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# UNDERSTANDING RICHARD POWERS

Joseph Dewey

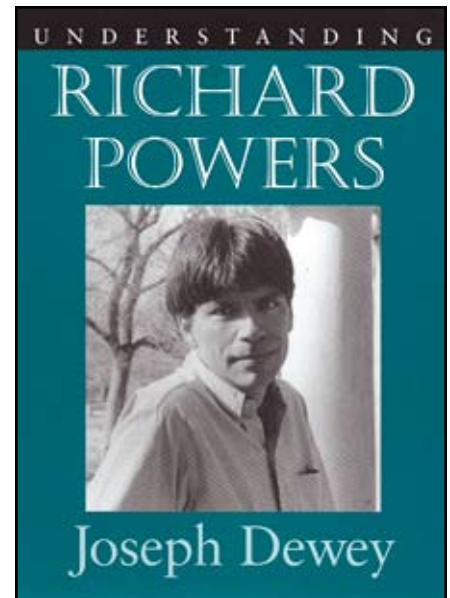
"Dewey's book is a good place to start for readers who are interested in Powers, and it will have a positive effect on further critical studies."—*Choice*

*Understanding Richard Powers* presents an introduction to one of the most important and admired writers to emerge in the post-Pynchon era of American literature. Joseph Dewey contends that while Powers's novels investigate the most pressing issues of the new millennium, the novelist is most deeply interested in the same thematic argument that consumed Ralph Waldo Emerson and Emily Dickinson—the problem of the self, the deep and unshakable loneliness that has always been at the heart of the American literary imagination.

Through an overview of Powers's career and close readings of his novels, which include *Galatea 2.2*, *Prisoner's Dilemma*, *The Gold Bug Variations*, *Operation Wandering Soul*, *Gain*, and *Plowing the Dark*, Dewey places Powers in context as a major voice in the first generation born entirely within the era of television and the computer and shows us how Powers reminds his readers that we have never been so connected and yet never quite so alone.

*Understanding Contemporary American Literature* • Matthew J. Bruccoli, series editor

May 2008, 192 pages



An associate professor of American literature at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, **Joseph Dewey** is the author of *Beyond Grief and Nothing: A Reading of Don DeLillo*, *Novels from Reagan's America: A New Realism*, and *In a Dark Time: The Apocalyptic Temper in the American Novel of the Nuclear Age*.

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