

Straight From the Horse's Mouth: Teaching Trainers Principles of Behavior



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Horsemanship

- Method of communication with the horse
- 2 schools of horsemanship

Traditional Horsemanship

- Dominance oriented
- More likely to use punishment
- Frequent use of artificial aids

Natural Horsemanship

- Partnership
- Do not condone punishment
- Emphasize use of natural aids

Horsemanship

- Both methods rely primarily on negative reinforcement and habituation
- Newer methods may appear to have a more scientific foundation, but do not utilize scientific methods
- Trainers rarely take data
- Myths, folklore, and traditions are still prevalent in the general horse community

Rearing

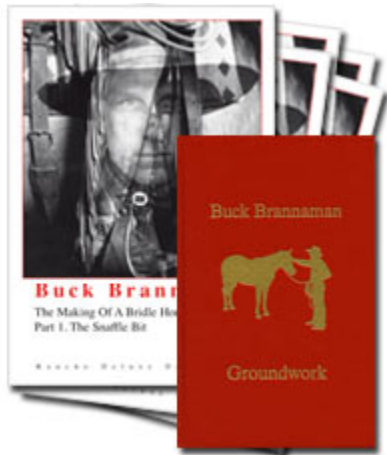


- Break an egg over horse's head
- Hit horse on top of the head with a 2x4
- Give him/her a big boot
- Smack him/her between the ears with your whip
- See website
 - <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20090502224058AAc0TAI>

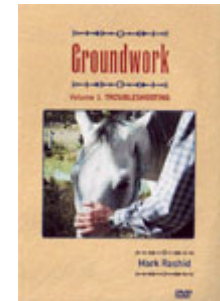
Books

- Animals In Translation – Temple Grandin
- Animals Make Us Human – Temple Grandin
- Influencing Horse Behavior: A Natural Approach to Training – Dr. Jim McCall





INCLUDES DVD, WORKBOOK + REFERENCE CARDS



ABA & Horses

- Ferguson & Rosales-Ruiz (2001), used clickers to shape trailer loading
- Warren-Smith & McGreevy (2007), used negative and positive reinforcement to shape the halt response
- The Domestic Horse: The Evolution, Development, and Management of its Behavior – Daniel Mills & Sue McDonnell (Eds)
- ORCA 2011
 - Alexandra Kurland – Hierarchies of Reinforcement
 - Steve White - Fluency

Animal Behavior Training

- SoCal = Autism
- Moorpark College Exotic Animal Training and Management Program
- UCLA animal laboratories
- Local pet stores & dog training facilities
- Began to look for a site

Bennett Farms

- Located at The Los Angeles Equestrian Center in Burbank, CA
- Head trainer Jim Bennett
- Approximately 12 staff
- 45 horses
- Daily activities
 - Training horses
 - Exercising horses
 - Riding lessons
 - Show preparations



Training Model

- Observation and program evaluation
- Group presentations
 - Introduction and Respondent Conditioning
 - Operant Conditioning
 - Punishment and Differential Reinforcement
 - Function and Stimulus Control
 - Shaping and Chaining

Training Model

- Trainers lacked a reinforcer menu; reliance on food
- Alternatives to punishment and overreliance on negative reinforcement
- Conducted a reinforcer survey and a preference assessment

Paired Choice Preference Assessment

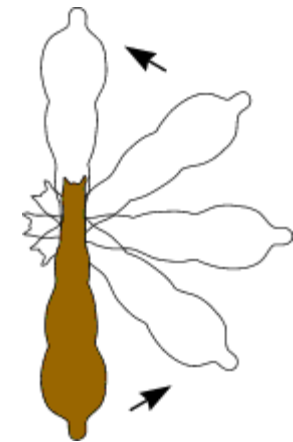
Trial	Left	Right
1	Mint	Carrot
2	Carrot	Mint
3	Carrot	Mint
4	Mint	Carrot
5	Mint	Carrot
6	Carrot	Mint
7	Carrot	Mint
8	Mint	Carrot

Clicker Training

1. Explained procedure during presentations
 2. Shared videos
 3. Modeled
 4. Observed them gave feedback
- Training Amanda

Individual consults

- One-on-one work with trainers
 - Coco: Piaffe
 - Vegas: Catching, kicking
 - Love: Moving away from trainer
 - Abby: Stopping, side passing, turns on the haunches
 - Noel: Turns on the forehand, parking out
 - Rascal: Turns on the forehand, parking out
 - Fritz: Backing up
 - Who Dat: Canter departures

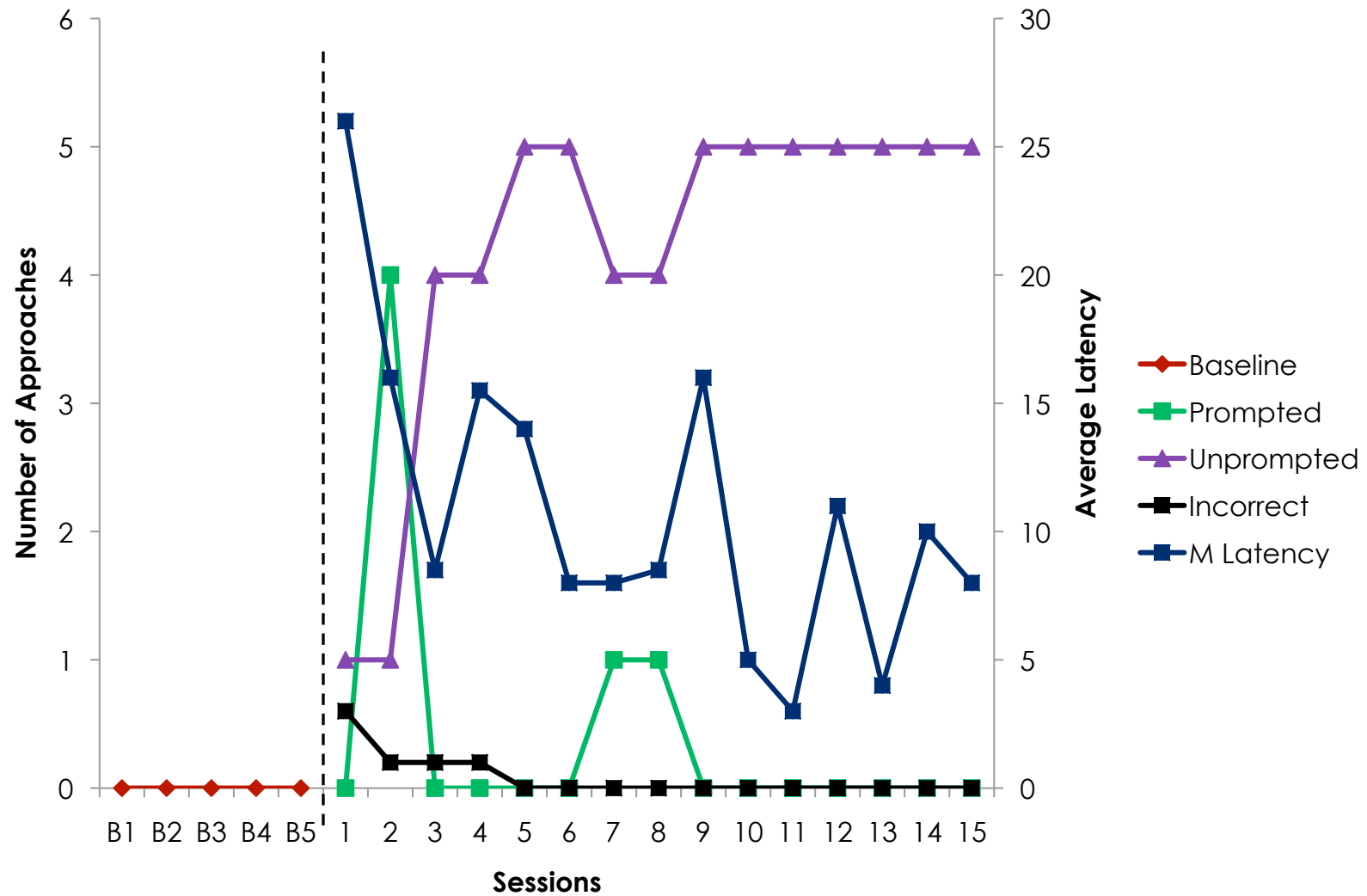


Vegas

- 7 y.o. American Saddlebred mare
- Couldn't be caught in her stall
 - always wore a halter
- Began using the clicker to reinforce Vegas putting her head through the halter



Results



Challenges

- Horses are bigger than us
- Often, you're on the horse's back
- Working in a new direction
- Some trainers don't buy into behavior analysis
- Treatment fidelity
- Taking data
- Not dealing with just a learner
- Funding

Future Directions

- Thesis
- Bringing more people on site to collect data
- Who Dat and Vegas
- Generalize positive reinforcement strategies across the horse training community

References

Ferguson, D.L. & Rosales-Ruiz, J. (2001). Loading the problem loader: The effects of target training and shaping on trailer loading behavior of horses. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 34, 409-423.

Grandin, T. & Johnson, C. (2009). *Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals*. Orlando, FL: Marniner Books.

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Warren-Smith, A.K. & McGreevy, P.D. (2007). The use of blended positive and negative reinforcement in shaping the halt response of horses (*Equus caballus*). *Animal Welfare*, 16, 481-488.