

## Land and Environment in Warwick Thornton's *Samson & Delilah* (2009)

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This paper discusses how understandings of land and the environment is presented in Indigenous Australian film. It introduces *Samson & Delilah* (2009) by Katej director Warwick Thornton – a very unconventional slow and almost silent film. It is emotionally very challenging as it unrelentingly shows the consequences of colonization for Indigenous Australians, and specifically the rough reality for Indigenous youth in isolated communities. It tells a youth love story set in a remote village near Alice Springs, where life seems suspended with nothing to do, to gain, or aspire to for young people. Switching between the rural and urban, the film speaks of marginalization, abuses, violence, and devastation that the young couple faces. Understandings of their culture and the land, which the young have not lost nevertheless, saves them from plain destruction and death. The paper will discuss how this Indigenous film communicates young Indigenous Australians' understandings of land, culture, and the environment as well as their struggles for plain survival.

### Bio

**Kerstin Knopf** holds an MA (1997) in American/Canadian, Hispanic and Scandinavian Studies, a PhD (2003) and a second PhD (Habilitation 2012) from the University of Greifswald in Germany. She studied and researched also in Los Angeles (USA), Gothenburg (Sweden), Regina, Ottawa and Toronto (Canada). She taught North American literature, film, and media in Greifswald, Rostock and Mainz and is currently full professor for Postcolonial Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Bremen. Her main research interests are Indigenous film and literature, Postcolonial Studies focusing on North America, Australia, and Papua New Guinea, African Diaspora Studies, American and Canadian romantic literature, American prison literature, and Women and Gender Studies. She published *Decolonizing the Lens of Power: Indigenous Films in North America* (Rodopi 2008) and several other books.