

Pass It On®...

Will Rogers: A Man of and for the People.

Our world has always relied on storytellers with a little humor to set us straight in our pride and loosen our collars when conversations get heated.

Will Rogers wrote: "I never met a man I didn't like," and that is how he lived his life. Born in Oklahoma as a member of the Cherokee nation, he once quipped, "My ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower, but they met the boat." His affable personality and cowboy philosophy made him the voice of commonsense in politics and of hope during the Depression.

Rogers began his career in vaudeville after failing as a ranch hand in Argentina and having more success during a stint in South Africa, where he learned people would pay a little bit of money to see a cowboy do rope tricks. His fame skyrocketed in America when a steer escaped the ring at a New York circus, and Rogers skillfully roped it before the raging animal could climb the bleachers.

It was his matter-of-fact approach to life that made him so appealing, delivering dry aphorisms and witty observations about life and politics. "All I know is what I read in the papers," he deadpanned at the beginning of each show, then went on to read headlines and offer up homespun logic: "Why sleep at home when you can sleep in Congress?"

Even with all his laid-back mannerisms, Rogers was one of the hardest-working people in America. He appeared in 70 movies and was on the lecture circuit from coast to coast. His weekly newspaper musings reached 40 million readers, and he wrote over 4,000 columns. He wrote a string of humor books and a longer column for the Saturday Evening Post. He traveled around the world three times, started his own production company and jumped into a weekly radio broadcast that also went nationwide. He was often a guest at the White House, no matter which political party was in power. He played to the fallibility of leaders and roped in fans as easily as cattle on his ranch. His broad smile, slack shoulders, hands-in-pockets posture and fatherly wink made him the person you wanted to talk to when you needed a take on the world that could get you through the day. "I hope we never see a day when a thing is as bad as some of our newspapers make it."

In a world sensationalized by headlines, it's good for all of us to recall those cowboy roots, no matter who we are. We should rise with the sun, put in a good day's work, eat a healthy meal, brush the dust off a friend's back, and go out and mend a few fences. Bringing a horse wherever you go is also a great way to break down barriers.

Rogers served as a goodwill ambassador to Mexico and traveled cross-country on a fundraising tour to feed Americans during the Depression. The affable cowboy and his sidekick horse put people at ease and helped them realize that moving into the future didn't mean giving up on the lessons learned from the past.

"The good old days with most of us was when we didn't earn enough to pay an income tax," he reminds us. Yes, things are better today than they were yesterday, and tomorrow they will be even better.

Wit and Wisdom...[PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

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