

Mario Biagioli

School of Law and Department of Communication UCLA

**RESPONSIBILITY GOES VIRTUAL:
LESSONS FROM COVID VACCINE PATENTS**

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NOTA BENE:

- All emphases in the following quotes are mine.
- All quotes come from op-ed articles published in 2021 in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.
- Specific references to these quotes can be found in my “Of Viruses and Licenses”, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, July 9, 2021, at: <https://www.lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-tangled-web-of-viruses-and-licenses-lessons-from-covid-19-vaccine-patent-debates/>

- [Weakening that system by introducing compulsory licenses] “would jeopardize *future* medical innovation, making us vulnerable to *other* diseases.”
- “Make patents too strong and prices too high, and people are deprived of life-saving treatments; weaken them too much, and drive prices too low, and you lose the *next generation* of such treatments.”
- “The trade-off between *current* distribution and *future* innovation is tough.”
- “If [President Biden] follows [the compulsory licensing proponents’] advice, he would cast serious doubt on the reliability of IP protections, making investors far less eager to risk their money developing *new treatments and cures*.”
- “Stripping away their intellectual property *now* could discourage *future* innovation,” [but keeping patent protection firmly in place] “*will save lives later*.”

- [Covid-19 vaccines] “are the product of a drug-development ecosystem that has taken shape over decades—and that ecosystem is built on IP protections.”
- “Breaking vaccine patents is a bad precedent that would do no immediate good and substantial long-term harm,” [and constitutes] “a destructive precedent that will reduce pharmaceutical investment.”
- “The pandemic has demonstrated why the world can’t afford to take continued pharmaceutical innovation for granted. Now, more than ever, the system that enabled the rapid response to the coronavirus needs to be preserved and even strengthened.”
- “If the Biden White House lets it happen, the wait for vaccines and treatments will be longer during the rest of this pandemic *and the next one.*”

- “The decision by the Biden administration to support a temporary waiver for Covid-19 might not end up costing the drug industry a dime.”
- “J&J and AstraZeneca have agreed not to profit from Covid vaccines.”
- “Companies can afford to license patents for free, or sell drugs at cost, precisely because they know that their intellectual property will be protected. That’s not a flaw in the system; it’s how the system ensures that pharmaceutical research will continue to be funded.”

- “The progress made over the last year is *nothing short of incredible.*”
- [It takes something special to hand] “the world a *science-based miracle*: multiple life-saving, pandemic-halting vaccines made in less than a year.”
- “The system that built coronavirus vaccine in *record time* relies on robust intellectual property protections.”
- [Compulsory licensing] “would represent an abrupt change in the rules of the game under which the pharma companies succeeded in developing remarkably effective vaccines in *record time.*”
- “The fabulous vaccine success should be a moment to celebrate property rights and innovation.”