PATENT LAW AND POLICY: CASES AND MATERIALS
Sixth Edition
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PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION

In the twenty-one years since the first edition of this casebook was published, the law of patents has undergone sweeping changes. Indeed, the pace of change seems to be getting even faster in recent years, as intellectual property becomes more important to the national and world economies, and as the fit between existing patent doctrine and modern business needs is reevaluated by a variety of judges, lawyers, academics, and institutions.

Some of the forces of change were already at work when earlier editions of this book appeared. The preface to the First Edition stressed the importance of the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which has revolutionized and revitalized patent law. That court has continued to rise in importance and has now gained international stature as one of the preeminent institutions in the field. Later editions of this casebook also stressed the increasing international influence in the field. The 1994 adoption of the TRIPs agreement was a watershed that expanded the global reach of patent law and created a new framework for a transnational system of intellectual property. TRIPs has also created a focal point for international debate on the merits and demerits of patents in general. Though this textbook by its nature cannot capture the full scope of that debate.

The most important change since the publication of our prior edition in 2011 is of course the America Invents Act (AIA), the most important statutory change in patent law since the venerable 1952 Act. Our book has been comprehensively updated in light of the AIA. Highlights of the major changes include: (1) Detailed coverage of the new “first inventor to file” novelty rules, with analysis of new statutory provisions integrated into traditional case coverage under the 1952 Act; (2) Extensive discussion relating to the structure of the new AIA section 102, including categories of prior art under the AIA compared to the 1952 Act, as well as the critical (filing) date under the AIA versus traditional first to invent rules, and of course (3) The new AIA “public disclosure” grace period provisions, compared to the 1952 Act statutory bars.

We have also included in-depth description and discussion of all the major new administrative proceedings under the AIA: (1) Post-Grant Review; (2) The new Inter Partes Review (replacing inter partes reexaminations); (3) The Supplemental Examination (inequitable conduct “purging”) procedure; and (4) Derivation Proceedings.

The chapters of this book now also include concise discussions of many other features of the AIA. Examples include: the new prior commercial use (“prior user”) right, discussed in the section of Chapter 8 on Defenses to Infringement; the transitional Business Method Patent review proceeding, discussed in Chapter 2 on Patentable Subject matter; and the new virtual patent marking provision, integrated into Chapter 9, Damages.

Finally, we include coverage of new and recent Supreme Court cases, including Mayo v. Prometheus (section 101), Globaltech v. SEB (inducement to infringe), and Stanford v. Roche (patent ownership and the Bayh-Dole Act). Unfortunately, the important decision in Association for Molecular Pathology v. Myriad Genetics, Inc., 2013 U.S. LEXIS 4540 (June 13, 2013) came out literally as we were going to press; an edited version of the case
is included in the annual supplement emailed to all professors who teach from the book.

As with prior editions, we have strived to make patent law accessible to a wide audience of students and teachers. We have continued to include many diagrams and figures from the patent cases and, where possible, have selected cases involving relatively simple technologies. We have also provided concise explanations of the relevant legal principles and policies animating the various doctrines. Our philosophy has been to be as helpful as possible.

We also continue the tradition from prior editions of focusing attention on the underlying policies of patent doctrines. Patents have long been a subject of study among both legal scholars and economists. While this book is directed primarily toward a legal audience, it also covers the economic and other policy considerations that frequently control the direction of the law in the area. These policy discussions are intended both to serve a broader audience and to provide the book’s core legal audience with a deeper understanding of forces shaping the law.

Finally we hope that, as with previous editions, this edition will imbue its readers with a love for the richness of this field. Patent law is directed to the ambitious goal of providing practical property rights in intellectual creation, and achieving that goal requires a society with sophisticated legal machinery. Not surprisingly then, patent law is still a young area — the entire field is no more than a few hundred years old — and like a new technology, it continues to evolve and become more intricate as it develops. Our aspiration is that this edition communicates some of the intricacy — and even beauty — of this fascinating and developing field.

In completing this book, we are indebted to many. Assistance was provided by a host of students, including Elliott Karr, Stefanie Lepore, James Holt, Alan Galloway, Prashant Thikkavarapu, and Margaret Ren Yi. For helpful comments and suggestions, we also thank Mark Lemley, Rebecca Eisenberg and Rochelle Dreyfuss.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF PATENT LAW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>THE ARCHITECTURE OF A MODERN PATENT</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>PATENT CLAIM DRAFTING EXERCISES</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Basics of Claim Drafting</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Preamble</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>“Open” Claims: “Comprising”</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>“Closed” Claims: “Consisting of”</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii)</td>
<td>An In-between Format: “Consisting Essentially of”</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>The Body</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Three Formal Requirements for Claim Drafting</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>Independent and Dependent Claims</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii)</td>
<td>Means-Plus-Function Elements</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv)</td>
<td>Jepson Claims</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>Negative Limitations</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Drafting a Set of Claims for the Pencil</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>The Invention Disclosure</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>The Prior Art</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>A New Cup Holder</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>The Prior Art</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Summary of the Prior Art</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Drafting Around the Prior Art</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>A Growing Foundation for Future Invention</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>OVERVIEW OF THE PATENT SYSTEM</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Patent Prosecution</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Enforcement Actions</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>GLOBALIZATION AND PATENT RIGHTS</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Late 19th Century: The Paris Convention</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The 1970s: Process Consolidation</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>TRIPS: Substantive Harmonization</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>The Patent Term</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Provisional Applications</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Eighteen Month Publication of Applications</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Continuing Evolution</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Chapter 2  PATENTABLE SUBJECT MATTER  ...................................... 69

### A. INTRODUCTION TO THE PATENT ACT  ..................................... 69

- *Diamond v. Chakrabarty*  ................................................. 70
- Notes  .............................................................................. 78
- *Bilski v. Kappos*  ................................................................. 81
- Notes and Questions on *Bilski*  ........................................... 103

### B. THE BAR TO PATENTING LAWS OF NATURE, PHYSICAL PHENOMENA AND ABSTRACT IDEAS  ........................................ 107

#### 1. The Rule Against Patenting Natural Laws  .............................. 107

- *Case Note on O’Reilly v. Morse*  .......................................... 107
- Notes  .............................................................................. 110
- Note on Patenting Scientific Principles and Discoveries  .......... 115
- *Case Note on the Telephone Cases*  ..................................... 116
- Notes  .............................................................................. 118
- *Lab. Corp. of America v. Metabolite Labs., Inc.*  .................... 120
- Notes and Comments  ......................................................... 122

#### 2. Abstract Ideas & Software: *Benson* and its Progeny  ............. 123

- *Gottschalk v. Benson*  .......................................................... 123
- Notes on *Benson*  ............................................................... 128
- Note on the “Mental Steps” Doctrine  ..................................... 131
- *Diamond v. Diehr*  ............................................................. 133
- Notes  .............................................................................. 142

#### 3. Natural Products and Substances  ........................................... 147

- a. Naturally Occurring, But Artificially Packaged  ....................... 148
- *Funk Bros. Seed Co. v. Kalo Inoculant Co.*  ......................... 148
- Notes  .............................................................................. 150
- b. Naturally Occurring But Isolated and Purified  ....................... 152
- *Parke-Davis & Co. v. H.K. Mulford & Co.*  ............................ 152
- Notes on *Parke-Davis*, Purified Products and cDNA  ............. 155
- *Ass’n for Molecular Pathology v. U.S. PTO (the “Myriad” Case)* 158
- Notes and Questions on *Myriad*  ........................................ 180
- Notes on Property Rights in Plant Discoveries  ....................... 182
- c. Patenting of Higher Life Forms  ......................................... 186
- Notes on Patenting Humans and Chimeras  ............................. 186

### C. FIELD RESTRICTIONS: DISFAVORED AREAS OF PATENTING  ... 190

#### 1. Medical Procedures  ......................................................... 192

- Notes on Patenting of Medical Procedures  ............................. 192

#### 2. Comparative Notes on Software Patenting Throughout the World 197

#### 3. Sports Methods and Other Traditionally Disfavored Areas  .... 202

- U.S. Patent No. 5,913,738  ..................................................... 202
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notes on Patents in Sports and Other Fields ........................................ 202

## Chapter 3  UTILITY ................................................................. 209

A. INTRODUCTION ................................................................................. 209
   Notes on Operability ........................................................................ 210

B. BENEFICIAL UTILITY ................................................................. 214
   Lowell v. Lewis ................................................................................. 214
   Notes ............................................................................................... 215
   Juicy Whip, Inc. v. Orange Bang, Inc. .............................................. 216
   Notes ............................................................................................... 219
   Notes on Morality and Biotechnology Inventions ............................. 221

C. PRACTICAL OR SPECIFIC UTILITY .............................................. 223
   Brenner v. Manson ............................................................................ 224
   Notes ............................................................................................... 229
   In Re Brana ....................................................................................... 232
   Notes ............................................................................................... 238
   In Re Fisher ....................................................................................... 241
   Questions and Comments ............................................................... 251
   Note on the Economics of the Utility Requirement: Races, Rent
   Dissipation and Anticommons Problems ......................................... 254

## Chapter 4  DISCLOSURE AND ENABLEMENT ................................. 259

A. INTRODUCTION ................................................................................. 259

B. ENABLEMENT .................................................................................. 263
   1. Patent Breadth and “Undue Experimentation” .............................. 264
      The Incandescent Lamp Patent ..................................................... 264
      Notes ............................................................................................. 271
   2. Speculation and Prophesy ............................................................ 277
      *Janssen Pharmaceutica v. Teva Pharms. USA Inc. (In Re ’319 Patent Infringement Litigation)* .............................................................. 277
      Notes on Janssen............................................................................ 282
   3. Problems in Enablement ............................................................... 284
      a. Enablement and the Temporal Paradox .................................... 284
         Notes on the Temporal Paradox .................................................. 286
      b. Enablement: Some Economic Considerations ........................ 287

C. THE WRITTEN DESCRIPTION REQUIREMENT ................................ 289
   1. Limitations on Amendments ....................................................... 289
      *The Gentry Gallery, Inc. v. The Berkline Corp.* .......................... 292
      Notes ............................................................................................. 296
TABLE OF CONTENTS

2. Limitations on Claim Breadth .......................... 298
   Ariad Pharmaceuticals, Inc. v. Eli Lilly & Co. ............. 302
   Notes on Ariad ........................................... 312
D. DEFINITE CLAIMS ........................................... 316
   Orthokinetics, Inc. v. Safety Travel Chairs, Inc. .......... 317
   Notes on Orthokinetics ................................. 319
   Notes on Ambiguous Language ............................ 322
1. Claim Definiteness and Software Patents .................. 327
2. Functional Language in Claims ............................ 331
   Notes on Functional Claiming ............................ 333

Chapter 5 NOVELTY ................................................. 337

A. INTRODUCTION TO NOVELTY UNDER THE 1952 ACT AND THE AIA OF 2011 ........................................... 337
1. Novelty Under AIA § 102 ................................. 341
   a. A Somewhat Simpler Structure ......................... 341
   b. Novelty vs. Priority .................................... 344
B. THE STANDARD FOR ANTICIPATION ......................... 344
1. The Identity Requirement .................................. 344
   In Re Robertson .......................................... 345
   Notes ....................................................... 350
2. Accidental and Unknown Anticipations ..................... 354
   In Re Seaborg ............................................. 354
   Notes on Accidental Anticipation ........................ 356
   Schering Corp. v. Geneva Pharmaceuticals, Inc. ........... 358
   Notes on Inherent Anticipation and the Public Domain .... 363
3. The “Enablement Standard” for Anticipation ............... 364
   In Re Hafner ............................................. 365
   Notes on Anticipatory Enablement ........................ 367
   Discussion: New use Patents ............................. 372
C. REFERENCES UNDER SECTION 102(a) ....................... 377
1. The Domestic Inquiry Under the 1952 Act: “Known or Used By
   Others” ..................................................... 378
   a. “Known . . . by others” ................................. 378
      National Tractor Pullers Ass’n v. Watkins ................ 378
      Notes on Prior Knowledge ............................. 380
   b. “Used by others” ....................................... 383
      Rosaire v. Baroid Sales Division, National Lead Co. .... 383
      Notes on Public Uses ................................. 385
     a. The AIA and Changes to the Categories of Prior Art ... 386
2. Patents and Printed Publications ........................... 387
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

a. “Printed publications” ................................................. 388  
   *In Re Klopfenstein* .................................................. 388  
   Notes on the Publication Standard ................................. 393  

b. “Patented” .............................................................. 396  
   *Reeves Bros. v. United States Laminating Corp.* ......... 396  
   Notes ................................................................. 398  

3. Novelty and the Economics of Search .............................. 400  
   Notes ...................................................................... 403  

D. DISCLOSURES IN EARLIER-FILED U.S. APPLICATIONS ........ 405  
   1. 1952 Act § 102(e) ..................................................... 405  
      *Alexander Milburn Co. v. Davis-Bournonville Co.* ........ 405  
      Notes .................................................................. 407  
      Comparative and Philosophical Note on § 102(E) ............. 411  
      Problems: § 102(E) ................................................... 413  
   2. Disclosures in Prior-Filed Applications Under the AIA .... 414  

E. DERIVATION FROM ANOTHER ........................................... 415  
   1. 1952 ACT SECTION 102(f) .......................................... 415  
      *Campbell v. Spectrum Automation Co.* ....................... 415  
      Notes .................................................................. 420  
   2. Derivation Proceedings Under the AIA ........................... 422  

F. TIMING ISSUES: 1952 ACT § 102(g) & PRIORITY OF INVENTION . 424  
   1. Section 102(g): The Basic Rules of Priority .................... 425  
      *Brown v. Barbacid* ............................................... 427  
      Notes on Priority Fights .......................................... 432  
      a. Note on Continuing Importance of Conception Under the AIA 441  
      b. “Abandoned, Suppressed or Concealed” Inventions ......... 442  
         *Peeler v. Miller* .................................................. 442  
         Notes on Abandoned, Suppressed, or Concealed Work ...... 446  
         Note on the Multiple Interference Paradox .................. 452  
   2. Prior Art Uses of § 102(g) ........................................... 454  
      *Dow Chemical Company v. Astro-Valcour, Inc.* .............. 454  
      Notes .................................................................. 460  

G. ESTABLISHING A DATE OF INVENTION: RULE 131 ............ 467  
   *In Re Moore* ............................................................ 469  
   Notes on Anteding Prior Art .......................................... 471  

H. INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS .................................. 473  
   1. Foreign Activities to Establish Priority ............................. 474  
      b. TRIPS and the Reformation of § 104 of the Patent Act ....... 479  
   2. Foreign Activities to Create Prior Art ............................ 480  
      *Westinghouse Machine Co. v. General Electric Co.* ........ 481  
   
ix
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Notes on the Imported Knowledge Problem .................................. 484

3. International Practice: Obtaining Patents in Multiple Countries ...... 488
   a. The Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) ............................ 489
   b. Foreign Filing Licenses ............................................. 489
       Problems: Foreign Priority and Prior Art ....................... 490

Chapter 6  STATUTORY BARS AND THE AIA GRACE PERIOD . 493

A. INTRODUCTION .......................................................... 493
   *Pennock v. Dialogue* .................................................. 497
   Notes ................................................................. 503

B. SECTION 102(b): THE GENERAL STATUTORY BARS .................. 505
   1. Review of Patents and Printed Publications ........................ 507
   2. “In Public Use or On Sale” .......................................... 507
      a. Public Use ...................................................... 508
         *Egbert v. Lippmann* ............................................ 508
         Notes ............................................................. 512
         *Molucel Research Corp. v. CBS, Inc.* ....................... 513
         Notes ............................................................. 517
         *Metallizing Engineering Co. v. Kenyon Bearing & Auto Parts Co.* ................................................. 519
         Notes ............................................................. 521
      b. On Sale .......................................................... 522
         *Pfaff v. Wells Electronics, Inc.* ............................... 522
         Notes ............................................................. 529
         *Abbott Laboratories v. Geneva Pharmaceuticals, Inc.* ...... 536
         Notes ............................................................. 539
      c. “Disclosures” Under the AIA .................................... 540
   3. The Experimental Use Exception .................................... 543
      *City of Elizabeth v. American Nicholson Pavement Co.* .......... 543
      Notes ............................................................. 546
      *Lough v. Brunswick Corp.* ....................................... 550
      Notes ............................................................. 554
   4. Third Party Statutory Bar Activity .................................. 558
      *Baxter International v. COBE Laboratories, Inc.* ............. 558
      Notes ............................................................. 564
      *W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.* ............... 567
      Notes ............................................................. 569
      Note on Widely Known But Contractually Confidential Information .................................................. 572
   5. International Considerations ........................................ 574
   6. Summary ............................................................. 576
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Problems ............................................. 577
C. PARTY-SPECIFIC STATUTORY BARS: §§ 102(c) & (d) .......... 581
   1. Section 102(c): Abandonment ............................... 581
      Macbeth-Evans Glass Co. v. General Electric Co. .......... 581
      Notes ............................................. 586
   2. Section 102(d): Prior Foreign Filing ......................... 589
      In Re Kathawala ....................................... 590
      Notes ............................................. 594
      Problems: § 102(d) ..................................... 596
D. THE AIA PUBLIC DISCLOSURE PROVISION: A POWERFUL GRACE PERIOD FOR INVENTORS ................................. 597
   1. Controversy over the Identity Standard Under the AIA’s Public Disclosure Provision ................................... 602
Chapter 7 NONOBVIOUSNESS ............................... 605
A. INTRODUCTION: NONOBVIOUSNESS AND “INVENTION” ...... 605
   Hotchkiss v. Greenwood .................................... 611
   Notes ............................................. 617
   Note on the Evolution of the “Invention” Standard .......... 620
B. SECTION 103 AND THE BASIC GRAHAM INQUIRY ............. 624
   Graham v. John Deere Co. .................................. 624
   United States v. Adams .................................... 645
   Notes ............................................. 650
C. SUBTESTS OF NONOBVIOUSNESS ............................ 653
   1. The Post-Graham Split and KSR v. Teleflex ................. 653
      KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc. .................. 655
      Notes ............................................. 665
   2. Obviousness at the Federal Circuit After KSR ............... 670
      In Re Kubin ......................................... 671
      Obviousness After KSR .................................. 676
   3. Objective Indicia in Obviousness Cases ....................... 684
      Arkie Lures, Inc. v. Gene Larew Tackle, Inc. ............. 684
      Notes ............................................. 687
      Note on the Economic Function of § 103 .................... 689
      Case Note on Hybritech Inc. v. Monoclonal Antibodies Inc. 697
      Notes ............................................. 698
D. THE “SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE PRIOR ART” ............ 708
   1. The “Winslow Tableau” ................................... 709
      In Re Winslow ......................................... 709
Notes ................................................................. 714

2. “Prior Art” for Purposes of Section 103 ......................... 715
   a. The Novelty Provisions of Section 102 .................... 715
      Hazeltine Research, Inc. v. Brenner ....................... 716
      Notes ....................................................... 717
      Case Note on In Re Bass ................................. 719
      Notes ....................................................... 721
      Note: An Economic Rationale for § 103(C) ............. 723
      Oddzon Products, Inc. v. Just Toys, Inc. ............... 725
      Notes ....................................................... 728
   b. The Statutory Bars of Section 102 ......................... 730
      Case Note on In Re Foster ............................... 731
      Notes ....................................................... 732
      Note: Strategic Disclosure and Patent Racing .......... 734

3. The Nonanalogous Arts Limitation ............................ 739
   In Re Clay .................................................. 739
   Notes ....................................................... 743

Chapter 8  INFRINGEMENT ........................................... 749

A. INTRODUCTION: THE PRIMACY OF PATENT CLAIMS ......... 749
   Merrill v. Yeomans ........................................... 750
   Notes ....................................................... 753

B. INTERPRETING CLAIMS .......................................... 756
   1. Basic Doctrine ............................................. 756
      Phillips v. AWH Corporation .............................. 757
      Notes ....................................................... 767
      Note on Canons of Claim Interpretation ............... 771
   2. Equivalents and Means-Plus-Function Claims .......... 779
      Wright Co. v. Paulhan ...................................... 779
      Notes ....................................................... 783
   3. Interpreting Product-By-Process Claims ................. 788
      Case Note on Abbott Laboratories v. Sandoz, Inc. .... 788
      Notes on Abbott v. Sandoz ............................... 789
   4. Joint and Divided Infringement ........................... 789
      Akamai Technologies, Inc. v. Limelight Networks, Inc. 789
      Notes and Comments ..................................... 795
   5. Procedural Aspects of Claim Interpretation ............. 795
      Markman v. Westview Instruments, Inc. ................. 795
      Notes ....................................................... 803

C. THE DOCTRINE OF EQUIVALENTS ............................ 807
   Winans v. Denmead ........................................... 807
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notes ................................................. 811

Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co., Ltd. ................. 813
Notes ................................................. 822

D. THE REVERSE DOCTRINE OF EQUIVALENTS ......................... 830

Westinghouse v. Boyden Power Brake Co. .................................. 830
Notes ................................................. 835
1. Modern Case Study: Scripps Clinic v. Genentech ...................... 837
2. An Economic Approach to Reverse Equivalents ...................... 839
   Notes ................................................. 841

E. THE EXPERIMENTAL USE “EXCEPTION” .............................. 842

Madey v. Duke University ............................................. 844
Notes ................................................. 846

Rebecca S. Eisenberg, Patents and the Progress of Science: Exclusive
Rights and Experimental Use ........................................... 850
Notes ................................................. 853

F. PRIOR COMMERCIAL USE RIGHT UNDER THE AIA ............... 855

G. INDIRECT INFRINGEMENT ....................................... 858

ARO Manufacturing, Co. v. Convertible Top Co. (ARO II) .............. 859
Notes ................................................. 864
C.R. Bard, Inc. v. Advanced Cardiovascular Systems ................. 867
Notes ................................................. 870
Global-Tech Appliances, Inc. v. SEB S.A. ............................. 873
Notes ................................................. 879

H. INFRINGEMENT AND FOREIGN ACTIVITY ......................... 880

Brown v. Duchesne ................................................. 880
Notes ................................................. 882
Microsoft Corp. v. AT&T ............................................. 883
Notes ................................................. 885

Chapter 9 REMEDIES ............................................. 889

A. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF ....................................... 889

1. Permanent Injunctions ............................................ 890
   eBay Inc. v. MercExchange, L.L.C. .................................. 890
   Notes ................................................. 894
   Additional Notes on the Reaction to eBay ......................... 902

2. Preliminary Injunctions ......................................... 904
   Amazon.com, Inc. v. Barnesandnoble.com, Inc. ..................... 904
   Notes ................................................. 912

B. REASONABLE ROYALTY DAMAGES ............................... 915

Lucent Technologies, Inc. v. Gateway, Inc. ................................ 915
Notes on Lucent ................................................. 931
TABLE OF CONTENTS

C. LOST PROFITS .................................................. 933
   Rite-Hite Corp. v. Kelley Co. ................................. 933
   Notes .......................................................... 944
1. Noninfringing Substitutes ..................................... 948
   Grain Processing Corp. v. American Maize-Products Co. 948
   Notes .......................................................... 955
2. The Market Share Rule ......................................... 963
   State Industries v. MOR-FLO Industries .................... 963
   Notes .......................................................... 967
3. The “Entire Market Value” and “Tag-Along Sales” .......... 969
   Notes .......................................................... 971
D. WILLFUL INFRINGEMENT .......................................... 973
   In Re Seagate Technology, LLC .............................. 973
   Notes .......................................................... 981
E. PATENT MARKING: STATUTORY NOTICE ..................... 982
   Notes .......................................................... 983
F. ATTORNEY FEES IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES ..................... 984

Chapter 10 THE LEGAL PROCESS OF THE PATENT SYSTEM . . 985
A. THE ALLOCATION OF POWER .................................... 985
1. Decisions of Fact .............................................. 988
   Dennison Manufacturing Co. v. Panduit Corp. ............... 988
   Panduit Corp. v. Dennison Manufacturing Co. ............... 989
   Notes .......................................................... 990
   Dickinson v. Zurko ............................................ 992
   Notes on Appellate Review of Factual Questions ............. 997
2. Decisions of Law ............................................... 998
   Merck & Co., Inc. v. Kessler .................................. 998
   Notes .......................................................... 999
3. Defining the Fact/Law Distinction ............................ 1003
4. The Jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit ...................... 1005
   Holmes Group, Inc. v. Vornado Air Circulation Systems, Inc. 1005
   Notes .......................................................... 1010
5. Administrative Rulemaking ..................................... 1013
   Note on the PTO’s 2007 Rules and Tafas Litigation .......... 1013
6. Presumption of Validity and Court Review .................. 1017
B. ADMINISTRATIVE CORRECTION AND REISSUE .............. 1020
1. Correction Versus Reissue .................................... 1021
   Superior Fireplace Co. v. Majestic Products Co. .......... 1022
   Notes on Superior Fireplace ................................ 1025
2. Errors Correctable in Reissue Proceedings ................. 1026
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mentor Corp. v. Coloplast Inc. ............................. 1026
Notes on Recapture and Other Limitations on Reissue 1028

3. Intervening Rights and the Enforcement of Reissue Patents 1031
Seattle Box Co. v. Industrial Crating & Packing, Inc. 1033
Notes on Intervening Rights 1037

C. REEXAMINATION ............................................. 1039
1. Ex Parte Reexamination ................................. 1040
Quantum Corp. v. Rodime, PLC 1042
Notes on Quantum Corp. and Ex Parte Reexamination 1044

2. Inter Partes Reexamination ............................... 1046

3. Administrative Procedures Under the AIA: Post-Grant Review,
   Inter Partes Review, and More ............................. 1046
4. Post-Grant Review ........................................... 1047
   a. Timing and Sequencing ................................. 1048
   b. Coordination with Other Proceedings ................. 1049
5. New Inter Partes Review: Successor to Inter Partes Reexaminations 1050
   a. Coordination of IPRs with Litigation ................. 1052
6. Derivation Proceeding ....................................... 1052
7. Foreign Opposition Proceedings ......................... 1053

D. INEQUITABLE CONDUCT ........................................ 1056
1. Nondisclosure .............................................. 1056
   Therasense, Inc. v. Becton-Dickinson, Inc. 1059
   Notes ......................................................... 1065
2. Supplemental Examination (“Patent Inoculation”) Under the AIA 1068
3. Laches ......................................................... 1070
   Symbol Technologies, Inc. v. Lemelson Medical, Ed. & Res.
   FDN., L.P. .................................................... 1070
   Notes ......................................................... 1076

E. PATENT PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE
   COMMISSION (ITC) ............................................ 1079

Chapter 11 INVENTORS AND OWNERS .................. 1081

A. INVENTORSHIP AND MISJOINER ......................... 1081
1. The Basics of Inventorship ............................... 1081
   Burroughs Wellcome Co. v. Barr Laboratories, Inc. 1082
   Notes ......................................................... 1086
2. Judicial Correction of Inventorship ...................... 1089
   Notes ......................................................... 1089
   Eli Lilly and Co. v. Aradigm Corp. ....................... 1090
   Notes ......................................................... 1094
3. Joint Inventors and Multiple Claims ..................... 1095

xv
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ethicon, Inc. v. United States Surgical Corp. .......................... 1095
Notes .................................................. 1107

B. ASSIGNMENT AND OWNERSHIP ................................. 1111
Waterman v. Mackenzie ................................................. 1111
Notes .................................................. 1114

1. Section 261: Patent Recording Statute ......................... 1115
Filmtec Corp. v. Allied-Signal Inc. .................................. 1116
Notes .................................................. 1120

2. Rights of the Employed Inventor ................................. 1124
United States v. Dubilier Condenser Corp. ......................... 1124
Notes .................................................. 1129

3. Co-Ownership of Patents ........................................... 1131
Robert P. Merges & Lawrence A. Locke, Co-Ownership of Patents:
A Comparative and Economic View .................................. 1131

4. Bayh-Dole Act ................................................. 1138
Stanford University v. Roche Molecular Sys., Inc. .................. 1138
Notes and Questions ................................................. 1143

C. DOUBLE PATENTING ........................................... 1145
1. The Basics of Double Patenting ................................ 1146
Miller v. Eagle Manufacturing Co. .................................. 1146
In Re Vogel .................................................. 1150
Notes .................................................. 1153

2. The Claiming Requirement ........................................ 1155
In Re Kaplan .................................................. 1155
Notes .................................................. 1159

3. Order of Filing and Issuance .................................... 1161
In Re Berg .................................................. 1162
Notes .................................................. 1166

4. Effect of Patent Office Restriction Requirement .............. 1168
Notes on Restrictions ................................................. 1169

5. The Economic Rationale for a Vigorous Double Patenting Doctrine ........ 1171

Chapter 12 ANTITRUST AND PATENT MISUSE ................. 1175

A. CONTROL BEYOND A PATENT’S SCOPE ....................... 1176
1. Tying Agreements ........................................... 1176
Illinois Tool Works Inc. v. Independent Ink, Inc. .................. 1176
Notes on the Demise of Per Se Patent Tying Doctrine .......... 1185
Notes on Other Licensing Terms ........................................ 1189

2. Temporal Extensions ........................................... 1193
Brulotte v. Thys Co. ........................................... 1193
Notes .................................................. 1196
TABLE OF CONTENTS

B. EXHAUSTION AND THE “FIRST SALE” DOCTRINE .................. 1198
   Quanta Computer, Inc. v. LG Electronics, Inc. ...................... 1198
   Notes and Questions on Quanta Computer ......................... 1208
C. PATENT POOLS ...................................................... 1211
   Princo Corp. v. International Trade Commission .................. 1211
   Notes on Patent Pools ............................................. 1227
D. PATENT ACQUISITION AND ENFORCEMENT AS AN ANTITRUST
   VIOLATION ............................................................ 1230
   Walker Process Equipment, Inc. v. Food Machinery &
   Chemical Corp. ..................................................... 1230
   Notes ................................................................. 1232
E. LICENSEE AND ASSIGNOR ESTOPPEL ............................... 1239
   Lear, Inc. v. Adkins ................................................. 1239
   Notes ................................................................. 1245
   Medimmune, Inc., Petitioner v. Genentech, Inc., et al. ........... 1245
   Notes ................................................................. 1252
   Diamond Scientific Co. v. Ambico, Inc. ............................ 1253
   Notes ................................................................. 1257
F. HATCH-WAXMAN AND REVERSE PAYMENTS ......................... 1258
   Notes on Reverse Payments ......................................... 1259

Table of Cases ............................................................ TC-1

Index ................................................................. I-1