

Everett Rogers

Everett M. Rogers (1931 in [Carroll, Iowa](#) - [Albuquerque, New Mexico](#), 21 October 2004), communications scholar, pioneer of [diffusion of innovations](#) theory, writer, and teacher. He is best known for his 'diffusion of innovations' theory and introducing the term '[early adopter](#)'.

Early life

He grew up on a farm in Iowa and had no plans to attend university until a school teacher drove him and some classmates to [Ames](#) to visit [Iowa State University](#). Rogers decided to pursue a degree in agriculture there. He then served in the Korean War for two years. He returned to Iowa State University to earn a PhD in sociology and statistics in 1957.

Academic research

He published 30 books, translated into 15 languages, and more than 500 articles. In a 47-year academic career, Rogers taught at [Ohio State University](#), [National University of Colombia](#), [Michigan State University](#), [University of Michigan](#), [Stanford University](#), [Universite de Paris](#), [University of Southern California](#), and the [University of New Mexico](#). In total, he taught at six US universities and six universities in Europe, the Far East, and Latin America. He taught or conducted research in Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Korea, Mexico, Nigeria,

Diffusion of Innovations

Rogers achieved academic fame for his [Diffusion of innovations](#) theory; his book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, is now in its fifth edition. He proved that adopters of any new [innovation](#) or idea could be categorized as innovators (2.5%), [early adopters](#) (13.5%), early majority (34%), late majority (34%) and laggards (16%), based on [Bell curve](#) mathematic division. Each adopter's willingness and ability to adopt an innovation would depend on their awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. People could fall into different categories for different innovations -- a farmer might be an early adopter of hybrid corn, but a late majority adopter of [VCRs](#). Rogers showed these innovations would spread through society in an [S curve](#).

His research and work became widely accepted in [communications](#) and technology adoption studies, and also found its way into a variety of other [social science](#) studies. [Geoffrey Moore](#)'s *Crossing the Chasm* drew from Rogers in explaining how and why technology companies succeed. Rogers was also able to relate his communications research to practical health problems, including [hygiene](#), [family planning](#), cancer prevention, and [drunk driving](#).

Later life

In 1995, Rogers moved to the University of New Mexico, having become fond of Albuquerque while stationed at an airbase during the Korean War. He helped UNM launch a doctoral program in communication.

Rogers suffered from kidney disease and retired from the University of New Mexico in the summer of 2004. He died just a few months later, survived by his wife, Corinne Shefner-Rogers, and two sons: David Rogers and Everett King.

See also

- [diffusion of innovations](#)
- technology adoption
- [communications](#)

External references

- [Obituary from University of New Mexico](#)
- [The Danger of the "Early Adopter" Myth](#)

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