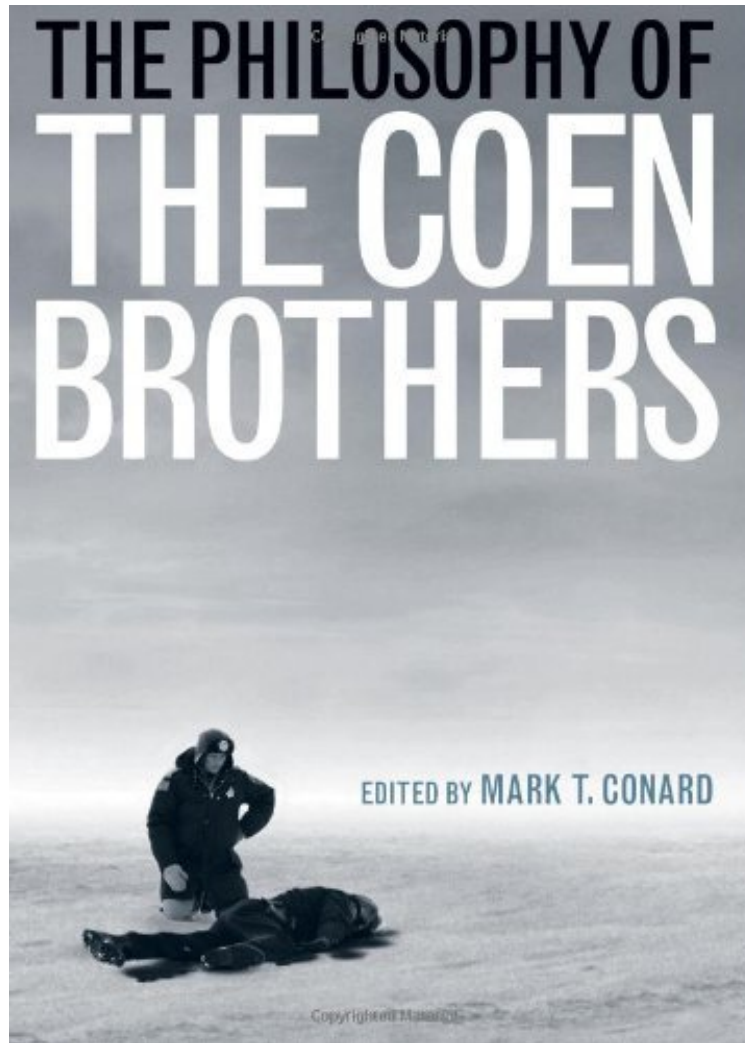


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Mark T. Conard

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Mark T. Conard : The Philosophy of the Coen Brothers (Philosophy Of Popular Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Philosophy of the Coen Brothers (Philosophy Of Popular Culture):

26 of 28 people found the following review helpful. Rebirth of TragedyBy Review GuyFriedrich Nietzsche believed for a time that the composer Richard Wagner would be able to unite all the noble impulses of art into an opera capable of sublimating European culture, just as classical tragedy ennobled the Athenians. Wagner failed, even in Nietzsche's judgement, but I am reminded of him every time I see a Coen Brothers film. Like Wagner, they have created a stage upon which the plastic/Apollonian (cinematography, lighting, set and costume) engages the musical/Dionysian (script,

drama, soundtrack). But where Wagner failed, the Coens have succeeded. Their films together constitute the rebirth of tragedy here in modern America - a multimedia art of moral choice, with a philosophical vocabulary and contemporary significance. There's nothing deeper or more relevant on the American scene. And I guess that accounts for just why this book so utterly blows the doors off any other "Philosophy of" book I've encountered. Like Woody Allen or Stanley Kubrick, the Coens produce film that is not merely philosophical, but is philosophy itself - the kind of art that drives fans to study philosophy in the first place. But, in approaching the Coens, you do need some guidance. These are two guys who know the canon, cold, from Homer (O Brother Where Art Thou?) to Kant (See Walter in the Big Lebowski) to Heidegger (Barton Fink). At least part of the opacity of their films stems from the audiences' unfamiliarity with these themes. And this is where this book comes in handy. This is a collection of truly thoughtful, high caliber works of scholarly criticism. It is so much better than similar titles like "The Simpsons and Philosophy" that I kinda wish it had a different title. Oh well, bottom line: if you like either philosophy or the Coen Brothers, you'll LOVE this book. Expect to gain new insights on Barton Fink's wallpaper, the Dude's relationship with the old cowboy, and the nature of Anton Chigurh. The authors are all philosophers, but they clearly love and understand film, and come at some of these problems from a film-studies perspective. I can only hope the same people involved in this will follow up with a "Philosophy of David Lynch."

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Technical Text
By Ronald J. Sribnik
The book is very technical. It presumes a basis in 19th and 20th century philosophy. It is probably a good text for a film student in an undergraduate or graduate program but is probably not appropriate for a more casual reader.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Love those Coen Brothers; love philosophy: Here's a marriage of the two!
By Alonzo Rumpf
I haven't read the entire thing (it's in storage, now), but what I read was enjoyable and helped connect ideas that I was looking at in philosophy with the movies of some of my favorite writers/directors!

Many critics agree that Joel and Ethan Coen are one of the most visionary and idiosyncratic filmmaking teams of the last three decades. Combining thoughtful eccentricity, wry humor, irony, and often brutal violence, the Coen brothers have crafted a style of filmmaking that pays tribute to classic American movie genres yet maintains a distinctly postmodern feel. Since arriving on the film scene, the Coens have amassed an impressive body of work that has garnered them critical acclaim and a devoted cult following. From *Raising Arizona* and *Fargo* to *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and *No Country for Old Men*, the Coens have left an unmistakable imprint on Hollywood. *The Philosophy of the Coen Brothers* investigates philosophical themes in the works of these master filmmakers and also uses their movies as vehicles to explore fundamental concepts of philosophy. The contributing authors discuss concepts such as justice, the problem of interpretation, existential role-playing, the philosophy of comedy, the uncertainty principle, and the coldness of modernity. *The Philosophy of the Coen Brothers* is not just for die-hard *Lebowski Fest* attendees, but for anyone who enjoys big ideas on the big screen.

"This volume is written for both fans of the Coen brothers and the philosophically curious, without the technical language. Both educational and entertaining, this philosophical compilation is recommended for public and academic libraries, particularly those with degree programs in philosophy and film." *Library Journal*

About the Author
Mark T. Conard is assistant professor of philosophy at Marymount College. He is the series editor of *The Philosophy of Popular Culture* series and the editor of numerous books, including *The Philosophy of Film Noir*, *The Philosophy of Neo-Noir*, and *The Philosophy of Martin Scorsese*. He lives in New York, New York.