



Media Release – June 9, 2011

**WHO:** PROFESSOR BARRY MARSHALL, Nobel Laureate and ASMR Medalist 2011  
**WHAT:** ASMR Medical Research Week® Dinner  
**WHERE:** Hilton on the Park  
**WHEN:** June 9, 2011

**Barry Marshall**  
**Professor, Physician, Scientist and Pioneer**  
in Melbourne today for the ASMR Medical Research Week® Dinner.

In 2005 Barry J. Marshall and J. Robin Warren were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in recognition of their 1982 discovery that a bacterium, *Helicobacter pylori*, causes one of the most common and important diseases of mankind, peptic ulcer disease.

While at Fremantle Hospital in 1984, Marshall proved that the new germ was harmful in a well-publicised self-administered experiment, in which he drank a culture of *H.pylori*. Persevering despite widespread skepticism, Marshall also came up with combinations of drugs that killed the *H.pylori* bacteria and eliminated ulcers permanently.

The brilliant, entertaining and entrepreneurial Professor Marshall once said ***“If you're curious about something and it's fun to muck around with it, then there's probably a career in there somewhere”***. On the way to the Nobel Prize, he and Robin Warren faced ridicule by those who espoused conventional wisdom that bacteria could not live in the acidic stomach. They persisted and we all reaped the reward. "Pay no attention to stereotypical views," is a Marshall mantra.

Marshall believes, *“Australians needs to be aware we are not a truly secular country.*

*We still not have religious people trying to control our science. This battle started 500 years ago with Galileo when he was excommunicated for saying that the earth rotated around the sun, and more recently with Charles Darwin. And it still continues - the GMO debate for example. Natural and alternative medicine might be another pseudo-religious group trying to hold back advances in modern science. Some of this influence filters back into science through Government sponsored and politically loaded ethics committees, whose bible is typically an out-dated NHMRC policy or guideline document. These serve to ensure that Australian medical research lacks spontaneity.*

*What is ethical or unethical? Your ethics may not be my ethics, or may not be the Pope's ethics...*

*I believe stem cell research has been stifled in Australia due to religious beliefs. This shouldn't be allowed to happen. Scientific freedom should prevail except in very extreme cases”.*

**Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, will also be announcing the winner of the Commonwealth Health Minister's Award for Excellence in Health and Medical Research at the Dinner**

Editor's Note: Interview and photo opportunities  
Marshall bio available at <http://www.asmr.org.au/MRW.html>

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