



## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Mike Esselmen

While product shortages may be frustrating to consumers for products like iPhones, stockouts of dependent products (life saving drugs) for patients can threaten lives. Drug product supply issues are becoming more frequent and can result from manufacturing business decisions, natural disasters affecting production or raw material acquisition, manufacturing challenges, or can be due to regulatory intervention.

That being said, a drug company may face ethical challenges while planning how much of a drug to manufacture:

- Do drug companies that produce dependent products (life saving drugs) *have to* manage a supply chain differently (from an iPhone) so that a constant supply is ensured to patients?
- Is it ethical for a manufacturer to halt manufacturing production once annual quotas or metrics are fulfilled?
- As drug companies have enormous investments to defend and stakeholders to please, how can we ensure that ethical standards are upheld in supplying drug product to patients in need?

Source: American Society of Health System Pharmaceuticals [http://www.ashp.org/s\\_ashp/docs/files/](http://www.ashp.org/s_ashp/docs/files/)

## DO SEED COMPANIES CONTROL GM CROP RESEARCH?

Chandana Thorat

Genetically modified crops promise higher food production, disease resistance, pesticide resistance, a high nutritional content, and even phytoremediation. Sure, GM crops pledge a great deal to humanity, but are there ways to verify these claims?

Maybe not. Agritech companies that produce GM seeds have the right of censorship over independent research of GM crops. To purchase GM seeds, one must sign an agreement that limits independent research on GM seeds. This prevents scientists from comparing seeds from different companies, examining side effects, and

studying the crop response under stress conditions. Published research on GM crops exists, but before submission to peer-reviewed journals, research must first be approved by agritech companies. Recently, a group of 24 scientists who oppose this current practice have submitted a statement to the EPA highlighting that no truly independent research can be conducted on GM crops due to restricted access.

This raises concerns about protection of intellectual property rights versus consumer rights. Should companies prevent independent research on their products



Image: <http://ghanabusinessnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/gm-crops.jpg>

to protect their technology? Don't consumers have the right to know the truth about GM crops? Do GM crops really deliver what they claim?

Source: <http://www.scientificamerican.com>

## THE MBA OATH: SETTING A STANDARD OR A WASTE OF INK?

Sarah Arlien

This last spring, in the wake of the financial crisis and the uncovering of some rather unscrupulous business practices, a group of students at the Harvard Business School created what is now referred to as the MBA Oath. Those in support of the oath cite the student led effort as “a generational shift away from viewing an M.B.A. as simply an on-ramp to the road to riches.” One of the students, Dalia Rahman, says the oath “takes what we learned in class and makes it more concrete. When you have to make a public vow,

it's a way to commit to uphold principles.”<sup>1</sup>

As of September 28<sup>th</sup>, a little over 50% of the HBS Class of 2009 had signed the Oath. Andrew Sridhar takes an opposing view stating that “a mere ‘promise to be ethical’...without any substance is senseless. Moral people who take the oath will still act in an upright manner, while less scrupulous persons are likely to profess their moral rectitude without an accompanying change in character.” Rather than the oath, Sridhar suggests that an increased “methodical study

of ethics” will work over time to make business leaders more ethical. Currently, he believes that the oath does not and will not change anything.<sup>2</sup>

**Where do you fall?** Send your brief responses (1 paragraph) to the editor at [mpesce11@kgi.edu](mailto:mpesce11@kgi.edu).

Sources:

1 Sridhar A. MBA Oath: An Oath and Its Flaws, *The Greater Good. The Harbus.* <http://media.www.harbus.org/media/storage/paper343/news/2009/09/28/Viewpoints/Mba-Oath.An.Oath.And.Its.Flaws-3785526.shtml>. September 28, 2009

2 Wayne L. A Promise to Be Ethical In an Era of Immorality. *New York Times.* <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/30/business/30oath.html>. May 29, 2009.

# GENE PATENTS: COMMERCIALIZATION OF DNA?

*Sri Ramya Maddilate*

An NIH task force is investigating the effects of gene patenting on medicine, research, and business. In collaboration with Duke University's Center for Genome ethics, the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Genetics, Health, and Society (SACGHS) has examined case studies of disease, companies, and research areas to generate a report for industry, patient right groups, and academic communities.

Excluding drug development, SACGHS has examined gene patents for diagnostic and clinical

purposes. Several case studies reveal that patented discoveries develop into clinical tests. The committee's studies reveal that the use and enforcement of IP rights on both patented and unpatented genes can create barriers to the clinical use of genes. For example, there is myriad genetic controversy regarding the screening for *BRCA* breast cancer genes.

Gene patenting controversies arise from an international tension between legal and ethical norms. Some people regard genes as common, universal

possessions, representative of humankind's collective heritage, and thus not an object appropriate for patenting.

SACGHS encourages that patents should encourage investment in innovation, but also provide incentives to patent holders to resolve ethical issues. Even though national regulatory agencies such as the FDA, NIH, and SACGHS are well-positioned to handle the regulatory issues behind genetic testing, whether or not the public is ready for gene patents, remains a million dollar



Image: [www.alexconstantine.blogspot.com](http://www.alexconstantine.blogspot.com)

question. How far are we ready to go with the commercialization of the human body?

Source: <http://www.globalethics.org/newsline/2009/03/09/life-sciences/>

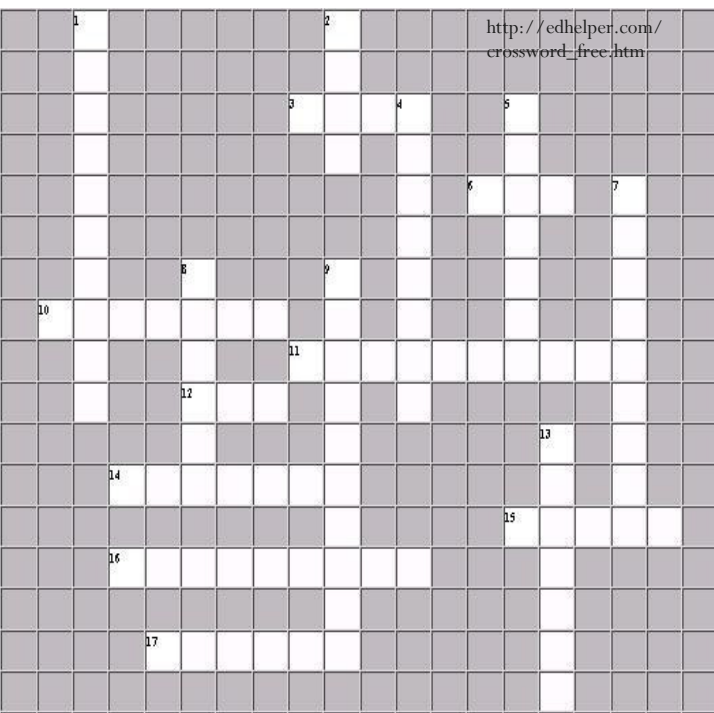
## CROSSWORD

*Rachelle Fryd*

### ACROSS

- 3) The school you currently attend.
- 6) Chinese basketball player.
- 10) Peace and \_\_\_\_\_ are two sides of the same coin (Dwight David Eisenhower).
- 11) Inner sense of what is right and wrong.

- 12) \_\_\_\_\_ and Order.
- 14) Code of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 15) Standing together.
- 16) KGI's home city.
- 17) KGI has an \_\_\_\_\_ committee.



[http://edhelper.com/crossword\\_free.htm](http://edhelper.com/crossword_free.htm)

### Note from the Editor

The Ethics Committee is proud to launch the first KGI ethics newsletter! We aim to highlight current ethical issues in the industry where knowledge of such will serve you in your careers. Please direct any comments, corrections, or concerns to [mpesce11@kgi.edu](mailto:mpesce11@kgi.edu).  
- Michelle Pesce, editor



Image: <http://www.artofbarter.com/gif-bin/rulesGavel.gif>

### DOWN

- 1) Do unto others as they would do unto you (2 words)
- 2) Griffith Observatory has a great \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ is worth more than the grandest intention (unknown)
- 5) The law of the land.
- 7) Something a jury gives
- 8) A stringed instrument
- 9) You can report Honor Code \_\_\_\_\_.
- 13) \_\_\_\_\_ is the best policy.

*Answers will be provided in the next issue!*

### The KGI Ethics Committee Ethics & Judicial Chairs

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