

# Media Release

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## FIGHT CLUB OR A MASTERY CLUB – WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER YOUR CHILD JOIN?

**Media Release- Thursday 29 March, Sydney Australia.** Confrontational and violent novel *Fight Club* by Chuck Palahniuk has made headlines after recently being added to the VCE English curriculum. The novel, which spawned a cult film starring Brad Pitt, describes a secret underground club where men meet to channel primal male aggression as a form of therapy. The film's release in 1999 saw groups of young men in the US form their own fight clubs.

Liliane Grace, Melbourne author of *The Mastery Club*, questions the value that youth will gain by studying *Fight Club* and asks parents which sort of Club they would prefer their kids join - a 'Fight Club' built on fist-fighting and violence or a 'Mastery Club', in which youth are invited to take responsibility for achieving their dreams by understanding the importance of their self-talk and of character values like persistence and resilience. Her book inspires adolescences to form clubs where they can support and challenge each other in achieving their goals, and has been credited with improving young readers' attitudes and confidence levels.

"Fight Clubs emerge when individuals feel alienated and frustrated; a Mastery Club is designed to provide a support system and to validate youth in their attempts to create a life they will love living," said Grace.

"Palahniuk makes many valid points with his novel, including the call to men to reject superficiality and connect with their strength. Fist-fighting and explosives are how his protagonists deal with those issues, however, as the old saying goes, if our only tool is a hammer, the whole world looks like a nail. *The Mastery Club* offers a set of tools and principles for making conscious, responsible decisions and for engaging with others in a way that offers both support and challenge, because we all need both."

Grace refers to two basic life principles: that 'what we feed, grows', and that 'we get back what we put out'. She suggests that requiring youth to dwell on violence in the process of studying texts such as *Fight Club* is planting seeds that parents might not wish to plant. Alternatively, she proposes inspiring literature such as *The Mastery Club* that provides thought-provoking philosophies and a set of practical tools that will encourage youth to act on and achieve their personal goals.

*The Mastery Club's* premise is validated by a Dominican University Study, which found that persons who wrote down a goal, communicated it to a supportive friend, had an action plan and set up a framework for accountability, were much more likely to succeed; this is the structure of a Mastery Club.

According to Psychologist, Family Therapist, Child Educator and Director of SuperCamp Australia, Heather Yelland, there is already too much exposure to violence. "The unfortunate reality of modern life is that children are exposed to an alarming amount of violence. Not only does it render them dulled to the impact of violence, it gives the impression that it is both normal and acceptable. The fact that our education system is suggesting a study of the kind of violence outlined in Palahniuk's book is disturbing when there are so many great alternatives that stimulate young people's hearts and minds alike," Yelland says.

*The Mastery Club* by Liliane Grace is a prize-winning book in the category of Youth Fiction and an Australian bestseller. Books are available from bookstores and online at [www.themasteryclub.com.au](http://www.themasteryclub.com.au).

Liliane Grace is available for interviews and/or comment. Tel. 03 9018 9724 or 0407 901 008.