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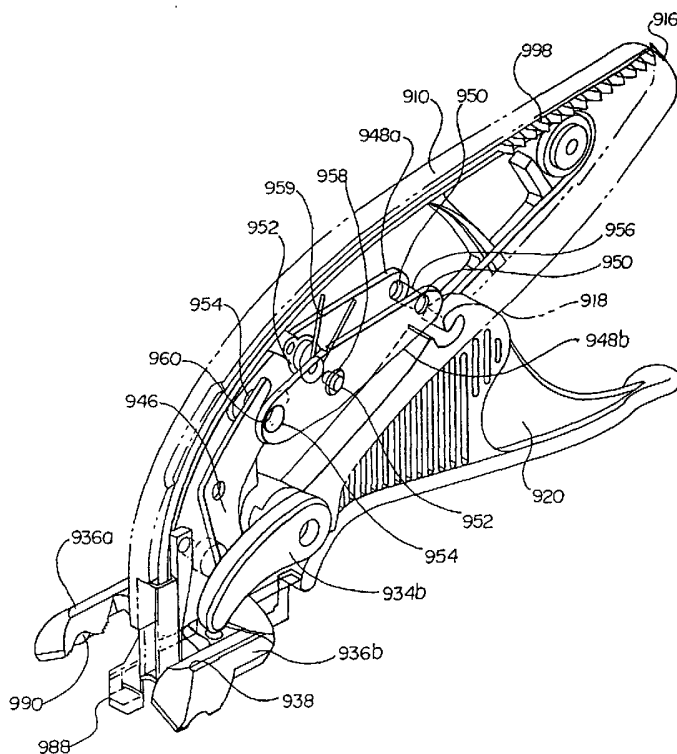
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(54) Title: MECHANICAL METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BILATERAL TISSUE FASTENING



(57) Abstract: A mechanical system for bilaterally securing tissue preferably utilizes a tissue manipulator apparatus to approximate a portion of an interior surface of each of two pieces of living tissue along a vertical interface below an exterior surface of the tissue without overlapping 5 either interior surface across the vertical interface. An applicator apparatus includes a driving head portion positioned in the vertical interface and at least partially below the exterior surface and a handle portion positioned at least partially above the exterior surface. The applicator apparatus bilaterally drives at least one portion of a fastener through each piece of the living tissue behind the interior surface of that piece of tissue such that the fastener is positioned below 10 the exterior surface and a portion of the fastener is positioned generally transverse to the vertical interface. Preferably, the manipulator apparatus and the applicator apparatus are arranged together as part of a hand-held instrument capable of carrying and deploying multiple fasteners.

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B. FIELDS SEARCHED
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 U.S. : 600/216; 606/75,205,213,219,22,221,215,216; 227/19, 155, 175.1;128/898

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Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
 TISSUE & SUTURE; TISSUE & FASTENER

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 4,428,376 A (MERICLE) 31 January 1984, see entire document.	
A	US 5,236,440 A (HLAVACEK) 17 August 1993, see entire document.	

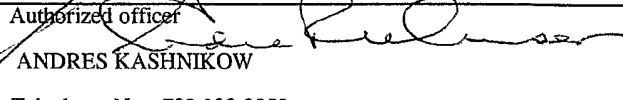
Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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