issue of Scientific American . One of the more prominent of these is Theseus and the Minotaur , which was originally published in the book Mad Mazes . His game Confusion was named " Best New Abstract Strategy Game " for 2012 by GAMES Magazine .

= = Biography = =

Abbott was born in St. Louis , Missouri , and attended St. Louis Country Day School . Abbott went to Yale for two years , then attended the University of Colorado for another two , but never graduated . Soon after , Abbott moved to New York , where he and his games were discovered by Martin Gardner . In 1963 , after Abbott 's book , Abbott 's New Card Games , received only moderate success , he " got tired of being poor " and moved back to St. Louis . There , he became a computer programmer at the Washington University Computer Research Laboratory . In 1965 , he moved back to New York , where he continued to work as a computer programmer , mostly with the IBM 360 assembly language .

Abbott created all of his card games during the 1950s , starting with Babel in 1951 , and ending with Auction in 1956 . Soon after , he moved to New York City , where the rules for his game Eleusis were first published by Martin Gardner in his Mathematical Games column . Motivated by the article , Abbott self @-@ published the rules for four of his card games in the book Four New Card Games in 1962 , which Abbott sold by mail . In 1963 , the book Abbott 's New Card Games was published by Sol Stein of Stein and Day , containing the rules for all eight of his card games and the rules for his chess variant , Baroque chess . In 1968 , the publisher Funk & Wagnalls published a paperback edition of Abbott 's New Card Games , in which Abbott slightly modified the rules of Baroque chess , but these changes never became popular . Around the same time that Abbott 's New Card Games was published , Abbott sent his maze , Traffic Maze in Floyd 's Knob , to Martin Gardner . This was the first logic maze to be published , appearing in Gardner 's Mathematical Games column .

Since then , Abbott has created various mazes , most of which appeared in the books SuperMazes and Mad Mazes . In 2008 , RBA Libros published a Spanish version of his book Abbott 's New Card Games , under the title Diez juegos que no se parecen a nada , which translates to Ten games that do not resemble anything . This version was not just a Spanish translation of the original , however ; the most up @-@ to @-@ date rules for the various games were used ; in addition , the rules for Eleusis Express and Confusion were included . In 2010 , his Where are the Cows ? maze was published by the Oxford University Press in the book Cows in the Maze . In 2011 , his game Confusion was published by Stronghold Games . The game was named " Best New Abstract Strategy Game " for 2012 by GAMES Magazine .

= = Logic mazes = =

Abbott is the inventor of a style of maze called logic mazes . A logic maze has a set of rules , ranging from the basic (such as " you cannot make left turns ") to the extremely complicated . These mazes are also called " Multi @-@ State mazes " . The reason for this name is that sometimes you can return to a position you were in before , but be traveling in a different direction .

That change in direction can put you in a different state and open up different choices for you . One example , from the book SuperMazes , would be a rolling @-@ die maze . Where you can move from a particular square depends on what number is facing up on the die . If you return to that same square , the die may be in a different state , with a different number on top . Thus , you would have different options than the first time .

= = = Traffic Maze in Floyd 's Knob = = =

The first logic maze ever published , Traffic Maze in Floyd 's Knob , appeared in the October 1962 issue of Scientific American in the Mathematical Games column .
The maze looks like a street grid , with arrows pointing down various roads at each intersection . When one comes to an intersection , only arrows leading from the road you are on to another road can be followed . One must continue in this fashion , following the arrows at the intersection , until the end is reached . When you come to an intersection from one direction , you have different options for which road to take than you would coming into the intersection from another direction ; therefore , this can be defined as a " multi @-@ state " or " logic " maze .

= = = Where Are the Cows ? = = =

Where are the Cows ? is one of Abbott 's most difficult mazes . It first appeared in his book SuperMazes . Abbott warns readers that it " may be too difficult for anyone to solve . " Since then , it has also appeared as the titular maze in the book Cows in the Maze .
The complexity in Where are the Cows ? includes self @-@ reference , changing rules , and flow charts . It is also worded so as to provoke confusion between an object (such as red text) , a reference to an object (such as the word " red ") , and even more subtle references (the word " word ") . The maze ends up being so complicated that it can even be difficult to work out the next move , let alone the end . In this maze , you have to use two hands , each starting at a different place . The instructions in one box might have to do with the box that the other hand is in , boxes you have already left , or complex combinations of the two .

= = = Theseus and the Minotaur = = =

Theseus and the Minotaur is another of Abbott 's better @-@ known mazes . It first appeared in his book Mad Mazes . Like Where are the Cows ? in SuperMazes , Abbott says that this " is the hardest maze in the book ; in fact , it is possible that no one will solve it . " Since then , several different versions of it have appeared , made by others , following the same theme , both on paper and in electronic forms .

= = Games = =

Abbott has created several games , including card games , board games , and one equipment game . As a whole , his games are not of particular fame , although they have some unique elements that set them apart from mainstream games . For instance , the card game Metamorphosis is a complex trick @-@ taking game . As you play the game , the rules change three times , so it is as if you are playing four different games that are threaded together .

= = = Baroque chess = = =

Baroque chess , or Ultima , was the only board game in the book Abbott 's New Card Games . Abbott 's reasoning for including this non @-@ card game in a card game book was that chess pieces are as plentiful as playing cards , and in this book , he wanted to introduce new games that did not require special equipment . Abbott 's friends , once he started teaching it to them , began to call the game " Abbott 's Ultima , " which he did not like at all . However , the publisher , Sol Stein ,

preferred the name " Ultima , " so that is the title that was used in the book .

= = = Eleusis = = =

Eleusis is probably Abbott 's most prominent game , due to its metaphors and its suitability for use as a teaching tool . He invented it in 1956 , and it appeared in his self @-@ published book Four New Card Games . It was also published in the book Abbott 's New Card Games a year later . Martin Gardner wrote about it in his Mathematical Games column in the June 1959 issue of Scientific American . Basically , the gameplay consists of the dealer choosing a secret rule dictating how cards are to be played , and the players playing cards in an attempt to figure out the rule through inductive reasoning . In 1973 , Abbott decided to improve Eleusis ; the result was considered to be far better than the original , with various improvements to the layouts and gameplay making it work quite a bit better . Martin Gardner wrote about this version in the October 1977 issue of Scientific American . Abbott also self @-@ published a pamphlet in 1977 with the rules for the improved version , titled The New Eleusis . It has appeared in several card game collections , such as Hoyle 's Rules of Games and New Rules for Classic Games , among others .

= = = Confusion = = =

Abbott initially created the game Confusion in the 1970s , and had it in finished form by 1980 . The game was published in Germany by Franjos in 1992 ; Abbott was not satisfied with this version , however , due to several flaws in it . The rules were published in the Spanish translation of his book Abbott 's New Card Games in 2008 , but the game did not get published in North America until 2011 . This Stronghold Games version was named " Best New Abstract Strategy Game " for 2012 by GAMES Magazine . The game is based on the idea of not knowing what your pieces are or what they do at the beginning of the game . His game Eleusis uses a similar idea , in that you do not know how cards are to be played at the beginning ; George Brancaccio , someone Abbott worked with at the Bank of New York , commented on this , saying " In your game Eleusis , you don 't know what cards can be played . Why don 't you make a board game where you don 't know how pieces move ? " This is what gave Abbott the idea , and he began work on it soon after .

= = Published work = =

Four New Card Games (1962)
Abbott 's New Card Games (1963 , again in paperback in 1968)
The New Eleusis (1977)
Mad Mazes (1990)
SuperMazes (1997)
Auction 2002 and Eleusis (2001)
Diez juegos que no se parecen a nada [Ten games that do not resemble anything] (2008 , translated by Marc Figueras)