

Parker Jones Wentworth Fellowship Profile

Parker Jones had already been saving money to visit India when the Wentworth fellowship crossed his radar. Suddenly, he found himself making travel plans to New Dehli, Ahmedabad, and Godhra for the first two weeks in August to witness the reality that he was introduced to in Arundhati Roy's collection of essays *War Talk* (2003).

War Talk unveils truths about "separatist riots and the resulting massacre of Muslims by Hindus." Jones describes how haunted the text left him, especially the fact that "the violence indicates state support from India's government due to inaction and an inappropriately brief investigation."

"I couldn't believe that it was so recent," Jones said, "I had to go. I read these atrocities on the page and couldn't part with their literal reality in another country."

Jones describes his love for NPR ("I'm the annoying 'I heard a story on that earlier this week...' guy.") and his hobby of "beard-growing." He can't stand pessimism, the US's support of Israel, or horseradish. He graduated with his bachelor's in English Literature in 2011 and is set to graduate with an MA in English in 2015, and has been involved on campus with Sigma Tau Delta, the Palaver Journal, the GSA, and the GEA.

"I'm an incredibly optimistic person at heart, and feel that if I can just *show* people what is going on, what is actually happening that might be hidden in the shadows, then something can be done about it... This optimism, I'll admit, is to a fault, but I'll gladly shoulder that burden over the guilt of tranquility," Jones said.

While in India, Jones will visit destroyed and damaged religious places, view government buildings and museums, visit the Godhra train station (known to be a catalyst for riots), and celebrate India's Independence day (to name a few of his activities).

A lot of the consequences that Jones read about in *War Talk* remain unresolved, and he feels it his duty to visit, see the damage for himself, and help to spread the word.

"How could I study Jane Austen's London when this was/[is] happening?" he asked.

Most people view the Wentworth fellowship as a way of changing the lives of the students who receive it, but Jones plans to use it to change the world for the better.