

## New exhibit opens in gallery



Sam Gorden/Index Sophomore Matt Freebersyser hangs poetry in the University Art Gallery for "Cross Connections: Design and Illustration from Art Schools Around the World" and "The China Trade Exhibitions" on Tuesday. A reception occurred for the exhibit Tuesday.

## Horseback competition requires athletic ability



BY JENNIFER MARKS  
Staff Reporter

How many sports require you to feed, clothe, house and clean up after your teammates? One. Horseback riding.

Now I'm not talking about Colorado trail ride horseback riding, but riding horses as a legitimate sport. I'm not athletically gifted enough to make the claim that riding horses is more difficult than all other sports, but it sure deserves more credit than what the world gives it.

Here's a sample of what you have to do in 60 seconds of a ride: heels down, shoulders back, eyes forward, hands tight, hands move with the horse, thumbs on top, chest up and breathe. And that's just at a walk. Increase speed or add jumps or a pattern into the mix, and you're thinking of 1,000 different things at once.

You also have to worry about your horse, a.k.a. your teammate. His head has to be level, forehead on the vertical. He should drive from behind, keeping his bend around the corners. Except instead of your teammate carrying his own weight, you have to tell him all these things. Imagine running down the football field trying to catch a ball while organizing your quarterback's moves.

When you finish a game on the football field, you and your teammates go home to your own houses. Horseback riding is another story. After a show, your horse gets a shower and dinner long before you do. He has to be fed, watered and bathed before you drag yourself home to do the same. You're also responsible for cleaning up the stinky mess after he eats and paying for his medical care when he gets hurt — and he will get hurt. And when he gets sick, it's your Friday night that gets put on hold to nurse him back to health. No football team that I know of does that for each other.

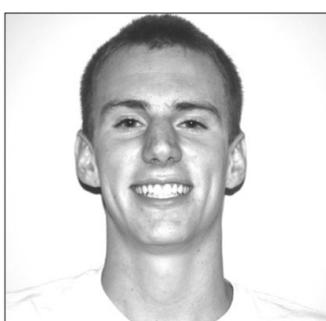
In the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, the association behind the competitions in which the Truman State Equestrian Team participates, riders draw a horse's name before their ride. They don't get to warm up the horses or even be in control of the reins before

walking into the arena. You blindly draw a name, mount and ride into the arena on a horse you've most likely never ridden before in your life. You have about 30 seconds to figure out the horse — how much rein she wants, how much leg you should use, whether or not you should use your crop, how to sit her trot successfully, how she reacts to other horses close to her. Try playing a football or soccer game with players who have never met each other. It probably won't be the most successful game.

Because there are many variations of the sport, one version of horseback riding can be completely different from another. Football is football, soccer is soccer and basketball is basketball. Horseback riding includes jumping, eventing, dressage, equitation, hunters, western pleasure, ranch horse, reining, rodeo, vaulting, polo and others. It's also one of a few Olympic sports in which men and women compete against each other. Not only is it incredibly difficult and widespread, riding horses levels the playing field between the sexes.

Next time you find yourself watching horseback riding during obscure ESPN programming, remember that though the goal of the sport is to make it look easy, it's anything but that.

## Books bring joy



### A life-long love affair with books leads writer to pursue English degree

BY JOHN BROOKS  
Staff Reporter

I'm in a relationship, and it's complicated. I'm hopelessly in love.

I love books. I learned to read when I was three. My parents started taking me to book sales shortly thereafter. When I was little, my job was to stay with the books my older sister and father collected. I was just as convinced that someone would try to take those books from me as I am that my English degree will get me a job after college — and I likely am just as wrong.

When I got older, and a younger brother was added to the family, it became his job to guard the books. I was let loose into the vast quarters of the three rooms packed with books to search for stories that intrigued me. At times only a few of the possible options interested me enough to make it back into the collection. At other times, anything was good enough. After the initial rush to grab the best books I would sit down with my father and he'd look at my collections, telling me which books we already had and sending me to put them back. The others went into the collection of books to buy. My parents were sticklers about spending money for many things — one year I opened a package to find a small brown cardboard box with X's marked on the sides after requesting an Xbox — but I never had too much trouble convincing my father to open his wallet for one, two or 20 more books.

We weren't after trashy literature, either. We searched for the crown jewel of those early Saturday morning sales to gloat about at lunch to my mother — the landmark books. Historical books about topics from the rule of Genghis Khan to the Crusades, written in a fashion accessible to a child yet informative enough that I remembered facts like Khan's propensity for multiple wives years later

during my AP history classes. My favorite was "Great American Fighter Pilots of World War II." I lived in that book, riding in the cockpit along with pilots in my favorite aircraft — the P-38 Lightning and P-51 Mustang — as they escorted B-17 bombers across Berlin on daring raids. I didn't grasp the significance or deadliness of warfare at the time — I still don't — but at least I was reading. The pictures in these books were rare, but my young mind filled in the details. My parents had introduced me to the gateway drug of literature — I had found a book I truly enjoyed, and the rest of the world was drab and wan in comparison, kind of like an English major the first time you talk to them.

At one of these sales, I found the love of my teenage years — Star Wars novels. Now, after seeing "Star Wars," you might be thinking, "nerd" — and you'd be right. But these books kept me reading. They were rare to find at library sales, so when my grandparents visited and took me to the magical forest of Barnes and Noble I quickly picked out the next book in whatever series I was enthralled with at the moment. Sometimes I would have the book read before they completed their 10 hour trip home. Eventually, though, I grew up.

I grew up, and got a bank account and a summer job as a lifeguard. What did I buy with my first paycheck? Nothing, because my mom made me save it. But with my second paycheck? Books. At a time when my peers were saving for video game systems, I purchased many books, some of which are on my bookshelf at Truman State now. The rest are boxed up in my closet. I mostly had abandoned my Star Wars phase by this point, so I looked for new material to read. High school left me with little time for frivolous activities. When I did have time to read, though, I ordered Tim O'Brien's "The Things They Carried," Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World" and Cormac McCarthy's "The Road." I never stopped reading, even if I didn't have much time for it.

Many of the books we picked at library sales ended up being wrapped and given as birthday gifts. As children, my parents gave my siblings and I the same number of books as our age. I've been building my personal library of books now for almost 20 years. I have filled bookshelves in my room with books of poetry, collections of short stories, dissertations on theology and philosophy, and yes, books that are simply fun to read. I have three books on order from Amazon right now. My parents gave me a love of reading, and it's a gift I'll always treasure.



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Interviews will be conducted Oct. 22-23-24-29-30. Applications are available online at [career.truman.edu/Internships/mogovBrochure.asp](http://career.truman.edu/Internships/mogovBrochure.asp).