

# TOP TEN PATENT CASES

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→◆■ **Top Ten No. (2)** *Cuozzo Speed Technologies, certiorari* **GRANTED** today

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This version January 15, 2016

Rank	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Top Ten List</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: green;">◆</span> = <i>certiorari</i> granted      <span style="color: blue;">◆</span> = CVSG order pending  <hr/> <span style="color: red;">■</span> = <b>Phoenix Issue</b> (<i>see</i> page 5)         </p>
1 <span style="color: red;">■</span>	“All Elements” Determination of §101 Patent-Eligibility <i>Sequenom v. Ariosa Diagnostics</i> is the expected certiorari petition Petition is due March 1, 2016
2 <span style="color: green;">◆</span> <span style="color: red;">■</span>	“Broadest Reasonable Interpretation” Post-Grant Claim Construction <i>Cuozzo Speed Technologies LLC v. Lee</i> ; <i>certiorari</i> granted Jan. 15
3 <span style="color: red;">■</span>	(1) Public Use vs. Experimental Use <i>The Medicines Co. v. Hospira, En banc</i> briefing (2) Whether Patents “Preempt” Future Research <i>Sequenom v. Ariosa Diagnostics</i> is the expected certiorari petition Petition is due March 1, 2016
4 <span style="color: red;">■</span>	Patent-Eligibility Denial <i>exclusive of</i> §§102, 103, 112 denials <i>cf. Mayo v. Prometheus (no active pending case)</i>
5a <span style="color: green;">◆</span>	Willful Infringement (§ 284) <i>Halo Electronics v. Pulse Electronics.</i> , <i>cert.</i> granted; argument February 23, 2016; ; decision by June 2016.
5b <span style="color: green;">◆</span>	Willful Infringement (§ 284) <i>Stryker v. Zimmer</i> , <i>cert.</i> granted; argument February 23, 2016; decision by June 2016.
6 <span style="color: red;">■</span>	International Patent Exhaustion <i>Lexmark v. Impression Products, en banc @ Fed. Circuit</i> (dec. pending)
7 <span style="color: blue;">◆</span>	Active Inducement to Infringe (§ 271(f)(1)) <i>Life v. Promega</i> ; awaiting Solicitor General’s response to CVSG
8	Claim Indefiniteness, Broad and Narrow Constructions Practice of the PTAB following <i>Ex parte Miyazaki</i>
9 <span style="color: red;">■</span>	Medical diagnostics patent-eligibility <i>Sequenom v. Ariosa Diagnostics</i> is the expected certiorari petition Petition is due March 1, 2016
10 <span style="color: green;">◆</span>	ITC Infringement Jurisdiction over “electronic transmissions” <i>ClearConnect v. U.S. ITC</i> ; <i>cert.</i> petition due February 10, 2016
* <span style="color: red;">■</span> The red square means the case implicates a “Phoenix Issue” that will be considered at the The Patent Roundtable event to be held February 13-15, 2016. <i>See</i> p. 5.	

**Other Cases and Issues**

(not ranked by immediacy nor importance)

■ = **Phoenix Issue** (see page 5)

*Nautilus v. Biosig*

“Nautilus II”: Claim Indefiniteness; *certiorari denied*

*OIP v. Amazon.com*

Section 101 Patent-Eligibility; *certiorari denied*.

*Arthrex, Inc. v. Smith & Nephew Inc*; “Knowledge” for Indirect Infringement

Response to the petition due January 11, 2016

*SpeedTrack v. Office Depot*

Federal Circuit standard for *res judicata* vs. other circuits

*Certiorari denied* January 11, 2016.

*Fivetech Tech. v. Southco*

“lexicography and disavowal” standard for claim construction

distributed for conference December 4, 2015

*Medtronic Sofamor Danek v. NuVasive*

GVR sought in view of *Commil v. Cisco*

Awaiting Conference.

*WesternGeco v. Ion Geophysical*

35 USC § 271(f) extraterritorial patent infringement

*Cert.* petition due Dec. 28, 2015

*SCA Hygiene v. First Quality Baby Prods.*(en banc)

patent laches; *certiorari* petition is due Jan. 19, 2016 (once extended).

*continued on the next page*

**Other Cases and Issues (*con'd*)**

(not ranked by immediacy nor importance)

■ = **Phoenix Issue** (*see* page 5)

■ *Allergan PLC v. State of New York*

Antitrust violation for refusal to continue sale of soon to expire patented formulation;  
Response to Petition due December 7, 2015

*MCM Portfolio v. Hewlett-Packard*

Constitutional challenge to inter partes review  
*Certiorari* petition due March 1, 2016

*ePlus, Inc. v. Lawson Software*

Injunction following PTAB Invalidation of the Patent  
Response to Petition due January 15, 2016

*Morgan v. Global Traffic Technologies*

Claim Construction  
Awaiting Conference

*Retirement Capital Access Management v. U.S. Bancorp*

Post-Grant Proceedings Raising § 101 Issue:  
Petition briefing stage.

Antitrust, Removal of Patented Drug from the Market

*Allergan PLC v. State of New York*

(Case withdrawn before *certiorari* decision).

## **“Phoenix Issues” at the Naples Conference February 13-15, 2016**

<https://www.thenaplesroundtable.org>

A “Phoenix Issue” (tagged by a red box ) signifies an issue involving *either* an intra-circuit conflict within the Federal Circuit *or* a situation where Federal Circuit precedent may be in conflict with the Supreme Court or pre-Federal Circuit case law.

### **Historical Origins of the “Phoenix List”**

The “Phoenix” title is adapted from the usage of the late Howard Thomas Markey, the first Chief Judge of the Federal Circuit, who in 1982 created a “Phoenix List” for his brand new court to fulfill what he saw as the “duty of [the new court to] clarify the law of patents itself [which] will require the resolution of numerous apparent conflicts [amongst the circuits] lurking in past decisions and decisional approaches of various courts.” William C. Rooklidge & Matthew F. Weil, *En Banc Review, Horror Pleni, and the Resolution of Patent Law Conflicts*, 40 Santa Clara L. Rev. 787, 802 (2000)(citing Howard T. Markey, *The Phoenix Court*, 10 Am. Pat. L. Ass’n Q.J. 227, 232 (1982))

### **The Naples Roundtable Patent Experts Conference February 13-15, 2016**

“Phoenix Issues” are the focus of The Naples Roundtable, a year round nonprofit organization that operates principally through the internet but is planning several events each year, notably the annual Patent Experts Conference that will next be held February 13-15, 2016.

### **Background Papers for Phoenix Issues**

Detailed background papers are in the process of preparation for the Phoenix Issues; some have already been completed and are available on the website.

**(1) “All Elements” Determination of §101 Patent-Eligibility:** *Should determination whether “inventive” subject matter is patent-eligible be determined under the “all elements” rule or may the claimed subject matter be focused upon a single element of the claim?*

**Current Case:** *Sequenom, Inc. v. Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc.*, is the styling of the expected *certiorari* petition due March 1, 2016, from *Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc. v. Sequenom, Inc.*, \_\_\_ F.3d \_\_\_ (Fed. Cir. Dec. 2, 2015)(Order denying en banc review), *panel proceedings*, 788 F.3d 1371 (Fed. Cir. 2015).

**Prior Case Law – (a) § 101:** *See* PATENT-ELIGIBILITY, § 8[b][1], *Flook versus the “All Elements” Rule* (discussing *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 188 (1981), distinguishing *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584 (1978)).

**Prior Case Law – (b) “All Elements” Rule:** “All elements” rule, in PATENT ELIGIBILITY, § 8[b][1], *Flook versus the “All Elements” Rule* (citing *Barrett v. Hall*, 2 F.Cas. 914, 924 (No. 1047)(D. Mass. 1818)(Story, J., riding circuit); *Prouty v. Draper*, 20 F.Cas. 11, 12 (No. 11,446) (D. Mass. 1841)(Story, J.; riding circuit), *aff’d*, 41 U.S. (16 Pet.) 336 (1842)(Taney, C.J.); *Eames v. Godfrey*, 68 U.S. (1 Wall.) 78, 79 (1864); *Water-Meter Co. v. Desper*, 101 U.S. (11 Otto) 332, 335-37 (1879); *Vance v. Campbell*, 66 U.S. (1 Black) 427, 429 (1861); *Eames v. Godfrey*, 68 U.S. (1 Wall.) 78, 79 (1864); *Gould v. Rees*, 82 U.S. (15 Wall.) 187 (1872); *Dunbar v. Myers*, 94 U.S. (4 Otto) 187, 202 (1876); *Water-Meter Co. v. Desper*, 101 U.S. (11 Otto) 332, 335-37 (1879); *Case v. Brown*, 69 U.S. (2 Wall.) 320, 327-28 (1864); *Gill v. Wells*, 89 U.S. (22 Wall.) 1, 26-30 (1874); *Fuller v. Yentzer*, 94 U.S. (4 Otto) 288, 297 (1876); *Gage v. Herring*, 107 U.S. (17 Otto) 640, 648 (1882); *Fay v. Cordesman*, 109 U.S. 408, 420-21 (1883); *Rowell v. Lindsay*, 113 U.S. 97, 102 (1885); *Sargent v. Hall Safe & Lock Co.*, 114 U.S. 63, 86 (1885); *Brown v. Davis*, 116 U.S. 237, 252 (1886); *Yale Lock Mfg. Co. v. Sargent*, 117 U.S. 373, 378 (1886); *McClain v. Ortmyer*, 141 U.S. 419, 425 (1891); *Wright v. Yuengling*, 155 U.S. 47, 52(1894); *Black Diamond Coal Mining Co. v. Excelsior Coal Co.*, 156 U.S. 611, 617-18 (1895); *Cimiotti Unhairing Co. v. American Fur Ref. Co.*, 198 U.S. 399, 410 (1905).)

**Implications:** If a claimed invention including all elements is nonobvious, i.e., “inventive”, then grant of a patent does not preempt fundamental or “abstract” technology (apart from the claimed “inventive” combination).

◆ (2) **“Broadest Reasonable Interpretation” Post-Grant Claim Construction**

**Current Case:** *Cuozzo Speed Technologies LLC v. Lee*, Supreme Court No. 15-446: The first *Question Presented* asks whether the Federal Circuit erred in concluding that in an *inter partes* review post-grant proceeding, the PTAB may construe claims in an issued patent according to the “broadest reasonable interpretation” standard used for *ex parte* examination as well as pre-Leahy Smith post grant proceedings *versus* the claims’ “plain and ordinary meaning”. The decision below is styled as *Apotex Inc. v. Daiichi Sankyo, Inc.*, \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Taranto, J.)

**Status:** Certiorari granted January 15, 2016.

**Mainstream Patent Groups Support *En Banc* Petitioner; Road to the Court**

Professor Crouch provides an excellent analysis of the various briefs of the *amici* which strongly support petitioner. See Dennis Crouch, *Cuozzo Amicus Briefs from IPO, AIPLA, BIO, et al., all arguing against Broadest Reasonable Interpretation of Claims During IPR proceedings*, Patently O, November 18, 2015, available at <http://patentlyo.com/patent/2015/11/reasonable-interpretation-proceedings.html>.

**(3) Public vs. Experimental Use; Whether Patents “Preempt” Future Research:**

*Does a patent “preempt” research using the subject matter of the claimed invention for the purpose of study or improvement upon the patented technology?*

**Current Cases:** **(1) Public vs. Experimental Use:** *The Medicines Co. v. Hospira, Inc.*, Fed. Cir. 2014-1469, *vacated panel opinion*, \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Hughes, J.)

**(2) *Sequenom*:** *Sequenom, Inc. v. Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc.*, is the styling of the expected *certiorari* petition due March 1, 2016, from *Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc. v. Sequenom, Inc.*, \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. Dec. 2, 2015)(Order denying en banc review), *panel proceedings*, 788 F.3d 1371 (Fed. Cir. 2015) (Supreme Court view that there is no experimental use exception to permit research on a patented invention).

**(1) Public vs. Experimental Use *The Medicines Co. v. Hospira***

***Issues to be Briefed in Medicines Company:*** “(a) Do the circumstances presented here constitute a commercial sale under the on-sale bar of 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)?

“(i) Was there a sale for the purposes of § 102(b) despite the absence of a transfer of title?

“(ii) Was the sale commercial in nature for the purposes of § 102(b) or an experimental use?

(b) Should this court overrule or revise the principle in *Special Devices, Inc. v. OEA, Inc.*, 270 F.3d 1353 (Fed. Cir. 2001), that there is no ‘supplier exception’ to the on-sale bar of 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)?”

(The now vacated panel opinion quote with approval from *Special Devices*: “A ‘sale’ under th[e on-sale bar] occurs when the parties offer or agree to reach ‘a contract . . . to give and pass rights of property for consideration which the buyer pays or promises to pay the seller for the thing bought or sold.’” *Special Devices*, 270 F.3d at 1355 (quoting *Zacharin v. United States*, 213 F.3d 1366, 1370 (Fed. Cir. 2000))). )

***Status:*** The Hospira opening brief is due Dec 28, 2015; the Medicines Company’s responsive brief is Due Jan. 27, 2016; the Hospira Reply Brief is due 15 days later. Oral argument will be at some point in 2016.

***Significance of Medicines Company for Newly Drafted Patent Applications:*** *Medicines v. Hospira* deals with a fact pattern under the *old law* prior to the *Leahy Smith America Invents Act*. It is thus not an interpretation of the present statute that denies novelty where an invention “was \* \* \* in public use \* \* \* or otherwise available to the public before the [applicant’s] effective filing date[.]” *Leahy Smith America Invents Act*, 35 USC § 102(a)(1).

***A Technology-Free cert. -worthy case:*** For a technologically-challenged Court that nevertheless wants to stay involved in patent issues, “experimental use” and related themes are policy-rich areas that are apt to be explored by the Supreme Court, as seen when it revised the standard for “public use”, denying an “experimental” exception in its less than landmark “ready for patenting” decision in *Pfaff v. Wells Elecs., Inc.*, 525 U.S. 55, 67-68 (1998), a seemingly unique case in the context of the Federal Circuit dealing with patentability where the Federal

Circuit had reached a conclusion of invalidity that was then *affirmed*, albeit with a different rationale.

***Double, double, toil and trouble:*** Surprisingly, the panel opinion was *unanimous*, hardly the type of scenario to attract *en banc* review. To the extent that the *en banc* court now issues a highly divided opinion, this might be just the seasoning to this case to create basis for grant of *certiorari*.

**The Federal Circuit's Difficulty with understanding "Experimental Use":**

"Experimental use" in any context, but including "public use", has long troubled the Federal Circuit, yet the *en banc* court has refrained from clarification, particularly in the very troubling progeny of the *Deuterium* case; *see Federal Circuit Case Law that Patents Do Preempt Research, infra*.

**(2) Research Preemption (Ariosa)**

**Current Case:** *Sequenom, Inc. v. Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc.*, is the styling of the expected *certiorari* petition due March 1, 2016, from *Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc. v. Sequenom, Inc.*, \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. Dec. 2, 2015)(Order denying *en banc* review), *panel proceedings*, 788 F.3d 1371 (Fed. Cir. 2015) (Supreme Court view that there is no experimental use exception to permit research on a patented invention).

**Prior Case Law that Patents do not Preempt Research:** *Whittemore v. Cutter*, 29 F. Cas. 1120 (C.C.D. Mass. 1813) (No. 17,600) (Story, J.)(riding circuit) ("[I]t could never have been the intention of the legislature to punish a man, who constructed such a machine merely for [scientific] experiments, or for the purpose of ascertaining the sufficiency of the machine to produce its described effects.").

**Federal Circuit Case Law that Patents Do Preempt Research:** *See* PATENT-ELIGIBILITY, § 3[c], *Deuterium Ghost at the Federal Circuit* (citing *Deuterium Corp. v. United States*, 19 Cl.Ct. 624 (Cl.Ct.1990)(Rader, J.), followed, *Embrex v. Service Eng'g Corp.*, 216 F.3d 1343 (Fed.Cir.2000) (Rader, J., concurring); *see also* *Madey v. Duke Univ.*, 307 F.3d 1351 (Fed.Cir.2002)(Gajarsa, J.)(dictum); *Integra Lifesciences I, Ltd. v. Merck KGaA*, 331 F.3d 860, 863 n.2 (Fed. Cir. 2003), *rev'd sub nom Merck KGaA v Integra Lifesciences I, Ltd.*, 545 U.S. 193 (2005)(discussed in Wegner, *Post-Merck Experimental Use and the "Safe Harbor,"* 15 Fed. Cir. B.J. 1 (2005)).

**Implications:** If the answer to the question is “no” – that patents do *not* preempt research – then the argument in *Mayo*, *Alice* and other recent cases vanishes that a patent “preempts” research.

**(4) Patent-Eligibility Denial exclusive of §§102, 103, 112 denials:** *Is there subject matter within the statutory categories of § 101 that should be denied patent-eligibility under §101 case law that is not also denied under patentability provisions of §§ 102, 103, 112? Should the Patent Office confine its initial § 101 determination until after full examination under §§102, 103, 112?*

**Current Case:** None.

**Prior Case:** In *Mayo Collaborative Services v. Prometheus Laboratories, Inc.*, 132 S.Ct. 1289 (2012), the Court declined the Government view that it should focus a validity determination on patentability issues under 35 USC §§ 102, 103, 112 instead of Section 101:

“[T]he Government argues that virtually any step beyond a statement of a law of nature itself should transform an unpatentable law of nature into a potentially patentable application sufficient to satisfy §101's demands. Brief for United States as *Amicus Curiae*. The Government does not necessarily believe that claims that (like the claims before us) extend just minimally beyond a law of nature should receive patents. But in its view, other statutory provisions—those that insist that a claimed process be novel, 35 U. S. C. §102, that it not be ‘obvious in light of prior art,’ §103, and that it be ‘full[y], clear[ly], concise[ly], and exact[ly]’ described, §112—can perform this screening function. In particular, it argues that these claims likely fail for lack of novelty under §102.

“This approach, however, would make the ‘law of nature’ exception to §101 patentability a dead letter. The approach is therefore not consistent with prior law. The relevant cases rest their holdings upon section 101, not later sections. [citing *Bilski*; *Diehr*; *Flook*; *Benson*] See also H.R. Rep. No. 1923, 82d Cong., 2d Sess., 6 (1952) (‘A person may have ‘invented’ a machine or a manufacture, which may include anything under the sun that is made by man, *but it is not necessarily patentable under section 101* unless the conditions of the title are fulfilled’ (emphasis added[ by the Court])).

“We recognize that, in evaluating the significance of additional steps, the §101 patent-eligibility inquiry and, say, the §102 novelty inquiry might sometimes overlap. But that need not always be so. And to shift the patent eligibility inquiry

entirely to these later sections risks creating significantly greater legal uncertainty, while assuming that those sections can do work that they are not equipped to do.”

**Implications:** The approach suggested by the Government would provide a more objective determination of patentability. Independent of the Supreme Court preference for a Section 101 determination, quare, should the Patent Office as a first step examine claims for patentability (§§ 102, 103, 112) *before* any consideration of Section 101?

**(5) Willful Infringement (§ 284):** *Should a Willful Patent Infringement Determination be based upon a Rigid Two Part test?*

◆ **Current Cases now at the Supreme Court:** *Halo Electronics, Inc. v. Pulse Electronics, Inc.*, S.Ct. No. 14-1513 (*cert. granted*); *Stryker Corp. v. Zimmer, Inc.*, No. 14-1520 (*cert. granted*). Consolidated oral argument is scheduled for February 23, 2016; merits decision by the end of June 2016.

**First Question Presented in Halo:** “Whether the Federal Circuit erred by applying a rigid, two-part test for enhancing patent infringement damages under 35 U.S.C. § 284, that is the same as the rigid, two part test this Court rejected last term in *Octane Fitness, LLC v. ICON Health & Fitness, Inc.*, 134 S. Ct. 1749 (2014) for imposing attorney fees under the similarly worded 35 U.S.C. § 285.”

**First Question Presented in Stryker Corp. v. Zimmer, Inc., No. 14-1520:**

“The Patent Act provides that district courts “may increase . . . damages up to three times the amount found or assessed.” 35 U.S.C. § 284. Despite this permissive and discretionary language, the Federal Circuit requires, as a prerequisite to awarding enhanced damages under § 284, that a patentee prove by clear and convincing evidence that infringement was “willful,” meaning both that (1) there was an objectively high likelihood that the infringer’s actions constituted infringement, and (2) this likelihood was either known or so obvious that it should have been known to the accused infringer.

“The [first question presented is] Has the Federal Circuit improperly abrogated the plain meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 284 by forbidding any award of enhanced damages unless there is a finding of willfulness under a rigid, two-part test, when this Court recently rejected an analogous framework imposed on 35 U.S.C. § 285, the statute providing for attorneys’ fee awards in exceptional cases?”

## *Wegner's Top Ten Patent Cases*

**Implications:** Reversal of the current Federal Circuit case law will make it easier to award enhanced damages for willful infringement.

**(6) International Patent Exhaustion:** *Is the patent right be “exhausted” upon the first sale by the patentee of a patented item when that item is sold by the patentee anywhere in the world (“international patent exhaustion”) or only where that item is sold in the United States (the current Federal Circuit practice).*

**Current Case:** *Lexmark International, Inc. v. Impression Products, Inc.*, Fed. Cir. No. 2014-1617, now awaiting *en banc* decision.

**Prior Case Law:** *Kirtsaeng v. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*, 133 S.Ct. 1351 (2012)(establishing international *copyright* exhaustion); cf. *Jazz Photo Corp. v. Int'l Trade Comm'n*, 264 F.3d 1094 (Fed.Cir.2001) (Newman, J.)(denying international patent exhaustion based upon *Boesch v. Graff*, 133 U.S. 697 (1890)(dicta)(holding had to do with an overseas first party sale by a third party and not by the patentee)).

**Implications:** Establishment of international patent exhaustion would result in severe consequences for the pharmaceutical industry where United States drug prices for patented medicines are far higher than in some other countries which would result in either an increased flow of lower priced “parallel import” drugs or diminishment of sales in other countries to diminish parallel import challenge.

**(7) “Active Inducement” to Infringe (§ 271(f)(1)):** *Can a single party who creates one component of a patented combination in the United States and then that same single party creates the patented combination offshore be guilty of infringement of the combination under a theory of “active inducement” under 35 USC § 271(f)(1)?*

**Current Case:** *Life Techs. Corp. v. Promega Corp.*, Supreme Court No. 14-1538, opinion below, *Promega Corp. v. Life Techs. Corp.*, 773 F.3d 1338 (Fed. Cir., 2014)(Chen, J.). The first *Question Presented* is “[w]hether the Federal Circuit erred in holding that a single entity can ‘actively induce’ *itself* to infringe a patent under 35 U.S.C. § 271(f)(1).” (emphasis added)

**Status:** The Solicitor General was asked for his views in a CVSG order dated October 5, 2015. It is likely that the Solicitor General’s brief will be filed in Spring 2016, perhaps in time for a vote before the end of the Term at the end of June 2016.

**Prior Case Law:** Contributory infringement was spawned more than 140 years ago in *Wallace v. Holmes*, 29 F.Cas. 74 (No. 17,100) (CC Conn.1871), as a court-fashioned way for a patentee to sue a third party who supplies a component of the patented invention to numerous third parties, because it would be impossible or next to impossible as a practical matter to sue each of the individual direct infringers. There has never been a prior appellate holding of active inducement other where a third party is induced to infringe.

**Implications:** This case represents yet another bold stroke by the Federal Circuit to expand the scope of American patent rights to cover extraterritorial activity.

**(8) Claim Indefiniteness with Broad and Narrow Constructions:** *In the context of a post-grant proceeding at the Patent Office, is a claim that is open to both a broad and narrow construction invalid under 35 USC § 112(b) as fatally indefinite?*

**Current Case:** None.

**Prior Case Law:** *Ex Parte Miyazaki*, 89 U.S.P.Q.2d 1207 (B.P.A.I.2008)(holding claim indefinite if open to broad and narrow interpretations); *see also In re Packard*, 751 F.3d 1307, 1323-24 (Fed. Cir. 2014)(Plager, J., concurring).

**Implications:** If *Miyazaki* is upheld by the courts, this would mean that a third party challenging a patent in a post-grant proceeding could produce evidence establishing that a claim is open to both a broad and narrow interpretation and then “win” either because of the *Miyazaki* line of cases or “win” where the patentee amends the claims because the patentee amends the claim and thereby opens the door to intervening rights.

**(9) Medical diagnostics patent-eligibility:** *To what extent should patent eligibility include medical diagnostics?*

**Current Case:** *Sequenom, Inc. v. Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc.*, is the styling of the expected *certiorari* petition due March 1, 2016, from *Ariosa Diagnostics, Inc. v. Sequenom, Inc.*, \_\_\_ F.3d \_\_\_ (Fed. Cir. Dec. 2, 2015)(Order denying en banc review), *panel proceedings*, 788 F.3d 1371 (Fed. Cir. 2015)

**(10) ITC Jurisdiction Beyond “Articles” (Electronic transmissions):** *The appellate court determined that the ITC, having has jurisdiction to exclude infringing “articles”, does not permit exclusion of instant “electronic transmission of digital data”.*

**Current Case:** *ClearConnect Operating, LLC v. U.S. Int’l Trade Comm’n*, \_\_\_ F.3d \_\_\_ (Fed. Cir. Nov. 10, 2015)(Prost, C.J.).

**Status:** Petition for *certiorari* is due February 10, 2016.

**Discussion:** Likelihood of *certiorari* review is heightened by the spirited dissent of the third member of the panel:

“Today’s culture, as well as today’s economy, are founded on advances in science and technology. As the Industrial Revolution advanced, and recognizing the importance to the nation of technology-based industry, the Tariff Acts of 1922 and 1930 were enacted to provide additional support to domestic industries that dealt in new and creative commerce, by providing an efficient safeguard against unfair competition by imports that infringe United States patents or copyrights. The International Trade Commission correctly applied the Tariff Act and precedent to encompass today’s forms of infringing technology.

“The new technologies of the Information Age focus on computer-implemented methods and systems, whose applications of digital science provide benefits and conveniences not imagined in 1922 and 1930. Throughout this evolution, Section 337 served its statutory purpose of facilitating remedy against unfair competition, by providing for exclusion of imports that infringe United States intellectual property rights.”

*ClearConnect* , \_\_\_ F.3d at \_\_\_ (Newman, J., dissenting)

## **Other Cases and Issues**

This is *the beginning* of a *separate* list of important issues with a particular focus upon cases at the Supreme Court that are pending but where *certiorari* has not so far been granted.

Issues before the Supreme Court *on petition* are generally (but not always) included in *this* section and not the “Top Ten” because, absent extraordinary circumstances, the chances for grant of review are slim. (Issues which stand as important, with or without grant of review, are included in the main list.)

Merely because an issue is very important does not mean that either the Supreme Court will grant *certiorari* or even that the *en banc* Federal Circuit will hear an appeal:

In the first instance, the issue must be properly framed, either as a *Question Presented* in a *certiorari* petition (or as an issue in a petition for Federal Circuit rehearing *en banc*). Many cases involve the failure of the petitioner to properly frame the issue in a *Question Presented*. Too often, *multiple* issues are presented in plural *Questions Presented* to dilute an important issue. Even where there is a conflict amongst decisions, the split is not properly identified.

## *Wegner's Top Ten Patent Cases*

Even where Supreme Court counsel are involved, the Supreme Court never grants more than a handful of petitions each year – less than one hundred – out of the many thousands that are presented. If success is measured by the grant of a petition, the success rate is at the one percent order of magnitude.

Even where a brilliant Supreme Court team puts together what seems to be the best possible petition, one that is definitely *certiorari* worthy, the Court may deny review, as it did in the case of *Eolas Technologies Inc. v. Microsoft Corp.*, 399 F.3d 1325 (2005); subsequently, in a slightly different presentation of the issues *certiorari* was granted and the appeal was successful in *Microsoft Corp. v. AT & T Corp.*, 550 U.S. 437 (2007).

### **“Nautilus II”: Claim Indefiniteness**

**No Current Case:** *Certiorari* was **denied** in *Nautilus, Inc. v. Biosig Instruments, Inc.*, Supreme Ct. 15-561, where petitioner had challenged the validity of claims under 35 USC § 112 ¶ 2 which had been upheld by the Federal Circuit on remand from the *first* appeal to the Supreme Court, *Nautilus, Inc. v. Biosig Instruments, Inc.*, 134 S. Ct. 2120 (2014).

**Discussion:** In this case – “Nautilus II” – petitioner challenges the validity of claims under 35 USC § 112 ¶ 2 which had been upheld by the Federal Circuit on remand from the *first* appeal to the Supreme Court, *Nautilus, Inc. v. Biosig Instruments, Inc.*, 134 S. Ct. 2120 (2014).

In a first *Question Presented*, petitioner-patent challenger asks whether “a patent claim [is] invalid for indefiniteness if its scope is not reasonably certain the day the patent issues, even if statements in later Patent Office proceedings clarify it?”

**Questions Presented:** “The Patent Act’s particular-and-distinct claiming mandate gives innovators the reasonable certainty they need to invent confidently near a patent claim’s boundary, but not over it. *See* 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 (2006 ed.). To perform this public-notice function, a patent claim must be clear the day it

## *Wegner's Top Ten Patent Cases*

issues. This Court accordingly rejected the Federal Circuit's *post hoc* 'amenable to construction' standard: 'It cannot be sufficient that a court can ascribe *some* meaning to a patent's claims; the definiteness inquiry trains on the understanding of a skilled artisan at the time of the patent application, not that of a court viewing matters *post hoc*.' *Nautilus, Inc. v. Biosig Instruments, Inc.*, 134 S. Ct. 2120, 2130 (2014). But, the remand panel again did the opposite. It copied and pasted much of its opinion this Court had vacated. It did not even mention the original prosecution history. Instead, it again viewed the claim *post hoc* in view of statements made in Patent Office proceedings 15 years after the patent issued. And, it again relied upon a purely functional distinction over a structurally identical prior-art design as supposedly providing sufficient clarity. The questions presented are:

"1. Is a patent claim invalid for indefiniteness if its scope is not reasonably certain the day the patent issues, even if statements in later Patent Office proceedings clarify it?

"2. Is a patent claim invalid for indefiniteness if its scope is distinguished from prior art solely by a functional requirement, rather than by any structural difference?"

### ***OIP Technologies: Section 101 Patent-Eligibility***

**No Current Case:** *OIP Technologies, Inc. v. Amazon.com, Inc.*, Supreme Court No. 15-642, proceedings below, 788 F.3d 1359 (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Hughes, J.), *certiorari denied*.

***First Question Presented:*** "Whether all methods that improve existing technological processes are equally eligible for patent protection under 35 USC § 101, and the Federal Circuit erred by distinguishing a method of testing demand to improve a pricing process from Diehr's method [in *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175 (1981),] of testing temperature to improve the timing of a rubber curing process by finding that only the business-related process was ineligible."

## **Good Faith Invalidity Belief to Negate Indirect Infringement**

**Current Case:** *Arthrex, Inc. v. Smith & Nephew Inc.*, Supreme Court No. 15-559, proceedings below, *Smith & Nephew Inc. v. Arthrex, Inc.*, \_\_ Fed. App'x \_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Taranto, J.): Is indirect infringement negated by a good faith belief that the patent is invalid?

**Status:** Petition response due January 11, 2016.

**Question Presented:** “Whether a[n accused infringer] may be held liable under a ‘knowledge’ standard where its actions were consistent with an understanding of relevant legal requirements that was not objectively unreasonable.” Thus, where the accused infringer has knowledge that its acts will lead to direct infringement of a patent, *if that patent is valid*, does a good faith belief in the invalidity of the patent mean that the accused infringer does not meet the “knowledge” requirement for indirect infringement?

**Status:** Response to the Petition is due November 30, 2015.

**Discussion:** Historically, indirect infringement requires knowledge that the accused indirect infringer has knowledge that his actions will induce the acts constituting direct infringement. *See Dawson Chemical Co. v. Rohm and Haas Co.*, 448 U.S. 176, 187-89 (1980)(discussing the ‘Oil Lamp Burner’ case, *Wallace v. Holmes*, 29 F.Cas. 74 (No. 17,100) (C.C. Conn.1871)). As explained in *Dawson*, “[t]he *Wallace* case demonstrates \* \* \* the reason for the contributory infringement doctrine. It exists to protect patent rights from subversion by those who, without directly infringing the patent themselves, engage in acts designed to facilitate infringement by others. This protection is of particular importance in situations, like the [*Wallace*] oil lamp case itself, where enforcement against direct infringers would be difficult, and where the technicalities of patent law make it relatively easy to profit from another's invention without risking a charge of direct infringement.” *Dawson. v. Rohm and Haas*, 448 U.S. at 188.

**Res Judicata, Federal Circuit Standards**

**Current Case:** None

**Previous Case:** *SpeedTrack, Inc. v. Office Depot, Inc., Inc.*, No. 15-461: Petitioner questions the Federal Circuit standard for res judicata. Certiorari was **denied** on January 11, 2016.

*“Question Presented:* In *Taylor v. Sturgell*, 553 U.S. 880 (2008), this Court confirmed that there are “uniform federal rule[s]’ of res judicata.’ 553 U.S. at 891. In the decision below, however, the Federal Circuit adopted its own unique form of patent-specific preclusion. This new form of preclusion bars entirely new issues and claims that no court has ever resolved. The Federal Circuit grounded this unique legal doctrine in its reading of *Kessler v. Eldred*, 206 U.S. 285 (1907), an anti-suit injunction case decided during ‘the heyday of the federal mutuality of estoppel rule.’ *MGA, Inc. v. Gen. Motors Corp.*, 827 F.2d 729, 733 (Fed. Cir. 1987). The Federal Circuit has directly acknowledged that its departure from generally applicable legal principles is ‘questionable’ (*Brain Life, LLC v. Elekta Inc.*, 746 F.3d 1045, 1057-1058 (Fed. Cir. 2014)), but the court has nevertheless now twice confirmed that it will not apply traditional preclusion rules ‘unless and until the Supreme Court overrules [Kessler].’ App., *infra*, 23a; *Brain Life*, 746 F.3d at 1058. The rules of preclusion are accordingly ‘[dis]uniform’ in the Federal Circuit alone.

“‘The question presented is: Whether, in direct conflict with the Third and Fourth Circuits, the Federal Circuit erred in construing *Kessler* to bar new issues and new claims that would survive the ‘uniform’ rules of preclusion applied by every other circuit in all non-patent cases.’”

*Note:* The *Question(s) Presented* quoted here come from *Patent Law and the Supreme Court: Certiorari Petitions Pending*, <https://www.wilmerhale.com/pages/publicationsandnewsdetail.aspx?NewsPubId=10737419834>

## **Intrinsic Evidence to Determine Claim Construction**

**Current Case:** None.

**Previous case:** *Fivetech Technology Inc. v. Southco, Inc.*, Supreme Court No. 15-381: Petitioner in the first *Question Presented* asks whether it is proper for the Federal Circuit to limit the role of the intrinsic evidence in construing patent claims under the exacting 'lexicography and disavowal' standard. The petition was *denied* on December 4, 2015.

**Questions Presented in Fivetech case:** In *United States v. Adams*, 383 U.S. 39, 49 (1966), this Court stated that 'it is fundamental that [patent] claims are to be construed in light of the specifications, and both are to be read with a view to ascertaining the invention.' In *Markman v. Westview Instruments, Inc.*, 517 U.S. 370, 389 (1996), this Court referenced the required 'standard construction rule that a [claim] term can be defined only in a way that comports with the instrument as a whole.' (Emphasis added). In *Phillips v. AWH Corp.*, 415 F.3d 1303 (Fed. Cir. 2005) (en banc), the Federal Circuit rejected a line of Federal Circuit opinions that limited the role of the specification in defining claim terms only to instances of *explicit* redefinitions or *explicit* disavowals of claim scope. However, since *Phillips*, the Federal Circuit remains divided as to the role of the specification and file history (intrinsic evidence) in construing claim terms. Specifically, some panels of the Federal Circuit have adopted a rigid standard of 'lexicography and disavowal' for defining claim terms which limits the relevance of the intrinsic evidence only to those instances of explicit redefinition of a claim term or *explicit* disavowal of claim scope. *See, e.g., GE Lighting Solutions, LLC v. Agilight, Inc.*, 750 F.3d 1304,1308-09 (Fed. Cir. 2014) ('The standards for finding lexicography and disavowal are exacting.'). This has raised the following questions for this Court.

"1. Whether it is proper for the Federal Circuit to limit the role of the intrinsic evidence in construing patent claims under the exacting 'lexicography and disavowal' standard.

"2. Whether the Federal Circuit's exacting 'lexicography and disavowal' standard improperly circumscribes the objective standard of the person of ordinary skill in the art in construing claim terms."

*Note:* The *Question(s) Presented* quoted here come from *Patent Law and the Supreme Court: Certiorari Petitions Pending*,

<https://www.wilmerhale.com/pages/publicationsandnewsdetail.aspx?NewsPubId=10737419834>

### **Knowledge Requirement for Indirect Infringement**

**Current Case:** *Medtronic Sofamor Danek USA, Inc. v. NuVasive, Inc.*, Supreme Ct. No. 15-85: Petitioner seeks to have the case sent back to the Federal Circuit in view of *Commil USA, LLC v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, 135 S. Ct. 1920 (2015). i.e., petitioner seeks a GVR.

**Status:** Awaiting Conference.

“Questions Presented: In this case, the Federal Circuit affirmed a judgment of indirect infringement, solely on the ground that defendant Medtronic was aware of the patent and instructed doctors to use its products in a manner that was later determined to be infringing. The Federal Circuit did not discuss whether Medtronic’s reading of the patent claims—under which it did not infringe—was reasonable.

“Two months later, this Court decided *Commil USA, LLC v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, 135 S. Ct. 1920 (2015). That decision rejected the proposition that ‘even if the defendant reads the patent’s claims differently from the plaintiff, and that reading is reasonable, he would still be liable because he knew the acts might infringe,’ and held that a plaintiff asserting a claim of indirect infringement must provide ‘proof the defendant knew the acts were infringing.’

“The question presented is: Whether the Court should grant the petition, vacate the judgment below, and remand to the Federal Circuit for further consideration in light of *Commil USA, LLC v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, 135 S. Ct. 1920 (2015).”

*Note:* The *Question(s) Presented* quoted here come from *Patent Law and the Supreme Court: Certiorari Petitions Pending*,

<https://www.wilmerhale.com/pages/publicationsandnewsdetail.aspx?NewsPubId=10737419834>

## **Extraterritorial Patent Infringement**

**Current Case:** *WesternGeco L.L.C. v. Ion Geophysical Corp.*, \_\_\_ Fed. App'x \_\_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(on pet. for reh'g en banc)(Wallach, J., joined by Newman, Reyna, JJ., dissenting from den. of reh'g en banc), *panel opinion*, \_\_\_ F.3d \_\_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Dyk, J.): The issue of extraterritorial patent infringement damages is raised.

**Status:** If a *certiorari* petition is filed and granted, the merits case would be argued in the October 2016 Term running until the end of June 2017. The petition is due December 28, 2015.

In the course of deciding a variety of issues relating to offshore activities governed by 35 USC § 271(f), the panel majority denied infringement damages based upon certain overseas activities. On rehearing en banc, a unique view of extraterritorial patent relief is posited by the three dissenting members keyed to the copyright “predicate doctrine”:

“The predicate act doctrine holds that a copyright owner ‘is entitled to recover damages flowing from the exploitation abroad of . . . domestic acts of infringement.’ *L.A. News Serv. v. Reuters Television Int'l, Ltd.*, 149 F.3d 987, 991-92 (9th Cir. 1998) (tracing the predicate act doctrine to Judge Learned Hand's opinion in *Sheldon v. Metro-Goldwyn Pictures Corp.*, 106 F.2d 45 (2d Cir. 1939), *aff'd*, 309 U.S. 390 (1940)); see also *Tire Eng'g & Distrib., LLC v. Shandong Linglong Rubber Co.*, 682 F.3d 292, 306 (4th Cir. 2012) (‘We adopt the predicate-act doctrine, which posits that a plaintiff may collect damages from foreign violations of the Copyright Act so long as the foreign conduct stems from a domestic infringement.’); *Update Art, Inc. v. Modiin Publ'g, Ltd.*, 843 F.2d 67, 73 (2d Cir. 1988) (‘It is well established that copyright laws generally do not have extraterritorial application. There is an exception—when the type of infringement permits further reproduction abroad — such as the unauthorized manufacture of copyrighted material in the United States.’).

“In this case, [the patentee]’s damages flowed from the exploitation abroad of domestic acts of patent infringement under § 271(f). The court's denial of rehearing en banc unfortunately prevents consideration of the predicate act doctrine, which is of particular import given ‘the historic kinship between patent law and copyright law.’ *Sony Corp. of Am. v. Universal City Studios, Inc.*, 464 U.S. 417, 439 (1984).”

### **Laches, Federal Circuit case law**

**Current Case:** *SCA Hygiene Prods. Aktiebolag v. First Quality Baby Prods., LLC*, S.Ct. No. 15A546 , \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(en banc), asks whether Federal Circuit patent laches law consistent with the Supreme Court copyright laches case, *Petrella v. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.*, 134 S.Ct. 1962 (2014).

**Status:** *Certiorari* petition is due Jan. 19, 2016 (once extended).

**Implications:** No matter the outcome, *SCA Hygiene* is a black eye for the Federal Circuit as a court established to provide a uniform body of case law in the patent field. It reaches a conclusion as to laches that differs from *Petrella v. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.*, 134 S.Ct. 1962 (2014)(copyright law) and does so in badly split *en banc* decision with a six vote majority opinion (Prost, C.J., joined by Newman, Lourie, Dyk, O'Malley, Reyna, JJ.) balanced by a five vote minority opinion (Hughes, J., joined by Moore, Wallach, Taranto, Chen, JJ., concurring in part, dissenting in part).

The majority ruled that “laches remains a defense to legal relief in a patent infringement suit after *Petrella* [*v. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.*, 134 S.Ct. 1962 (2014)]. Laches bars legal relief, and courts must weigh the facts underlying laches in the *eBay* framework when considering an injunction. However, absent extraordinary circumstances, laches does not preclude an ongoing royalty.”

The dissent disagreed with “the majority [which] adopts a patent-specific approach to the equitable doctrine of laches. In doing so, the majority overlooks Congress’ intent and Supreme Court precedent, which demonstrate that laches is no defense to a claim for damages filed within the statutory limitations period established by 35 U.S.C. § 286.”

### **Constitutionality of Post Grant Proceedings**

**Current Case:** *MCM Portfolio LLC v. Hewlett-Packard Co.*, opinion below, \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. Dec. 2, 2015)(Dyk, J.), is the expected Supreme Court petition challenging Patent Office inter partes review proceedings as unconstitutional as violating Article III protections and a right to a trial by jury under the Seventh Amendment.

**Status:** *Certiorari* petition is due March 1, 2016.

## **Injunction following PTAB Invalidation of the Patent**

**Current Case:** *ePlus, Inc. v. Lawson Software, Inc.*, No. 15-639, *opinion below*, \_\_\_ F.3d \_\_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Dyk, J.), with O'Malley, J., dissenting. (This case is "ePlus II", following an earlier case, "ePlus I", 700 F.3d 509 (Fed. Cir. 2012).

**Status:** Response to the petition is due January 15, 2016 (once extended).

**The Dissent (O'Malley, J.):** The dissent (O'Malley, J.) points to the issue in controversy at the Supreme Court:

"[An ongoing injunction was *prospectively* terminated upon the Patent Office cancellation of the relevant claim in a post grant proceeding.] That conclusion comes easily \*\*\*. The more difficult question is whether Appellees are relieved of all penalties for having violated the injunction during the four years it was in place before the PTO's cancellation was affirmed.

"On this second question, the majority concludes that '[t]his case does not require us to decide whether civil contempt sanctions would survive if the injunction had been final at the time the district court imposed civil contempt sanctions,' because, under *Fresenius USA, Inc. v. Baxter International, Inc.*, 721 F.3d 1330 (Fed. Cir. 2013) ('*Fresenius II*'), cancellation of claims by the Patent and Trademark Office ("PTO") "requires that non-final judgments be set aside.' *Id.* Because it finds the judgment in this case non-final, the majority—on the strength of *Fresenius II*—renders all aspects of the earlier judgment against Lawson, including the injunction premised thereon, a nullity. \*\*\* *Fresenius II* is distinguishable from, and I do not believe governs, the present appeal. I write separately, moreover, to note that, if we are bound by *Fresenius II* on these facts, I find *Fresenius II* even more troubling than I initially believed. *Fresenius USA, Inc. v. Baxter Int'l, Inc.*, 733 F.3d 1369, 1373-81 (Fed. Cir. 2013) (O'Malley, J., dissenting from denial of petition for rehearing en banc)[ ]. If *Fresenius II* compels the conclusion here, it should be reconsidered."

**Questions Presented:** "Following a jury trial, the district court permanently enjoined respondent Lawson Software, Inc., from infringing patent claims owned by petitioner ePlus, Inc. Lawson then abandoned its challenge to the validity of the key patent claim (claim 26). The Federal Circuit affirmed the judgment that

Lawson infringed claim 26, and it upheld the injunction; it reversed with respect to some other patent claims.

“Lawson flagrantly violated the injunction, and after a hearing, the district court entered an order of civil contempt. While Lawson’s second appeal was pending, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office cancelled claim 26 based on an invalidity ground that Lawson had not pursued in litigation. A divided Federal Circuit panel held that the cancellation order retroactively invalidated the contempt judgment.

“The questions presented are as follows:

“1. Whether civil contempt of a permanent injunction order that has been affirmed on appeal and is binding on the litigants under the law of judgments, may be set aside based on a legal development that came after both the permanent injunction and the contumacious conduct, and that did not call into question the correctness of the injunction when it was entered.

“2. Whether, under *Plaut v. Spendthrift Farm, Inc.*, 514 U.S. 211 (1995), the PTO, an administrative agency, may issue an order that retroactively overrides a federal court’s judgment on a question of law that is not subject to further judicial review, so long as some other part of the litigation is pending.”

### **Claim Construction**

**Current Case:** *Morgan v. Global Traffic Technologies LLC*, No. 15-602, *opinion below*, \_\_ F.3d \_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(O’Malley, J.)

**Status:** Awaiting scheduling of Conference. (Respondent waived its right to file a response.)

**Questions Presented:** [1] “As a case of first impression, does the procedure required when a patent, cited as prior art in and accused of infringing a subsequently issued patent, include construction of the scope of the claims of the subsequent patent in light of the prior patent plus comparison of differences between the accused device and the one claimed?”

[2] Does the standard set forth in *Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc. v. Sandoz, Inc.*, 135 S. Ct. 831 (2015) apply retroactively in this case, pending on appeal when Teva was decided?”

**Post-Grant Proceedings Raising § 101 Issue:**

**Current Case:** *Retirement Capital Access Management Co. LLC v. U.S. Bancorp*, No. 15-591, *proceedings below*, \_\_ Fed App'x \_\_ (Fed. Cir. 2015)(Rule 36 affirmance)(Lourie, Bryson, O'Malley, JJ.)

**Status:** Petition briefing stage. 11, 2016.

**Questions Presented:** “In 2011, Congress enacted the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act [ ], Pub. L. No. 112-29, 125 Stat. 284 (2011). The Act created three new post-grant administrative proceedings for challenging the validity of patents. It also created within the Patent and Trademark Office [ ] a new tribunal called the Patent Trial and Appeal Board (hereinafter the “Board”) to preside over these new proceedings. One of the newly created proceedings is the transitional post-grant review, also known as “covered business method” or “CBM” review, for patents directed to a financial product or service. The AIA limits the Board’s jurisdiction with respect to CBM review to challenges based on any ground that could be raised under paragraph (2) or (3) of 35 U.S.C. § 282(b). Paragraph 2 provides that a party may seek to invalidate a patent or claim on any ground specified in part II of Title 35 as a condition for patentability.

“The questions presented arise from the Federal Circuit affirming, without comment, the Board’s holding that 35 U.S.C. § 101 is a ground specified in part II of Title 35 as a condition for patentability and therefore constitutes a proper basis for review in a CBM proceeding, and from the Federal Circuit affirming the Board’s application of § 101 to the patent claims at issue. They are:

“1. Whether subject matter eligibility under 35 U.S.C. § 101 is a ground specified as a condition for patentability under 35 U.S.C. § 282(b)(2).

“2. Whether the Board errs when it invalidates issued patent claims posing no risk of preemption under the abstract idea exception to patent eligibility.”

*Note:* The *Question(s) Presented* quoted here come from *Patent Law and the Supreme Court: Certiorari Petitions Pending*, <https://www.wilmerhale.com/pages/publicationsandnewsdetail.aspx?NewsPubId=10737419834>

**Antitrust, Removal of Patented Drug from the Market:** *Is the patentee's removal from the market of a patented formulation from the market in favor of the continued marketing of a second patented formulation with a longer patent life an antitrust violation?*

**No Current Case:** *Allergan PLC v. State of New York*, Supreme Ct. No. 15-587, *opinion below*, *People of the State of New York v. Actavis PLC*, 787 F.3d 638 (2nd Cir. 2015): Can it be an antitrust violation for a branded drug manufacturer to remove one patented formulation in favor of maintaining on the market a second patented formulation? Stipulation to dismiss the petition for writ of certiorari pursuant to Rule 46; petition dismissed (Rule 46).

**Pharma Under Fire:** Both Top Ten No. (2) *Allergan v. State of New York* (antitrust violation for removing drug from the market) and Top Ten No. (6) *Lexmark v. Impression Products* (international exhaustion) represent serious threats to the pharmaceutical industry.

**Questions Presented:** “Brand drug manufacturers seeking to market a new prescription drug must undergo a long and expensive process to obtain FDA approval. Under the 1984 Drug Price Competition and Patent Term Restoration Act, better known as Hatch-Waxman, generic drug manufacturers can obtain FDA approval for a ‘bioequivalent’ generic drug more easily, by piggy-backing on the brand’s approval efforts. Once the brand drug’s patent and other exclusivities expire and generic versions enter the market, state drug substitution laws permit or require pharmacists to dispense lower-priced, therapeutically equivalent generic drugs in place of brand drugs, unless the prescriber directs otherwise. Under most (but not all) states’ definitions of therapeutic equivalence, however, pharmacists may not substitute a generic drug that has a different dose than the prescribed brand without the physician’s approval.

“The Second Circuit held below that brand drug manufacturers have a federal antitrust duty to facilitate the operation of state drug substitution laws so as to maximize the future sales of their generic competitors. Petitioners are a brand drug manufacturer and its subsidiary, who sought to exercise their rights under the Patent Act to limit distribution of an outdated version of their patented Alzheimer’s drug in favor of an innovative new formulation with different dosing and longer patent protection. The Second Circuit held that so doing would violate section 2 of the Sherman Antitrust Act because it would reduce the number of prescriptions most state substitution laws would automatically hand over to Petitioners’ generic rivals once the old drug’s exclusivities ended. The questions presented are:

“1. Whether exercising rights granted by the Patent Act—in particular, not selling one patented product and selling a different patented product instead—can violate the Sherman Antitrust Act?”

“2. Whether drug manufacturers have a federal antitrust duty to facilitate the operation of state drug substitution laws to maximize competitors’ sales?”

**Background:** Various state laws have differing reimbursement policies for prescription medications which may make it impossible to prescribe (with refund) new versions of old drugs. Here, a prescription for the patented single daily dose version of a drug (the once-a-day “Namenda XR” form) could not in some states permit substitution of the by now off-patent older version (the twice-daily “Namenda IR” form).

The factual background is further explained in the *certiorari* petition:

“The Second Circuit affirmed an unprecedented antitrust injunction forcing a brand drug manufacturer to continue making and selling an outdated patented drug it wanted to replace with a new and improved version. The court held that withdrawing twice-daily Namenda IR in favor of innovative [i.e., patented] once-daily Namenda XR violated section 2 of the Sherman Act because certain state pharmacy laws treat the two drugs differently. In particular, most states allow or require pharmacists to dispense a generic version of IR in place of brand IR, but not in place of brand XR. The Second Circuit held that instead of maximizing their own sales and profits, Petitioners had to keep selling IR to maximize the sales state drug laws would automatically hand over to Petitioners’ generic rivals.

\* \* \*

“Under the Hatch-Waxman amendments to the FDCA, once the FDA approves a brand drug for marketing, generic manufacturers can obtain similar marketing approval far more easily. In particular, “a generic competitor [may] file an abbreviated new drug application (ANDA) piggy-backing on the brand’s NDA.” *Caraco Pharm. Labs., Ltd. v. Novo Nordisk A/S*, 132 S. Ct. 1670, 1676 (2012). “Rather than providing independent evidence of safety and efficacy, the typical ANDA shows that the generic drug has the same active ingredients as, and is biologically equivalent to, the brand-name drug.” *Id.* (citing 21 U.S.C. § 355(j)(2)(A)(ii), (iv)).”

## Free\* Information Sources

### Supreme Court Patent Filings, Proceedings and Analysis Supreme Court Official website, [supremecourt.gov/](http://www.supremecourt.gov/)

The official government website is the primary source for obtaining the latest information, *other than* copies of briefs and statement of *Questions Presented*.

**Docket Sheet:** If a person knows the names of the parties or the Case Number, the Docket Sheet is easily accessible for each case at  
<http://www.supremecourt.gov/docket/docket.aspx>

**An “Orders List”** showing whether certiorari has been granted,  
<http://www.supremecourt.gov/orders/ordersofthecourt/15>

Generally, a decision whether to grant *certiorari* is part of an Orders List that is electronically published at 9:30 AM on the first “red” or “blue” day (usually a Monday) following the Conference where the case is under consideration (a “green” day, generally the previous Friday). But, in the early months of each Term beginning in October, if *certiorari* is granted, then a special Orders List is issued in the afternoon of the day of the Conference indicating cases where *certiorari* has been granted.

The calendar with the “red”, “blue” and “green” days is available at  
[http://www.supremecourt.gov/oral\\_arguments/2015TermCourtCalendar.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/2015TermCourtCalendar.pdf)  
For the date of the Conference for an individual case, see the Docket Sheet for that case.

**New Opinions:** Latest slip opinions are released at  
<http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/slipopinion/15>

**Shortcomings of the Official Website:** The website does not provide access to court documents, e.g., briefs, petitions, and nowhere states the *Question Presented*.

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\*A variety of fee-based resources provide excellent information including Westlaw (which electronically publishes all Supreme Court *certiorari* petitions), Law360 (which is often fed the latest information from interested parties and then provides a link to briefs and other documents) and the Patent Trademark and Copyright Journal, a daily source of on line information.

**Top Free\* Private Blogsters**

Full time academics and practitioners who have an active appellate practice at either the Federal Circuit or Supreme Court are listed here, *alphabetically*:

**Courtenay C. Brinckerhoff, Pharmapatents Blog**

[pharmapatentsblog.com/](http://pharmapatentsblog.com/)

Appellate expert Courtenay C. Brinckerhoff provides in depth expert analysis of all issues relating to pharmaceutical patents.



**Prof. Dennis Crouch et al., Patently-O blog**

[patentlyo.com](http://patentlyo.com)

Prof. Crouch provides by far the most comprehensive treatment of all patent issues, including Supreme Court cases.



**Tom Goldstein, SCOTUSblog**

<http://www.scotusblog.com/>

SCOTUSblog is by far the most compressive website for Supreme Court information. It is the most convenient source to obtain briefs in any case where *certiorari* has been granted. Its only real drawback is an absence of input from an active patent practitioner.



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\* See the note on the previous page.

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**Dr. Kevin Noonan** *et al.*, Patent Docs blog,  
<http://www.patentdocs.org/>

This website selectively considers *biotechnology* and related patent Supreme Court petitions and merits cases with in depth analysis of the cases it considers. It also provides links to briefs.



**Professor Jason Rantanen**, *see* Prof. Dennis Crouch *et al.*, Patently-O blog



**WilmerHale**, *Patent Law and the Supreme Court: Certiorari Petitions Granted*,  
<https://www.wilmerhale.com/pages/publicationsandnewsdetail.aspx?NewsPubId=10737419833>

Authored by Joseph J. Mueller, Leslie Pearlson and Thomas G. Saunders, this website is useful to identify all patent cases at the Supreme Court *after grant of certiorari* with a statement of the *Question Presented* and links to documents. It is not updated as frequently as SCOTUSblog.



**Warren D. Woessner**, Patents4life blog  
<http://www.patents4life.com/>

This blog presents the views of a senior, experienced patent practitioner for the field of biotechnology.



**Dr. Donald Zuhn**, *see* Kevin Noonan *et al.*, Patent Docs blog

## **About the List**

This listing represents the opinion of the author and has been created pro bono without sponsorship by any other person or organization.

This listing differs from the previous *Top Ten Patent Cases* that ran for several years through the end of 2014 in that it is in the first instance *issue* driven – whether or not there is a pending case for that issue – while the pendency or likely pendency of a test case that is at or may reach the Supreme Court is also given weight.

Suggestions for inclusion of issues or cases is gratefully appreciated and may be sent to [hwegner@gmail.com](mailto:hwegner@gmail.com), with the subject heading, “Suggestions for The List.

## **Public Access to Documents of this Writer**

This paper and also other papers by the author are made available to the public as “Wegner’s Writings” on the website of the Los Angeles Intellectual Property Law Association: [www.laipla.net/category/wegners-writings/](http://www.laipla.net/category/wegners-writings/)

Any citations to FIRST TO FILE PATENT DRAFTING and SEQUENOM PATENT ELIGIBILITY CHALLENGE are to monographs of this writer now in draft form, which are available under “Wegner’s Writings”

## **About the Author**



**HAROLD C. WEGNER** is an independent Expert Patent Consultant available to cooperate with corporate and law firm colleagues on matters involving patent drafting and procurement strategies, appellate matters and opinions.

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