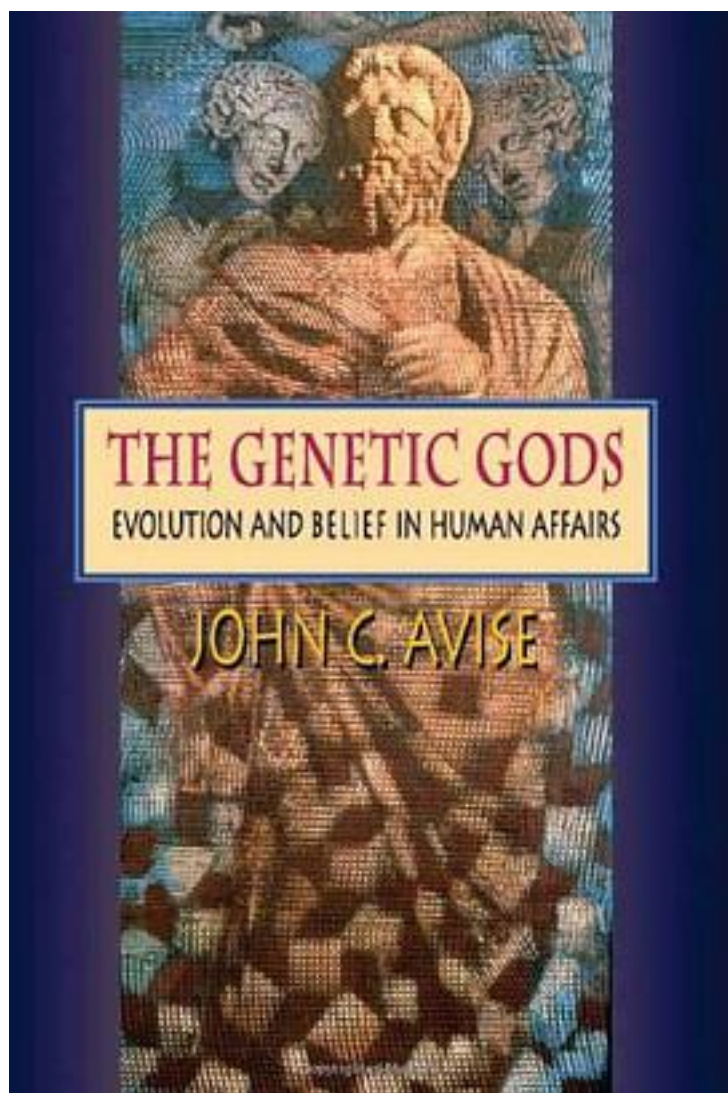


The Genetic Gods



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In clear terms, John Avise reviews discoveries in molecular biology, evolutionary genetics, and human genetic engineering, and discusses the relevance of these findings to issues of concern traditionally reserved for mythology, theology and religious faith. The text explains how the "genetic gods" figure in our development - not just our metabolism and physiology, but even our emotional disposition, personality, ethical leanings and even religiosity. Yet genes are physical rather than metaphysical entities. Having arisen via an amoral evolutionary process - natural selection - genes have no consciousness, no sentient code of conduct, no reflective concern about the consequences of their actions. It is Avise's contention that late-1990s genetic knowledge can inform attempts to answer typically religious questions - about origins, fate and meaning.

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