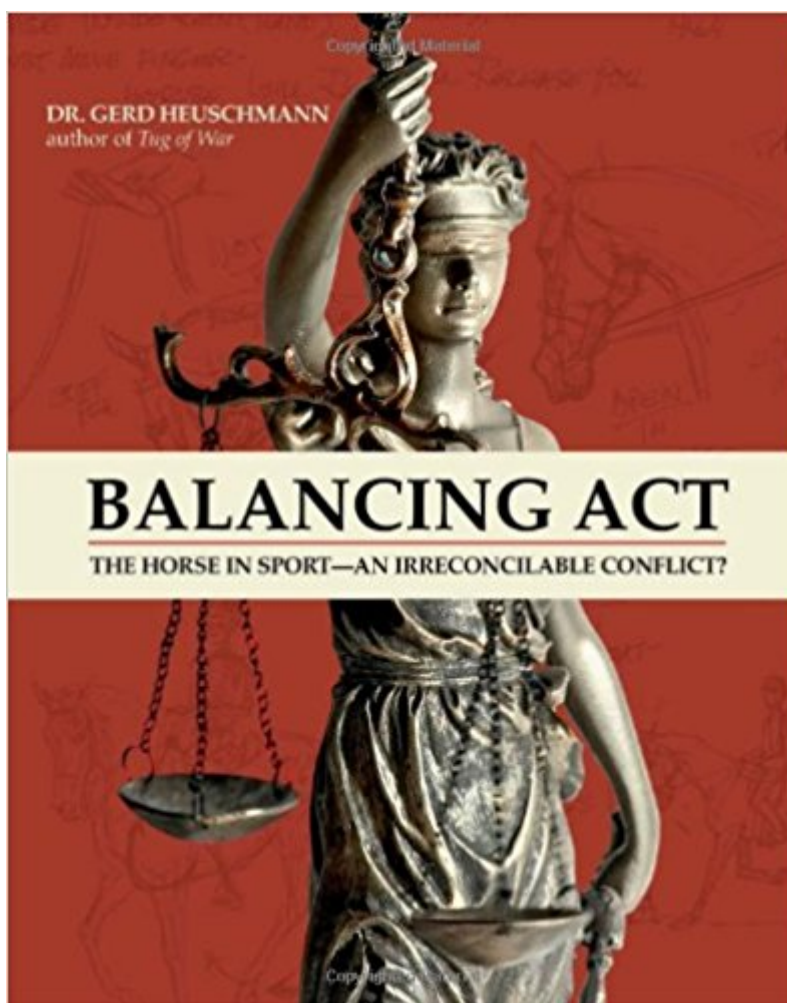


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# Balancing Act: The Horse In Sport, An Irreconcilable Conflict?



## Synopsis

Dr. Gerd Heuschmann burst onto the international equestrian scene with his startling expose *Tug of War*, in which he demonstrated with words and photographs the disturbing effects of the (then) popular "rollkur" or "hyperflexion" technique in training dressage horses. In his long-awaited follow-up book, Dr. Heuschmann explores what it means to be a "responsible rider," and asks whether, in today's society, it is indeed possible for riders in any horse sport to put the good of the horse first and foremost—most pointedly above ambition and fame. With fabulous art to help show the anatomy of the horse and how it is impacted by various riding techniques, as well as further proof that—although some steps have been taken to prevent the use of forceful and cruel techniques in the training of top horses—many sport horses still perform in pain and discomfort, this book is sure to follow in its bestselling predecessor's footsteps. Dr. Heuschmann's arguments are based in his experience as a veterinarian and his knowledge of the working equine's body, and are certain to ring true with every serious rider who also claims to be an avid horse lover.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In this new book, [Dr. Gerd Heuschmann] explores what it means to be a responsible rider and provides a detailed horse-friendly training method. The 23 chapters are handsomely illustrated with 150 color photos and anatomical instructions." —Lone Star Horse Report

The gist of this dense read is that good old-fashioned horsemen have died out, to be replaced by riders who go for maximum wow factor with minimal consideration for horse welfare. Most horses' problems stem from rider error and ignorance, but Heuschmann argues that modern (incorrect) methods are

encouraged by today's competition guidelines and young horse licensing requirements."

•Horse and Hound"Using photographs and anatomical illustrations, Heuschmann explains the classical training ideals, how modern judging (not only in dressage) has deviated from these ideals, and how they may be brought together once again." •USDF Connection"Through his education and experience, much that Heuschmann has to offer is a fresh or more acute angle on old knowledge. His training principles are biomechanically based and supported .... Myriad quotes from classical masters lend credence to his views." •Mary Daniels, Dressage Today

Gerd Heuschmann trained as a Bereiter (master rider) in Germany and is a veterinarian with a research interest in the training of horses in equestrian sports. He is the author of "Tug of War: Classical Versus Modern Dressage" and a coauthor of "Classical Schooling with the Horse in Mind."

Once again Gerd Heuschmann hits the nail on the head. Continuing on from his wonderful book "Tug of War; 'Modern' Versus Classical Dressage" and the DVD "If Horses Could Speak", Dr Heuschmann presents the facts in an honest and open manner. He has the courage to challenge the unethical and brutal training and riding methods from the basic level right up to the so called "top" international competitions. He attacks the judges who, by turning a blind eye, encourage the devastating effect this cruelty has on horses who are unable physically and mentally to sustain the unnatural and exaggerated movements currently enjoying popularity, and all in the name of money, egos and big business. However, Gerd Heuschmann goes one step further from his previous book by offering re-training solutions to previously ruined horses. Wonderful! His books should be required reading by everyone involved with horses at every level of every discipline, not just dressage. I feel the horse world has the potential to be a better place if equestrians take on board Dr Heuschmann's points and intensively researched facts and then act on them. I hope that the books cause a great deal of anguish and sleepless nights in some quarters because then, just maybe, not only will those beautiful creatures we are privileged to be involved with become winners with a life expectancy of more than seven miserable years but the riders and trainers will experience the sheer joy of riding a relaxed and happy horse who gives what we want willingly and to the best of its ability. Buy this book, read it, listen to what Dr Heuschmann is saying and demonstrating and TALK about it to everyone. Thank you Dr Heuschmann.

Great book every dressage rider should read this. There is a lot of confusion out there about the correct head and neck position to ride in. This book explains how neck position relaxes or contracts

the back. Lots of pics to help you see the difference. So many dressage horses suffer needlessly due to a lack of knowledge of correctly executed gymnastics and stretching. This is a great gift.

This book by Gerd Heuschmann, German veterinarian and equestrian, critiques and questions the dressage judging and riding at the International level. He explains and illustrates correct and classical dressage carriage and movement of the horse versus the incorrect dressage that is occurring in the highest show levels. And he takes the show judging to task for allowing this to happen. Very interesting read. But I wish the heads of the riders weren't blurred out in some of the pictures so that I could tell which top riders the author was criticizing!

Exceptional read. Dr. Gerd Heuschmann keeps the integrity of the horse at the first and foremost through the process of training for sport. If you have a chance to ride in a clinic with him, I would recommend it! He is a great lecturer, clinician, and writer. In an ideal world all my students would read this book.

My son, a nationally known professional horse trainer, teacher and, clinician requested this as a gift and is very happy with it. :0)

This book is now required reading for all my clients. It is excellent, and gives very detailed information regarding the anatomy and physiology of the horse, and how that affects the horse's ability to do its job, and also how the way we ride them affects them biomechanically. And beauty is, it's easy enough to understand the information. You may have to re-read a passage or two, to make sure you get it, but honestly it's a book you'll want to read over and over. It helps readers understand natural crookedness, as well as rider-caused crookedness, in the horse. While the author does specialize in dressage, and most of the examples are dressage horses, the information is relevant across disciplines, in particular to reiners. There are excellent photographs and illustrations to help the reader understand the information. The title may seem ominous and pessimistic, but I came away feeling inspired that as long as there are a few people out there getting this information put together in a comprehensible format, people inherently want to do what's best for their horses and will absorb this. I do believe we can be true to the correct training and the nature of the horse, and still be successful in the show ring. But we have to stay aware. Training a horse correctly is very difficult, there will always be mistakes made, but books like this empower those of us who want to find a more holistic way to train...and want scientific proof to back us up.

Once again, Dr. Hauschmann has produced what should become another bible for ANY person who owns/rides a horse. And this one seems to be written in an even MORE "accessible" way than his TUG OF WAR so there's NO excuse for any horseman/woman/young adult not to read this and, if possible, commit it to memory. It seems utterly miraculous to me that there actually IS someone out there who is willing to express their honesty proudly, without apology, and with such a wealth of knowledge, even when it flies in the face of all the practices and theory that supposedly support the controlling competitors (especially in dressage) in the various equine disciplines. One can only hope that this book will be read by not simply the "already converted", but by every competitor, judge, trainer and participant in all and any equine involved sport.

An interesting book if you have no knowledge of what has transpired in dressage since the advent of modern breeding. This is a thought-provoking book, but not very informative on training.

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