



# Blossoms and Blood: Postmodern Media Culture and the Films of Paul Thomas Anderson

*Jason Sperb*

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From his film festival debut *Hard Eight* to ambitious studio epics *Boogie Nights*, *Magnolia*, and *There Will Be Blood*, Paul Thomas Anderson's unique cinematic vision focuses on postmodern excess and media culture. In *Blossoms and Blood*, Jason Sperb studies the filmmaker's evolving aesthetic and its historical context to argue that Anderson's films create new, often ambivalent, narratives of American identity in a media-saturated world.

*Blossoms and Blood* explores Anderson's films in relation to the aesthetic and economic shifts within the film industry and to America's changing social and political sensibilities since the mid-1990s. Sperb provides an auteur study with important implications for film history, media studies, cultural studies, and gender studies. He charts major themes in Anderson's work, such as stardom, self-reflexivity, and masculinity and shows how they are indicative of trends in late twentieth-century American culture. One of the first books to focus on Anderson's work, *Blossoms and Blood* reveals the development of an under-studied filmmaker attuned to the contradictions of a postmodern media culture.



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