

**Suggested Interview Questions for Cathleen Falsani,  
author of *The Dude Abides: The Gospel According to the Coen Brothers***

The films of Joel and Ethan Coen are filled with murder, mayhem, deception, and chaos, as you point out. Is the Coeniverse a godless place?

What's the overarching spiritual message of the Coen Brothers films?

You identify certain clear dos and don'ts in the Coeniverse. There are rules. What are some of the "Coenmandments"?

What are some moral and ethical questions that the Coen Brothers grapple with in their films?

What are some ways you see the Coens' Jewish upbringing influencing their films?

How do you respond to critics who say their work is "all style without any soul"?

Why do you call *Fargo* "perhaps the finest example of a Judeo-Christian morality play in all of American cinema"?

How does *Fargo*'s heroine Marge Gunderson embody the triumph of love?

Let's talk about the Dude. *The Big Lebowski* seems to be your favorite Coen film. Why?

What about *The Big Lebowski* makes it the Coens most blatantly spiritual movie?

What is a *lamed vavnik* and why do you think the Dude qualifies?

*No Country for Old Men*, which won the Best Picture Oscar, is one of the darkest films in a dark oeuvre. What does this movie have to say about evil, and about the thorny theological question of theodicy (how a good God can permit evil to exist)?

How is *Blood Simple*, the Coens' first film, a meditation on free will?

The Coens' forthcoming movie, *A Serious Man*, will be out in October. You call it the "most overtly religious and perhaps the most autobiographical of all of their films." Tell us about it.

You've written often about the Christian concept of grace, including in your previous book, *Sin Boldly*. Where do you find instances of this concept in Coen movies?

Why do you think people have such intense reactions to the work of the Coen Brothers?

Why do movies have such a powerful effect on us?