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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [251]-264) and indexes.
Nota di contenuto	Part I: Spreading the blame around -- The atheistic answer : abandoning the quest -- Alternative gods : falling back on a convenient worldview -- A demon at work : letting benevolence slip -- Part II: Redefining God -- Limited power and knowledge : accentuating human freedom -- Split personality : reconciling justice with mercy -- A disciplinary procedure : stimulating growth in virtue -- Punishment for sin : blaming the victim -- Part III: Shifting to the human scene -- Suffering as atonement : making the most of a bad thing -- Justice deferred : banking on life beyond the grave -- Mystery : appealing to human ignorance -- Disinterested righteousness : questioning the problem.
Sommario/riassunto	In the ancient Near East, when the gods detected gross impropriety in their ranks, they subjected their own to trial. When mortals suspect their gods of wrongdoing, do they have the right to put them on trial?

What lies behind the human endeavor to impose moral standards of behavior on the gods? Is this effort an act of arrogance, as Kant suggested, or a means of keeping theological discourse honest? It is this question James Crenshaw seeks to address in this wide-ranging study of ancient theodicies. Crenshaw has been writing about and pondering the issue of theodicy - the human effort to justify the ways of the gods or God - for many years. In this volume he presents a synthesis of his ideas on this perennially thorny issue. The result sheds new light on the history of the human struggle with this intractable problem.
