



JANUS

A student lead book club
exploring
contemporary literature with
classical themes

For Christopher Phillips, philosophy is a passion: it is not so much a discipline to be learned as an experience to be lived. Taking his cue from Socrates, the inaugurator of the Western philosophical tradition, Phillips embarks on a search for truth and meaning through a series of conversations that is at once refreshing, humorous, troubling, confusing, encouraging, depressing, and provocative. What makes Plato's Socratic dialogues so enduring--and Phillips's book so intriguing--is that for both Plato and Phillips, philosophy is not something you read or study. It is something you do. Plato wrote in *Parmenides* that "without wandering around and examining everything in detail one is unable to secure understanding." Phillips takes this approach--the Socratic approach--to heart. In the course of *Socrates Café*, he travels around asking questions of everyone who's interested. Just like the real Socrates, who did not confine himself to the Athenian ivory tower, Phillips searches out public conversations--what he calls Socrates cafés--with children, seniors, psychiatrists, prisoners, ex-academics, students, lawyers, and everyday people. In a sense, the book is a series of short, modern-day Socratic dialogues interspersed with meditations on the nature of philosophical inquiry.

Quid Janus Legit? Spring 2009

Socrates Café: A Fresh Taste of Philosophy

by **Christopher Phillips**

March 22, 4 pm

Christopher Center,

First Floor Fireplace Lounge

Come discuss it with us this spring. The discussion will be lead by Classics Major, Nicole Haworth.