

# North Australia Research Unit (NARU)



Australian  
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## 2017 Public Seminar Series

### Victory, disaster, or scapegoat? Aboriginal 'self-determination' policy in the Northern Territory during the 1970s

#### Presented by:

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#### Abstract

It is commonly understood that the federal policy of Aboriginal self-determination was responsible for significant changes that occurred in the Territory's remote Aboriginal Indigenous settlements in the 1970s. Rather than the administrative changes that self-determination policy entailed, broader policy shifts associated with 'equal rights' enabled remote Indigenous people to enact their own agendas of reform. This reformism brought deep and lasting changes to the Territory's Indigenous nations, and shaped the modus operandum of the "communities" and town camps created by self-determination policy. This paper sheds new light on a controversial period in Territory history that has had lasting effects.



#### Biography

Charlie Ward lived and worked in the Gurindji communities of Kalkaringi and Daguragu between 2004–06. His first book, *A Handful of Sand: the Gurindji Struggle after the Walk-off* (Monash University Publishing) appeared in 2016. Charlie is a PhD candidate of Western Sydney University, based at the Australian National University's North Australian Research Unit. His doctoral research examines the effects of the federal policy of Aboriginal Self-determination in the Northern Territory during the 1970s–80s.

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 12.15pm**

'The Library' NARU Campus, 23 Ellengowan Drive, Brinkin  
This seminar is free and open to the public

The views expressed in this lecture are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the view of ANU.

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