

Patent Wars

How Patents Impact Our Daily Lives

Patents are ubiquitous in contemporary life. Practically everything we use incorporates one or more patented inventions, and recent years have witnessed epic disputes over such matters as the patenting of human genes, the control of smartphone design and technology, the marketing of patented drugs, and the conduct of "patent trolls" accused of generating revenue from nuisance litigation. But what exactly is a patent? Why do governments grant them? Can patents simultaneously encourage new invention, while limiting monopoly and other abuses? In *Patent Wars*, Thomas Cotter, one of America's leading patent law scholars, offers an accessible, lively, and up-to-date examination of the current state of patent law, showing how patents affect everything from the food we eat to the cars we drive to the devices that entertain and inform us. Beginning with a general overview of patent law and litigation, the book addresses such issues as the patentability of genes, medical procedures, software, and business methods; the impact of drug patents and international treaties on the price of health care; trolls; and the smartphone wars. Taking into account both the benefits and costs that patents impose on society, Cotter highlights the key issues in current debates and explores what still remains unknown about the effect of patents on innovation. An essential one-volume analysis of the topic, *Patent Wars* explains why patent laws exist in the first place and how we can make the system better.

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