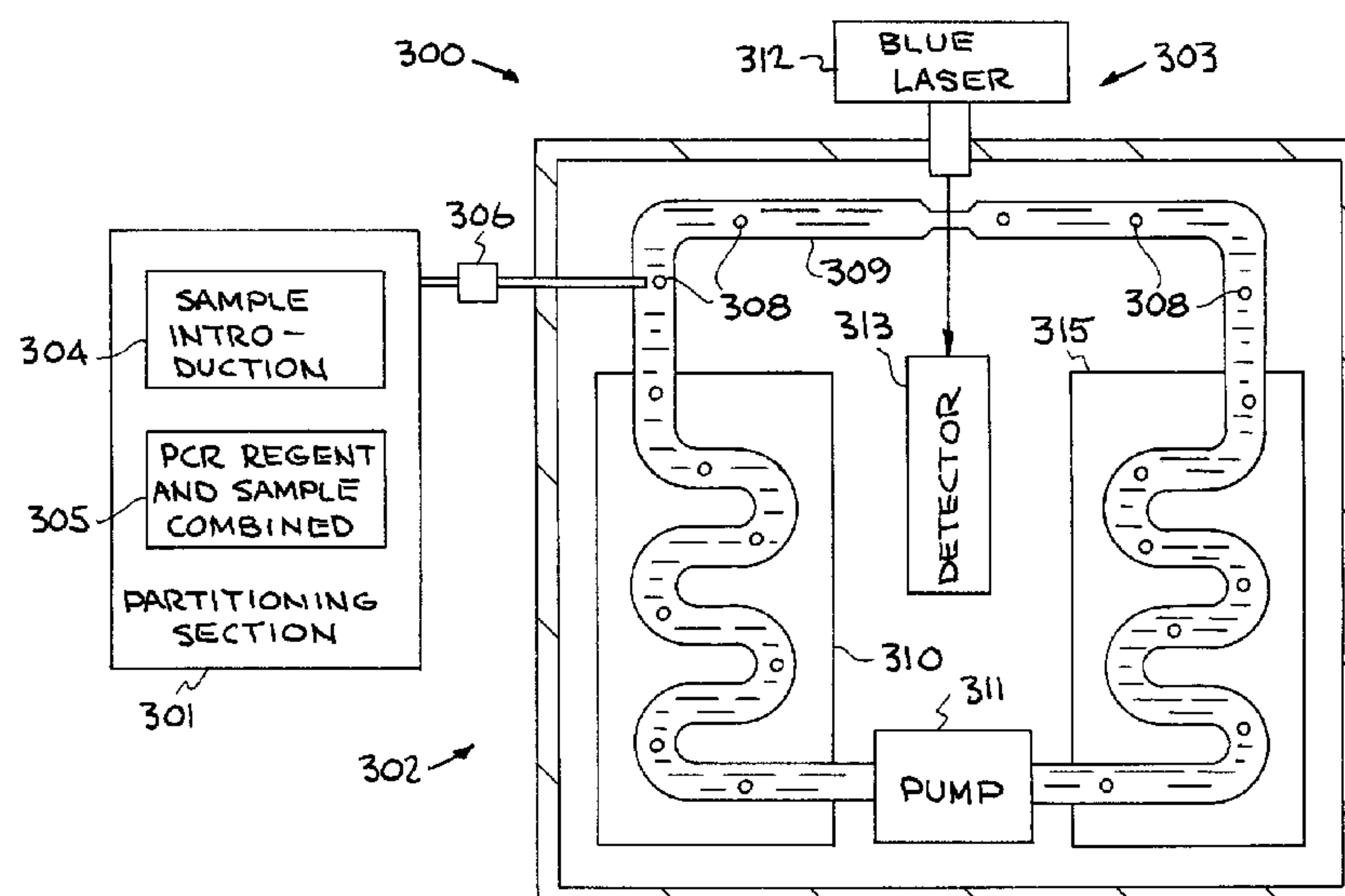




(10) **Patent Number:** US RE46,322 E
(45) **Date of Reissued Patent:** Feb. 28, 2017

13 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

4,801,529	A	1/1989	Perlman	
4,948,961	A	8/1990	Hillman et al.	
5,176,203	A	1/1993	Larzul	
5,270,183	A *	12/1993	Corbett	B01J 19/0046 435/287.2
5,376,252	A	12/1994	Ekstrom et al.	
5,422,277	A *	6/1995	Connelly et al.	436/10
5,585,069	A	12/1996	Zanzucchi et al.	
5,587,128	A	12/1996	Wilding et al.	
5,602,756	A	2/1997	Atwood et al.	
5,736,314	A	4/1998	Hayes et al.	
5,827,480	A	10/1998	Haff et al.	
5,842,787	A	12/1998	Kopf-Sill et al.	
5,856,174	A	1/1999	Lipshutz et al.	
5,858,187	A	1/1999	Ramsey et al.	
5,912,945	A	6/1999	Da Silva et al.	
5,928,907	A	7/1999	Woudenberg et al.	
5,945,334	A	8/1999	Besemer et al.	
5,972,716	A	10/1999	Ragusa et al.	
6,057,149	A	5/2000	Burns et al.	
6,126,899	A	10/2000	Woudenberg et al.	
6,130,098	A	10/2000	Handique et al.	
6,143,496	A	11/2000	Brown et al.	
6,146,103	A	11/2000	Lee et al.	
6,156,181	A	12/2000	Parce et al.	
6,174,673	B1	1/2001	Short et al.	
6,175,669	B1	1/2001	Colston et al.	
6,176,609	B1	1/2001	Cleveland et al.	
6,177,479	B1	1/2001	Nakajima et al.	
6,221,654	B1	4/2001	Quake et al.	
6,281,254	B1	8/2001	Nakajima et al.	
6,337,740	B1	1/2002	Parce	
6,344,325	B1	2/2002	Quake et al.	
6,357,907	B1	3/2002	Cleveland et al.	
6,384,915	B1	5/2002	Everett et al.	
6,391,559	B1	5/2002	Brown et al.	
6,403,338	B1	6/2002	Knapp et al.	
6,429,025	B1	8/2002	Parce et al.	
6,440,706	B1	8/2002	Vogelstein et al.	
6,466,713	B2	10/2002	Everett et al.	
6,479,299	B1	11/2002	Parce et al.	
6,488,895	B1	12/2002	Kennedy	
6,494,104	B2	12/2002	Kawakita et al.	
6,509,085	B1	1/2003	Kennedy	
6,521,427	B1	2/2003	Evans	
6,522,407	B2	2/2003	Everett et al.	
6,524,456	B1	2/2003	Ramsey et al.	
6,540,895	B1	4/2003	Spence et al.	
6,551,841	B1	4/2003	Wilding et al.	
6,558,916	B2	5/2003	Veerapandian et al.	
6,575,188	B2	6/2003	Parunak	
6,602,472	B1	8/2003	Zimmermann et al.	
6,637,463	B1	10/2003	Lei et al.	
6,660,367	B1	12/2003	Yang et al.	
6,663,619	B2	12/2003	Odrich et al.	
6,664,044	B1	12/2003	Sato	
6,670,153	B2 *	12/2003	Stern	435/91.2
6,767,706	B2 *	7/2004	Quake et al.	435/6
6,773,566	B2	8/2004	Shenderov	
6,833,242	B2	12/2004	Quake et al.	
6,900,021	B1	5/2005	Harrison et al.	
6,905,885	B2	6/2005	Colston et al.	
6,960,437	B2	11/2005	Enzelberger et al.	
6,964,846	B1	11/2005	Shuber	
7,010,391	B2	3/2006	Handique et al.	
7,041,481	B2	5/2006	Anderson et al.	
7,052,244	B2	5/2006	Fouillet et al.	
7,081,336	B2	7/2006	Bao et al.	
7,091,048	B2	8/2006	Parce et al.	
7,094,379	B2	8/2006	Fouillet et al.	
7,118,910	B2	10/2006	Unger et al.	
7,129,091	B2	10/2006	Ismagilov et al.	
7,188,731	B2	3/2007	Brown et al.	
7,192,557	B2			

7,238,268	B2	7/2007	Ramsey et al.	
7,244,567	B2	7/2007	Chen et al.	
7,252,943	B2	8/2007	Griffiths et al.	
7,268,167	B2	9/2007	Higuchi et al.	
7,268,179	B2	9/2007	Brown	
7,270,786	B2	9/2007	Parunak et al.	
7,279,146	B2	10/2007	Nassef et al.	
7,294,503	B2	11/2007	Quake et al.	
7,312,085	B2	12/2007	Chou et al.	
7,323,305	B2	1/2008	Leamon et al.	
7,368,233	B2	5/2008	Shuber et al.	
7,459,315	B2	12/2008	Brown	
7,595,195	B2	9/2009	Lee et al.	
7,622,280	B2	11/2009	Holliger et al.	
7,682,565	B2	3/2010	Linton et al.	
7,833,708	B2	11/2010	Enzelberger et al.	
7,842,457	B2	11/2010	Berka et al.	
7,927,797	B2	4/2011	Nobile et al.	
7,972,778	B2	7/2011	Brown et al.	
8,067,159	B2	11/2011	Brown et al.	
8,257,925	B2	9/2012	Brown et al.	
8,278,071	B2	10/2012	Brown et al.	
2001/0039014	A1	11/2001	Bass et al.	
2001/0046701	A1	11/2001	Schulte et al.	
2002/0021866	A1	2/2002	Everett et al.	
2002/0058332	A1	5/2002	Quake et al.	
2002/0093655	A1	7/2002	Everett et al.	
2002/0119459	A1	8/2002	Griffiths	
2002/0141903	A1 *	10/2002	Parunak et al.	422/101
2002/0164820	A1	11/2002	Brown	
2003/0003441	A1	1/2003	Colston et al.	
2003/0027244	A1	2/2003	Colston et al.	
2003/0032172	A1	2/2003	Colston, Jr. et al.	
2003/0170698	A1	9/2003	Gascoyne et al.	
2003/0204130	A1	10/2003	Colston, Jr. et al.	
2004/0038385	A1	2/2004	Langlois et al.	
2004/0074849	A1	4/2004	Brown et al.	
2004/0171055	A1	9/2004	Brown	
2004/0180346	A1	9/2004	Anderson et al.	
2004/0185484	A1	9/2004	Costa et al.	
2004/0208792	A1	10/2004	Linton et al.	
2004/0224325	A1	11/2004	Knapp et al.	
2005/0032240	A1	2/2005	Lee et al.	
2005/0042639	A1 *	2/2005	Knapp et al.	435/6
2005/0042684	A1	2/2005	Aehle et al.	
2005/0064460	A1	3/2005	Holliger et al.	
2005/0079510	A1 *	4/2005	Berka et al.	435/6
2005/0221279	A1	10/2005	Carter et al.	
2005/0221373	A1	10/2005	Enzelberger et al.	
2005/0227264	A1	10/2005	Nobile et al.	
2005/0239192	A1	10/2005	Nasarabadi et al.	
2006/0057599	A1	3/2006	Dzenitis et al.	
2006/0094108	A1	5/2006	Yoder et al.	
2006/0172336	A1	8/2006	Higuchi et al.	
2006/0263264	A1	11/2006	Bohm et al.	
2007/0227890	A1	10/2007	Ramsey et al.	
2008/0138815	A1	6/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0145923	A1	6/2008	Hahn et al.	
2008/0153091	A1	6/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0160525	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0161420	A1	7/2008	Shuber	
2008/0166793	A1	7/2008	Beer et al.	
2008/0169184	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0171324	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0171325	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0171326	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0171327	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0171380	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0171382	A1	7/2008	Brown et al.	
2008/0213766	A1	9/2008	Brown et al.	
2009/0035838	A1	2/2009	Quake et al.	
2009/0325236	A1	12/2009	Griffiths et al.	

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

EP	0843589	A1	5/1998
EP	1522582	B1	7/2007
WO	WO 84/02000		5/1984
WO	WO 92/01812		2/1992

(56)

References Cited

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

WO	WO 94/05414	3/1994
WO	WO 98/41869	9/1998
WO	WO 98/47003	10/1998
WO	WO 01/07159	2/2001
WO	WO 01/57263	8/2001
WO	WO 02/23163	3/2002
WO	WO 02/081490	10/2002
WO	WO 02/081490 A2	10/2002
WO	WO 02/081729	10/2002
WO	WO 03/016558	2/2003
WO	WO 03/072258	9/2003
WO	WO 03/106678	12/2003
WO	WO 2005/010145	2/2005
WO	WO 2005/075683	8/2005
WO	WO 2008/109878	9/2008

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

3M Fluorinert™ Electronic Liquid FC-3283, 3M product information, 2001.

Abdelgawad, M. et al., "All-terrain droplet actuation," *Lab on a Chip*, 2008, pp. 672-677, vol. 8.

ABIL® EM 90, Goldschmidt Personal Care product literature, 2003, 7 pages.

Adang, A.E., et al., "The Contribution of Combinatorial Chemistry to Lead Generation: An Interim Analysis," *Current Medical Chemistry*, 2001, pp. 985-998, vol. 8.

Anarbaev, R., et al., "Klenow fragment and DNA polymerase α -primase from calf thymus in water-in-oil microemulsions," *Biochimica et Biophysica Acta*, 1998, pp. 315-324, vol. 1384.

Baroud, C., et al., "Thermocapillary Valve for Droplet Production and Sorting," *Physical Review E*, 2007, pp. 046302-1 to 046302-5, vol. 75.

Beer, N., et al., "On-Chip Single-Copy Real-Time Reverse-Transcription PCR in Isolated Picoliter Droplets," *Anal. Chem.*, 2008, pp. 1854-1858, vol. 80, No. 6.

Beer, N. et al., *On-Chip, Real-Time, Single-Copy Polymerase Chain Reaction in Picoliter Droplets*, *Anal. Chem.*, 2007, pp. 8471-8475, vol. 79, No. 22.

Bransky, A., et al., "A Microfluidic Droplet Generator Based on a Piezoelectric Actuator," *Lab Chip*, 2009, pp. 516-520, vol. 9.

Carroll, N., et al., "Droplet-Based Microfluidics for Emulsion and Solvent Evaporation Synthesis of Monodisperse Mesoporous Silica Microspheres," *Langmuir*, 2008, pp. 658-661, vol. 24.

Chabert, M., et al., "Droplet fusion by alternating current (AC) field electrocoalescence in microchannels," *Electrophoresis*, 2005, pp. 3706-3715, vol. 26.

Chen, D. L., et al., "Using Three-Phase Flow of Immiscible Liquids To Prevent Coalescence of Droplets in Microfluidic Channels: Criteria To Identify the Third Liquid and Validation with Protein Crystallization," *Langmuir*, 2007, pp. 2255-2260, vol. 23.

Clausell-Tormos, J., et al., "Droplet-Based Microfluidic Platforms for the Encapsulation and Screening of Mammalian Cells and Multicellular Organisms," *Chemistry and Biology*, 2008, pp. 427-437, vol. 15.

Diehl, F., et al., "Digital quantification of mutant DNA in cancer patients," *Current Opinion in Oncology*, 2007, pp. 36-42, vol. 19.

Diekema, D.J., et al., "Look before You Leap: Active Surveillance for Multidrug-Resistant Organisms," *Healthcare Epidemiology*, 2007, pp. 1101-1107, vol. 44.

Dressman, D., et al., "Transforming single DNA molecules into fluorescent magnetic particles for detection and enumeration of genetic variations," *PNAS*, 2003, pp. 8817-8822, vol. 100, No. 15.

Fan, J.B., et al., "Highly parallel genomic assays," *Nature Reviews, Genetics*, 2006, pp. 632-644, vol. 7.

Fidalgo, L. M., et al., "Coupling Microdroplet Microreactors with Mass Spectrometry: Reading the Contents of Single Droplets Online," *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2009, pp. 3665-3668, vol. 48.

Halloran, P.J., Letter to John H. Lee, Assistant Laboratory Counsel, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, re U.S. Appl. No. 12/118,418, Jun. 4, 2010, 5 pages.

Heyries, K.A., et al., "Megapixel digital PCR," *Nature Methods*, 2011, 5 Pages.

Higuchi, R., et al., "Kinetic PCR Analysis: Real-time Monitoring of DNA Amplification Reactions," *Bio/Technology*, 1993, pp. 1026-1030, vol. 11.

Jarvis, J., et al., "Digital quantification using amplified single-molecule detection," *Nature Methods*, 2006, pp. 725-727, vol. 3, No. 9; includes supplementary information from www.nature.com website.

Kalinina, O., et al., "Nanoliter scale PCR with TaqMan detection," *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 1997, pp. 1999-2004, vol. 25, No. 10.

Katsura, S., et al., "Indirect Micromanipulation of Single Molecules in Water-In-Oil Emulsion," 2001, *Electrophoresis*, pp. 289-293, vol. 22.

Kiss, M. M., et al., "High-Throughput Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction in Picoliter Droplets," *Anal. Chem.*, DOI: 10.1021/ac801276c, Nov. 17, 2008 <<http://pubs.acs.org>>.

Kojima, T., et al., "PCR amplification from single DNA molecules on magnetic beads in emulsion: application for high-throughput screening of transcription factor targets," *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 2005, vol. 33, No. 17, e150.

Kopp, M., et al., "Chemical Amplification: Continuous-Flow PCR on a Chip," *Science*, 1998, pp. 1046-1048, vol. 280, [Online] [Retrieved on Sep. 22, 2009] Retrieved from the internet URL<<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/280/5366/1046>.

Kumaresan, P., et al., "High-Throughput Single Copy DNA Amplification and Cell Analysis in Engineered Nanoliter Droplets," *Anal. Chem.*, DOI: 10.1021/ac800327d, Apr. 15, 2008 <<http://pubs.acs.org>>, plus supporting information.

Leamon, J. H., et al., "Overview: methods and applications for droplet compartmentalization of biology," *Nature Methods*, 2006, pp. 541-543, vol. 3, No. 7.

Lin, Y. H., et al., "Droplet Formation Utilizing Controllable Moving-Wall Structures for Double-Emulsion Applications," *Journal of Microelectromechanical Systems*, 2008, pp. 573-581, vol. 17 No. 3.

Link, D. R., et al., "Electric Control of Droplets in Microfluidic Devices," *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2006, pp. 2556-2560, vol. 45.

Liu, K., et al., "Droplet-based synthetic method using microflow focusing and droplet fusion," *Microfluid Nanofluid*, 2007, pp. 239-243, vol. 3.

Lo, Y. M., et al., "Digital PCR for the molecular detection of fetal chromosomal aneuploidy," *PNAS*, 2007, pp. 13116-13121, vol. 104, No. 32.

Margulies, M., et al., "Genome sequencing in microfabricated high-density picolitre reactors," *Nature*, 2005, pp. 376-380, vol. 437; includes supplementary information from www.nature.com website.

Margulies, M., et al., Supplementary figures from JM Rothberg, *Nature*, May 2005, 12 Pages.

Margulies, M., et al., Supplementary methods from JM Rothbert, *Nature*, May 2005, 34 Pages.

Musyanovych, A., et al., "Miniemulsion Droplets as Single Molecule Nanoreactors for Polymerase Chain Reaction," *Biomacromolecules*, 2005, pp. 1824-1828, vol. 6.

Nagai, H., et al., "Development of a Microchamber Array for Picoliter PCR," *Anal. Chem.*, 2001, pp. 1043-1047, vol. 73, No. 5.

Nakano, M., et al., Single-molecule PCR using water-in-oil emulsion, *Journal of Biotechnology*, 2003, pp. 117-124, vol. 102.

Pamme, N., "Continuous flow separations in microfluidic devices," *Lab Chip*, 2007, pp. 1644-1659, vol. 7.

Pohl, G., et al., "Principle and applications of digital PCR," *Expert Rev. Mol. Diagn.*, 2004, pp. 41-47, vol. 4, No. 1.

Price, C. P., "Regular review: Point of care testing," *BMJ*, 2001, pp. 1285-1288, vol. 322.

Roach, L. S., et al., "Controlling Nonspecific Protein Adsorption in a Plug-Based Microfluidic System by Controlling Interfacial Chemistry Using Fluorous-Phase Surfactants," *Anal. Chem.*, 2005, pp. 785-796, vol. 77, No. 3.

(56)

References Cited

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Rutledge, R. G., et al., "Mathematics of quantitative kinetic PCR and the application of standard curves," *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 2003, p. e93, vol. 31, No. 16.

Rutledge, R. G., "Sigmoidal curve-fitting redefines quantitative real-time PCR with the prospective of developing automated high-throughput applications," *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 2004, p. e178, vol. 32, No. 22.

Schneegass, I., et al., "Miniaturized Flow-through PCR with Different Template Types in a Silicon Chip Thermocycler," *Lab on a Chip*, 2001, pp. 42-49, vol. 1.

U.S. Appl. No. 60/443,471, filed Jan. 29, 2003, 68 Pages.

Vogelstein, B., et al., "Digital PCR," *PNAS*, 1999, pp. 9236-9241, vol. 96.

Williams, R., et al., "Amplification of complex gene libraries by emulsion PCR," *Nature Methods*, 2006, pp. 545-550, vol. 3, No. 7.

Zhang, T., et al., "Behavioral Modeling and Performance Evaluation of Microelectrofluidics-Based PCR Systems Using SystemC," *IEEE Transactions on Computer-Aided Design of Integrated Circuits and Systems*, 2004, pp. 843-858, vol. 23, No. 6.

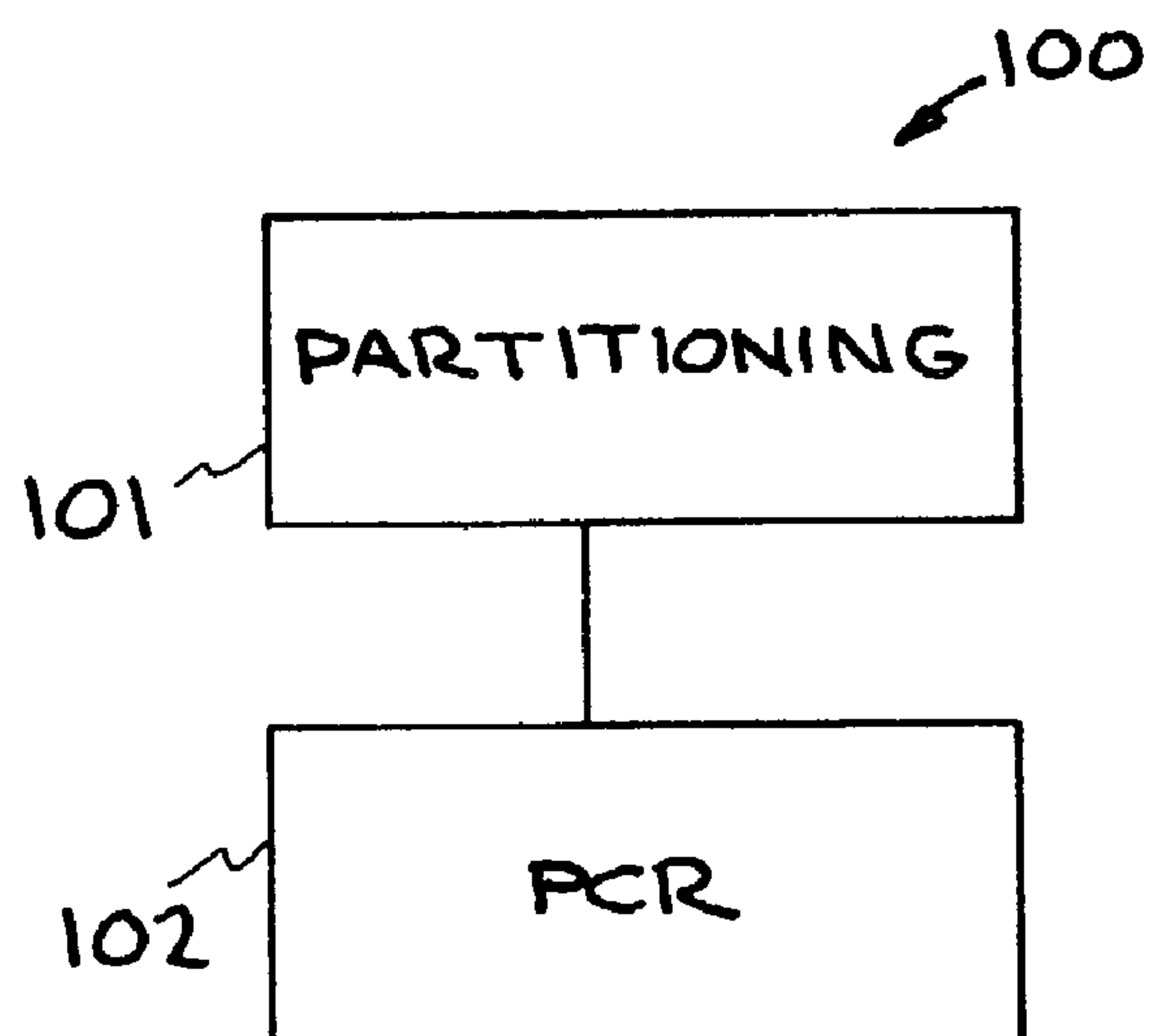
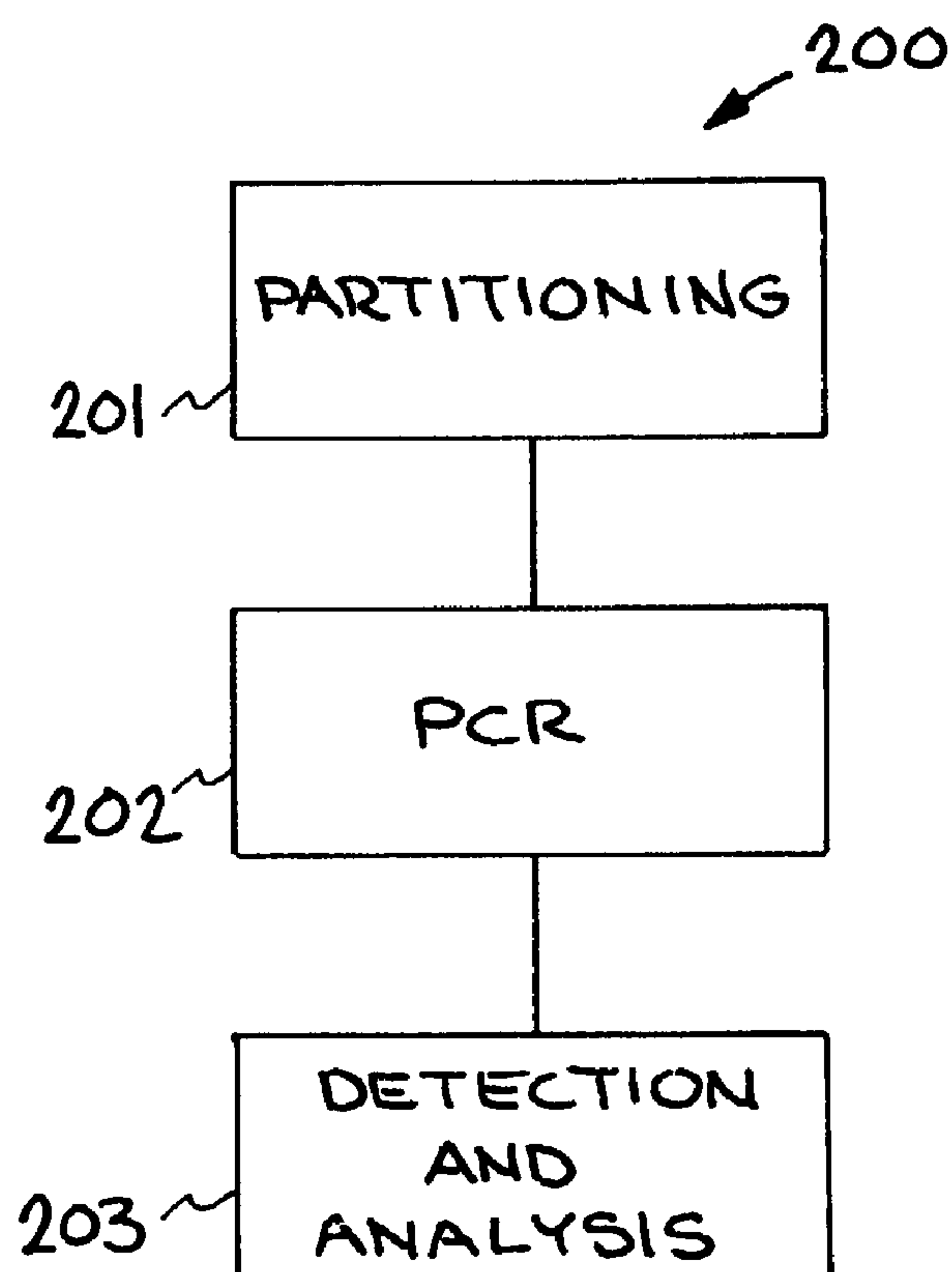
Zhang, C., et al., "Miniaturized PCR chips for nucleic acid amplification and analysis: latest advances and future trends," *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 2007, pp. 4223-4237, vol. 35.

Zhao, Y., et al., "Microparticle Concentration and Separation by Traveling-Wave Dielectrophoresis (twDEP) for Digital Microfluidics," *Journal of Microelectromechanical Systems*, 2007, pp. 1472-1481, vol. 16, No. 6.

Zhelev, T., et al., "Heat Integration in Micro-Fluidic Devices," *16th European Symposium on Computer Aided Process Engineering and 9th International Symposium on Process Systems Engineering*, 2006, pp. 1863-1868.

Nagai et al., *Anal. Chem.* 73, 1043-1047 (2001).*

* cited by examiner

**FIG. 1****FIG. 2**

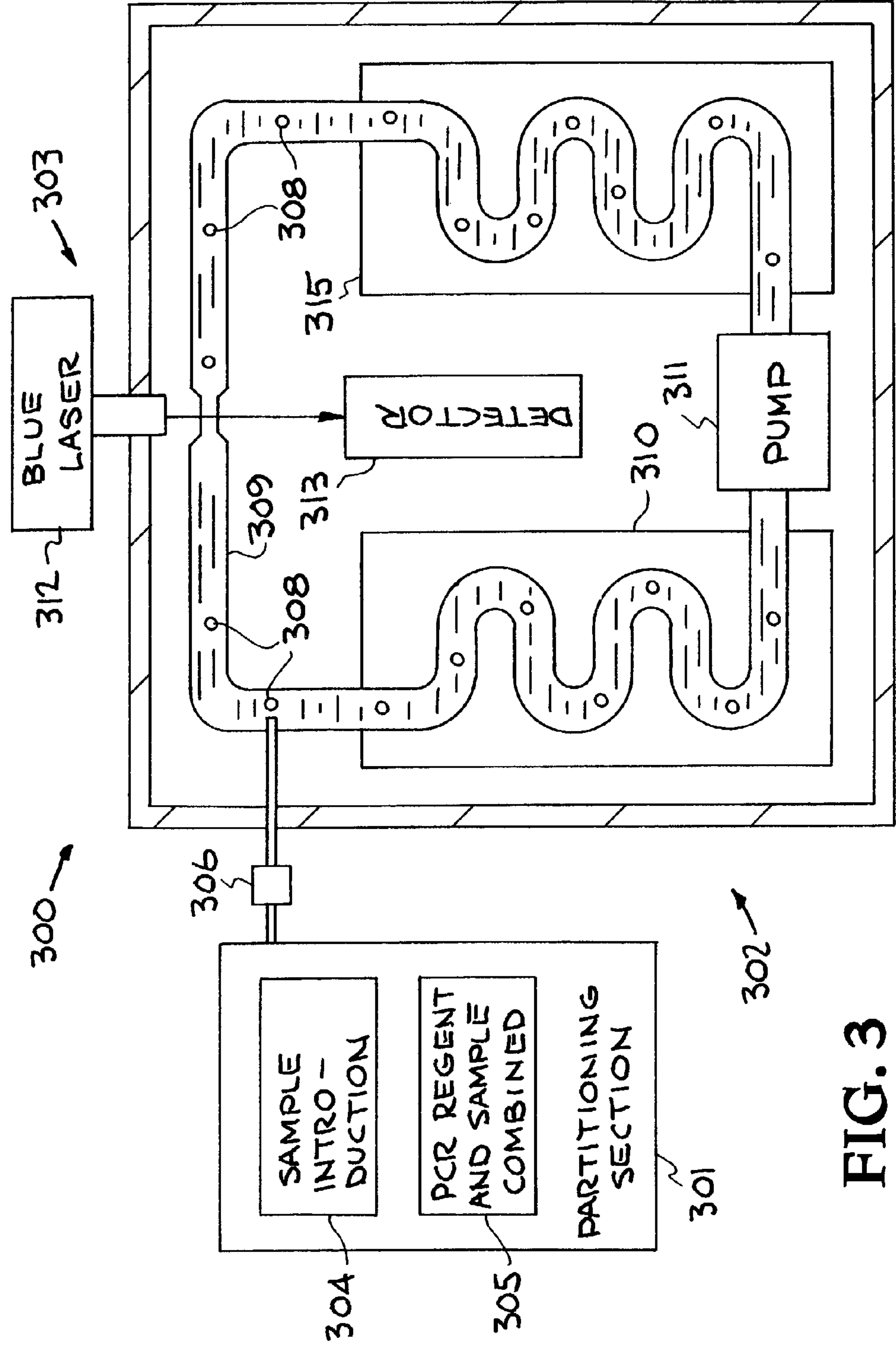


FIG. 3

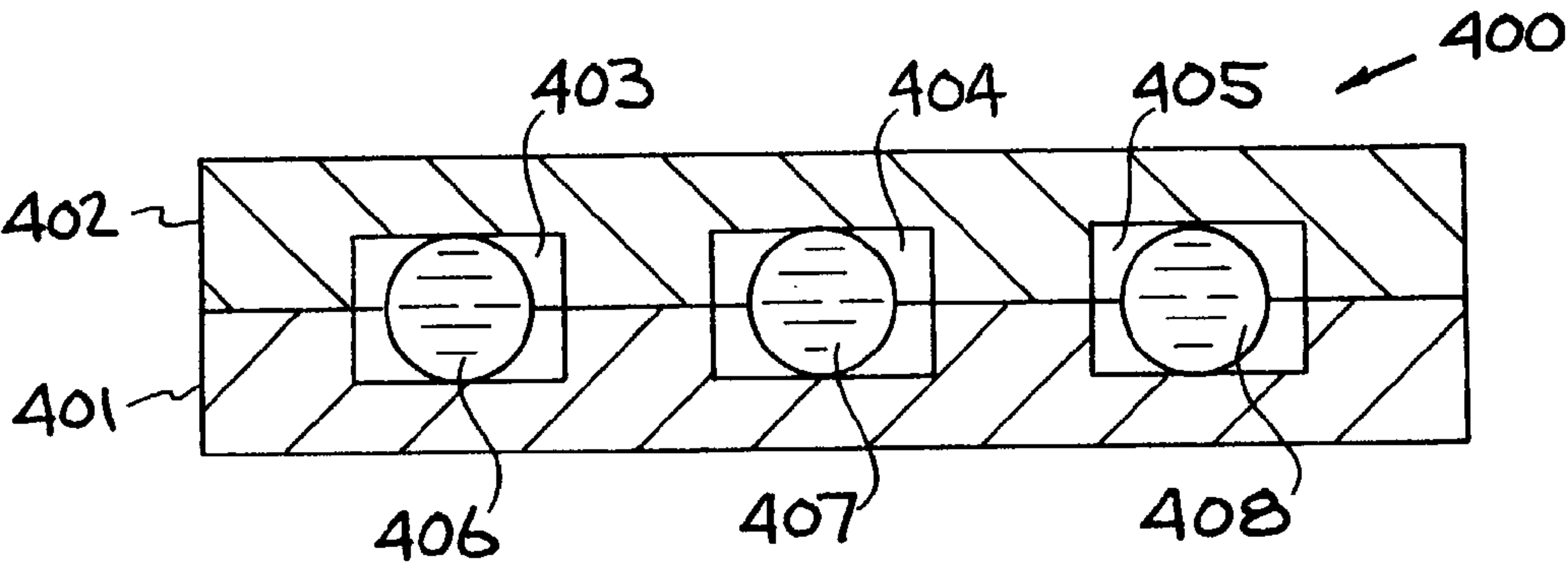


FIG. 4

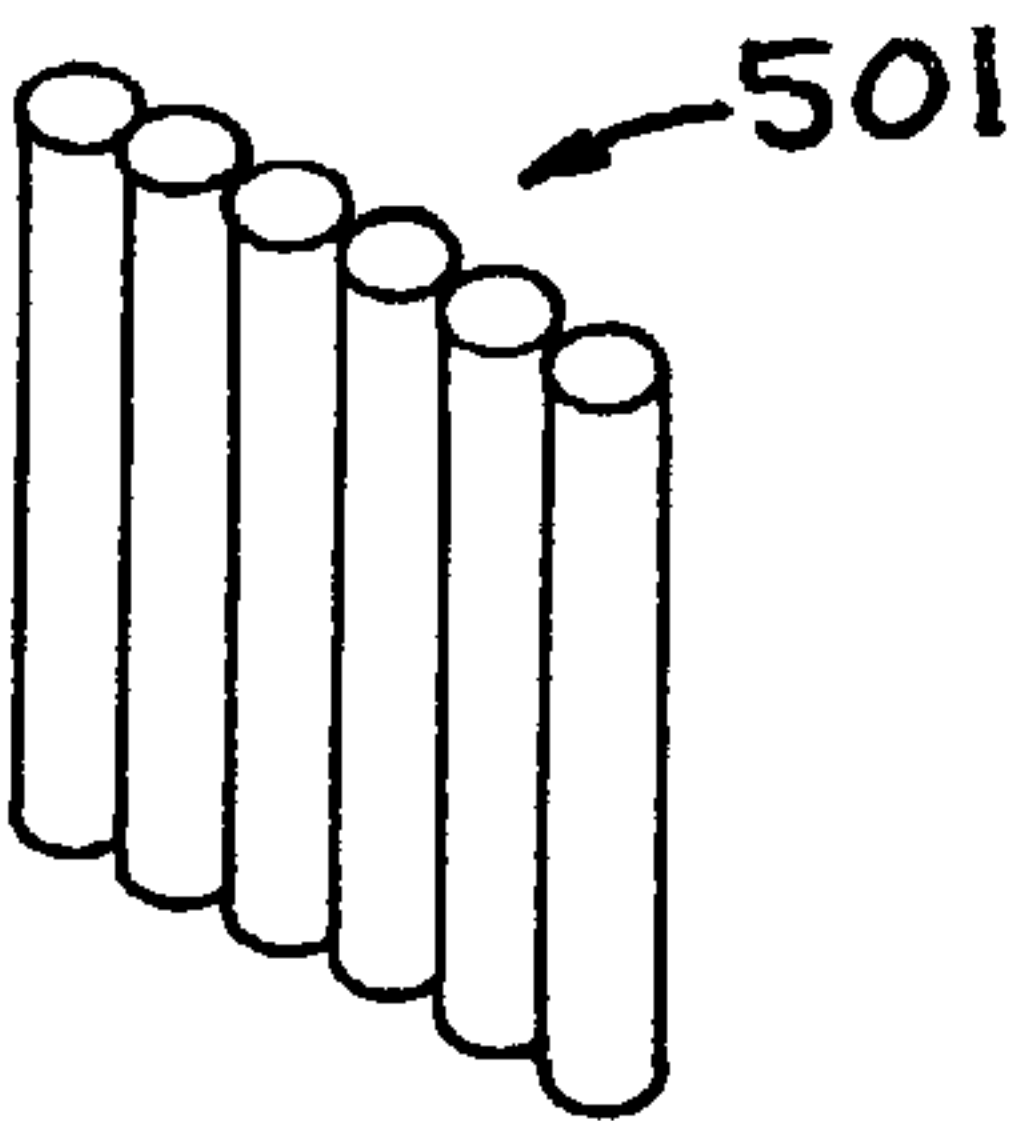


FIG. 5A

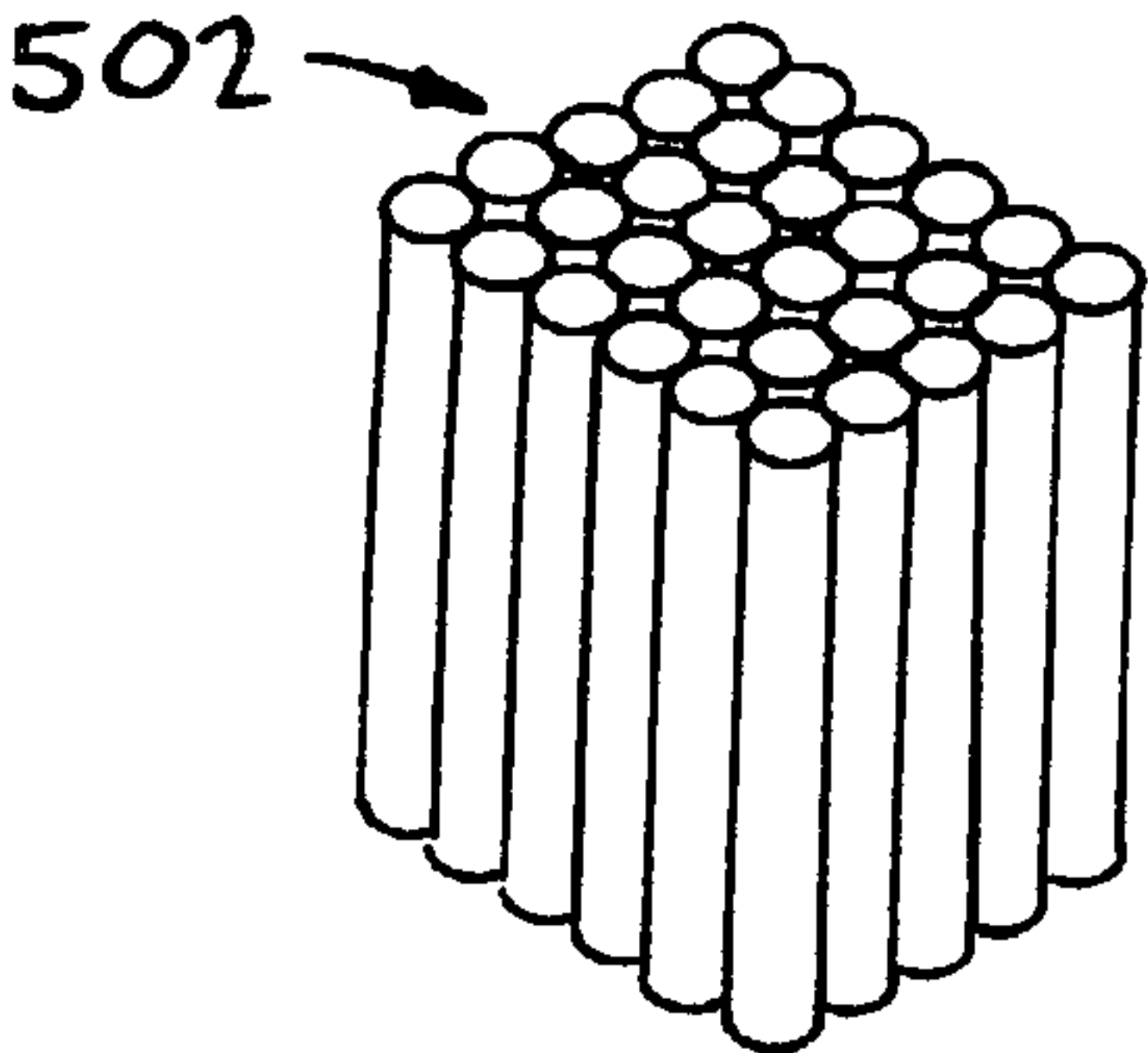


FIG. 5B

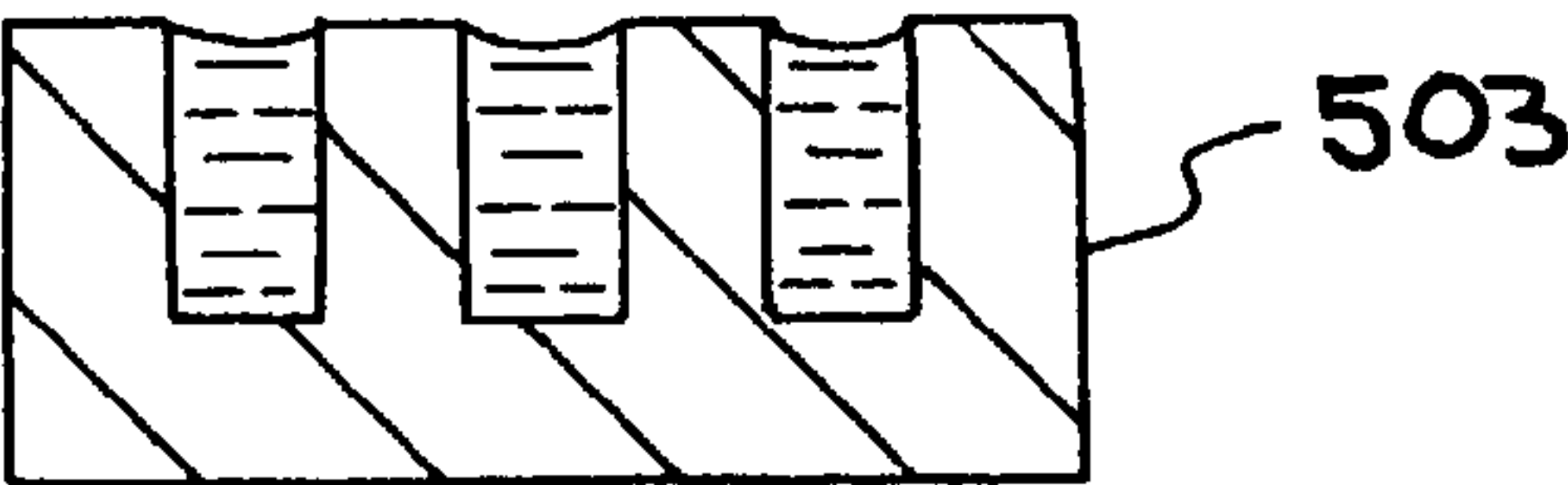


FIG. 5C

METHOD FOR CHEMICAL AMPLIFICATION BASED ON FLUID PARTITIONING IN AN IMMISCIBLE LIQUID

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [] appears in the original patent but forms no part of this reissue specification; matter printed in italics indicates the additions made by reissue; a claim printed with strikethrough indicates that the claim was canceled, disclaimed, or held invalid by a prior post-patent action or proceeding.

The present application is a Reissue of application Ser. No. 10/389,130, filed May 14, 2003, issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481 on May 9, 2006 and adds new claims relative to U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481. The present application is also a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 13/436,693, filed Mar. 30, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 45,539, issued Jun. 2, 2015, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 12/891,733, filed Sep. 27, 2010, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 43,365, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 12/118,418, filed May 9, 2008, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 41,780.

More than one reissue application has been filed for the reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481. The reissue applications are the present application; application Ser. No. 13/436,693, filed Mar. 30, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 45,539, issued Jun. 2, 2015; application Ser. No. 12/891,733, filed Sep. 27, 2010, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 43,365; and application Ser. No. 12/118,418, filed May 9, 2008 and issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 41,780.

The United States Government has rights in this invention pursuant to Contract No. W-7405-ENG-48 between the United States Department of Energy and the University of California for the operation of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

BACKGROUND

1. Field of Endeavor

The present invention relates to chemical amplification and more particularly to chemical amplification based on fluid partitioning.

2. State of Technology

U.S. Pat. No. 4,683,202 issued Jul. 28, 1987; U.S. Pat. No. 4,683,195 issued Jul. 28, 1987; and U.S. Pat. No. 4,800,159 issued Jan. 24, 1989 to Kary B. Mullis et al provide background information. The patents describe processes for producing any particular nucleic acid sequence from a given sequence of DNA or RNA in amounts which are large compared to the amount initially present. The DNA or RNA may be single-or-double-stranded, and may be a relatively pure species or a component of a mixture of nucleic acids. The process utilizes a repetitive reaction to accomplish the amplification of the desired nucleic acid sequence. The extension product of one primer when hybridized to the other becomes a template for the production of the desired specific nucleic acid sequence, and vice versa, and the process is repeated as often as is necessary to produce the desired amount of the sequence.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,503,715 for a nucleic acid ligand diagnostic biochip issued Jan. 7, 2003 provides the following background information, "Methods are provided in the instant invention for obtaining diagnostic and prognostic Nucleic acid ligands, attaching said ligands to a Biochip, and

detecting binding of target molecules in a Bodily to said Biochip-bound Nucleic acid ligands." In one embodiment of the instant invention, one or more Nucleic acid ligands are chosen that bind to molecules known to be diagnostic or prognostic of a disease; these ligands are then attached to the Biochip. Particular methods for attaching the Nucleic acid ligands to the Biochip are described below in the section entitled "Fabrication of the Nucleic Acid Biochip." The Biochip may comprise either (i) Nucleic acid ligands selected against a single target molecule; or more preferably, (ii) Nucleic acid ligands selected against multiple target molecules.

U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0197623 for nucleic acid detection assays published Dec. 26, 2002 provides the following background information, "means for the detection and characterization of nucleic acid sequences, as well as variations in nucleic acid sequences ... methods for forming a nucleic acid cleavage structure on a target sequence and cleaving the nucleic acid cleavage structure in a site-specific manner. The structure-specific nuclease activity of a variety of enzymes is used to cleave the target-dependent cleavage structure, thereby indicating the presence of specific nucleic acid sequences or specific variations thereof."

SUMMARY

Features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description. Applicants are providing this description, which includes drawings and examples of specific embodiments, to give a broad representation of the invention. Various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this description and by practice of the invention. The scope of the invention is not intended to be limited to the particular forms disclosed and the invention covers all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the claims.

The present invention provides an apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample comprising means for partitioning the sample into partitioned sections and means for performing PCR on the partitioned sections of the sample. Another embodiment of the invention provides an apparatus for nucleic acid amplification and detection of a sample comprising means for partitioning the sample into partitioned sections, means for performing PCR on the partitioned sections of the sample, and means for detection and analysis of the partitioned sections of the sample. The present invention also provides a method of nucleic acid amplification of a sample comprising the steps of partitioning the sample into partitioned sections and subjecting the partitioned sections of the sample to PCR. Another embodiment of a method of the present invention provides a method of nucleic acid amplification and detection of a sample comprising the steps of partitioning the sample into partitioned sections, subjecting the partitioned sections of the sample to PCR, and detecting and analyzing the partitioned sections of the sample.

The invention is susceptible to modifications and alternative forms. Specific embodiments are shown by way of example. It is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the particular forms disclosed. The invention covers all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated into and constitute a part of the specification, illustrate specific

embodiments of the invention and, together with the general description of the invention given above, and the detailed description of the specific embodiments, serve to explain the principles of the invention.

FIG. 1 is a flow diagram illustrating one embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a flow diagram illustrating another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a diagram of another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 4 is a diagram of another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a diagram of another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings, to the following detailed description, and to incorporated materials; detailed information about the invention is provided including the description of specific embodiments. The detailed description serves to explain the principles of the invention. The invention is susceptible to modifications and alternative forms. The invention is not limited to the particular forms disclosed. The invention covers all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the claims.

Referring now to the drawings, and in particular to FIG. 1, a flow diagram of one embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention is illustrated. The system is designated generally by the reference numeral **100**. The system **100** provides a method and apparatus for performing extremely rapid nucleic acid amplification. The flow diagram illustrating system **100** shows block **101** "partitioning" the sample and block **102** performing "CR" on the sample. The system **100** provides an apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample comprising means for partitioning the sample and means for performing PCR on the sample. The system **100** also provides a method of nucleic acid amplification of a sample comprising the steps of partitioning the sample and subjecting the sample to PCR. The system **100** has application wherever current PCR-type systems exist.

In block **101** a chemical reagent and an input sample are "partitioned" into a large number of microdroplets or other forms of fluid partitions prior to amplification in block **102**. The partitioning **101** involves dispersing the DNA-containing solution. For example the partitioning **101** can be accomplished by dispersing the DNA-containing solution in an immiscible carrier liquid. The DNA-containing solution is dispersed in the immiscible carrier fluid as microdroplets. The DNA-containing solution can be partitioned in other ways, for example, by being dispersed as liquid slugs separated by the carrier fluid, as an emulsion with the carrier fluid, or by using a gelling agent that prevents transfer of DNA between partitioned regions. The DNA-containing solution can also be partitioned mechanically by partitioning the fluid into micro-tubes or capillaries, or into micro-wells.

With the system **100**, each partitioned DNA-containing fluid volume contains the necessary biochemical constituents for selectively amplifying a specified portion of a sample DNA via polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The target DNA can be detected by monitoring for the colori-

metric indicator (e.g., fluorescence or optical absorption) generated with each DNA template duplication sequence.

In block **102** selected portions of each nucleic acid sample are amplified using polymerase chain reaction (PCR), with the product contained in each partitioned fluid volume. This results in much more concentrated amplification product, since the volume containing the reaction is so small.

The polymerase chain reaction (PCR), is a cyclic process whereby a large quantity of identical DNA strands can be produced from one original template. The procedure was developed in 1985 by Kerry Mullis, who was awarded the 1993 Nobel prize in chemistry for his work. In PCR, DNA is immersed in a solution containing the enzyme DNA polymerase, unattached nucleotide bases, and primers, which are short sequences of nucleotides designed to bind with an end of the desired DNA segment. Two primers are used in the process: one primer binds at one end of the desired segment on one of the two paired DNA strands, and the other primer binds at the opposite end on the other strand. The solution is heated to break the bonds between the strands of the DNA, then when the solution cools, the primers bind to the separated strands, and DNA polymerase quickly builds a new strand by joining the free nucleotide bases to the primers in the 5'-3' direction. When this process is repeated, a strand that was formed with one primer binds to the other primer, resulting in a new strand that is restricted solely to the desired segment. Thus the region of DNA between the primers is selectively replicated. Further repetitions of the process can produce a geometric increase in the number of copies, (theoretically 2^n if 100% efficient whereby n equals the number of cycles), in effect billions of copies of a small piece of DNA can be replicated in several hours.

A PCR reaction is comprised of (a) a double-stranded DNA molecule, which is the "template" that contains the sequence to be amplified, (b) primer(s), which is a single-stranded DNA molecule that can anneal (bind) to a complementary DNA sequence in the template DNA; (c) dNTPs, which is a mixture of dATP, dTTP, dGTP, and dCTP which are the nucleotide subunits that will be put together to form new DNA molecules in the PCR amplification procedure; and (d) Taq DNA polymerase, the enzyme which synthesizes the new DNA molecules using dNTPs.

Current amplification systems are limited in practice to half hour type amplification and detection windows (~30 cycles, 1 minute/cycle). The system **100** provides faster amplification. This has many applications, for example, in Homeland Defense applications, faster detection methods (a few minutes) can push the deployment of these sensors from "detect to treat" to "detect to protect," having a serious impact on the number of casualties from a massive bioagent release.

The system **100** has significant advantages over typical bulk DNA detection techniques (even microscale bulk solution approaches), including (1) much faster detection time through a reduction in the total number of temperature cycles required, (2) a reduction in the time for each cycle, and (3) removing interference from competing DNA templates. The system **100** achieves a reduction in the total number of cycles by limiting the dilution of the optically generated signal (e.g., fluorescence or absorption). The formation of partitioned fluid volumes of the DNA-containing solution effectively isolates the fluid volumes which contain the target DNA from the fluid volumes that do not contain the target DNA. Therefore, the dilution of the optical signal is largely eliminated, allowing much earlier detection.

5

This effect is directly related to the number of fluid partitions formed from the initial sample/reagent pool.

The system **100** achieves a reduction in the total number of cycles that are needed by limiting the dilution of the optically generated signal (e.g., fluorescence or absorption). The formation of partitioned fluid volumes of the DNA-containing solution effectively isolates the fluid volumes which contain the target DNA from the fluid volumes that do not contain the target DNA. Therefore, the dilution of the optical signal is largely eliminated, allowing much earlier detection. This effect is directly related to the number of fluid partitions formed from the initial sample/reagent pool. The effect of the number of fluid partitions on the number of cycles required for detection can be described by the following Equation E1:

$$N = \frac{\ln[D_L A_N \left(\frac{V}{X}\right)]}{\ln(2)}$$

where: N=number of cycles; D_L =detection limit for optical signal [moles/liter]; X=initial number of DNA molecules; V=volume containing DNA molecules [liters]; A_N =Avagadro's number [6.023×10^{23} molecules/mole]. From Equation E1 it is clear that N, the number of cycles until detection, decreases as V, the partitioned fluid volume, decreases.

The system **100** reduces the duration of each temperature cycle by effectively increasing the concentration of reactants by enclosing them in picoliter type volumes. Since reaction rates depend on the concentration of the reactants, the efficiency of a partitioned fluid volume or droplet should be higher than in an ordinary vessel (such as a test tube) where the reactant quantity (DNA quantity) is extremely low. It is estimated that through the reduction in the number of cycles and the reduction in the time required for each cycles that the FPDD technique can reduce the detection time by an order of magnitude as compared to bulk solution DNA detection techniques.

[The system **100** facilitates removal of interference from competing DNA templates. Given the extremely small volumes involved with Fluid-Partitioned DNA Detection (FPDD), it is possible to isolate a single template of the target DNA in a given partitioned volume or microdroplet. For example, the formation of 2000 partitioned fluid volumes or microdroplets (each with a volume of 5×10^{-9} liters) made by dividing a bulk solution of 10 microliters containing 200 DNA molecules, would result in one DNA molecule per microdroplet on average. This makes it possible to amplify only one template in mixtures containing many kinds of templates without interference. This is extremely important in processing of real world aerosol samples containing complex mixtures of DNA from many sources, and has direct application in screening of cDNA libraries.] *The system 100 facilitates removal of interference from competing DNA templates. Given the extremely small volumes involved with Fluid-Partitioned DNA Detection (FPDD), it is possible to isolate a single template of the target DNA in a given partitioned volume or microdroplet. For example, the formation of 2000 partitioned fluid volumes or microdroplets (each with a volume of 5×10^{-9} liters) made by dividing a bulk solution of 10 microliters containing 2000 DNA molecules, would result in one DNA molecule per microdroplet on average. This makes it possible to amplify only one template in mixtures containing many kinds of*

6

templates without interference. This is extremely important in processing of real world aerosol samples containing complex mixtures of DNA from many sources, and has direct application in screening of cDNA libraries.

Referring now to FIG. 2, a flow diagram of another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention is illustrated. The system is designated generally by the reference numeral **200**. The flow diagram illustrating system **200** shows block **201** "partitioning" the sample, block **202** performing "PCR" on the sample, and block **203** "detection and analysis." The system **200** provides a method and apparatus for performing extremely rapid nucleic acid amplification and detection. The system **200** provides an apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample comprising means for partitioning the sample into partitioned sections, means for performing PCR on the partitioned sections, and means for detection and analysis of the partitioned sections. The system **200** also provides a method of nucleic acid amplification of a sample comprising the steps of partitioning the sample into partitioned sections, subjecting the partitioned sections to PCR, and detecting and analyzing the partitioned sections of the sample.

In block **201** a chemical reagent and an input sample are "partitioned" into a large number of microdroplets or other forms of fluid partitions prior to amplification. The system **200** achieves a reduction in the total number of cycles by limiting the dilution of the optically generated signal (e.g., fluorescence or absorption). The formation of partitioned fluid volumes of the DNA-containing solution effectively isolates the fluid volumes which contain the target DNA from the fluid volumes that do not contain the target DNA. Therefore, the dilution of the optical signal is largely eliminated, allowing much earlier detection. This effect is directly related to the number of fluid partitions formed from the initial sample/reagent pool.

In block **202** selected portions of each nucleic acid sample are then amplified using polymerase chain reaction (PCR), with the product contained in each partitioned fluid volume. This results in much more concentrated amplification product, since the volume containing the reaction is so small. If a Taqman type detection approach is used, fluorescent dye molecules unquenched by the PCF amplification are also more concentrated, making possible earlier optical based detection. Since it is possible to contain very amounts of the starting target DNA in each partition fluid volume, inhibitory competition from near-neighbor DNA templates is less allowing screening of very dilute samples.

In block **203** partitioned portions of the sample are detected by monitoring for the calorimetric indicator (e.g., fluorescence or optical absorption) generated with each DNA template duplication sequence. The partitioned portions of the sample are optically probed to detect the colorimetric indicator which signals the presence of the target DNA. The partitioned portions of the sample can also be scanned optically to detect the colorimetric indicator signaling the presence of the target DNA. In one embodiment, fluorescence, generated by degradation of the dye/quencher pair on the primer, is detected using a confocal imaging system such as that employed in conventional flow cytometers. Scattering profiles from individual microdroplets, as in conventional flow cytometers, can be used to eliminate background signal from other particles.

The system **200** has application wherever current PCR-type systems exist, including medical, drug-discovery, bio-warfare detection, and other related fields. Biowarfare detection applications include identifying, detecting, and monitoring bio-threat agents that contain nucleic acid sig-

natures, such as spores, bacteria, etc. Biomedical applications include tracking, identifying, and monitoring outbreaks of infectious disease. The system 200 provides rapid, high throughput detection of biological pathogens (viruses, bacteria, DNA in biological fluids, blood, saliva, etc.) for medical applications. Forensic applications include rapid, high throughput detection of DNA in biological fluids for forensic purposes. Food and beverage safety applications include automated food testing for bacterial contamination.

Referring now to FIG. 3, a diagram of another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention is illustrated. The system is designated generally by the reference numeral 300. The system 300 provides an instrument for performing Fluid-Partitioned DNA Detection (FPDD) with PCR based detection and amplification. The system 300 includes a partitioning section 301, a PCR section 302, and a detection and analysis section 303.

The partitioning section 301 includes a sample introduction unit 304 and a unit 305 where the sample and a PCR reagent are combined. The sample and a PCR reagent are injected through a small orifice 306. The injection of the sample through the small orifice 306 produces microdroplets 308.

The PCR section 302 includes a continuous tube 309 for circulating the microdroplets 308 and suspended in an immiscible carrier fluid 314. The microdroplets 308 suspended in an immiscible carrier fluid 314 are pumped through the continuous tube 309 by pump 311. The microdroplets 308 suspended in an immiscible carrier fluid 314 are cycled through heater 310 and cooler 315 to perform PCR.

The detection and analysis section 303 includes a blue laser 312 and a detector 313. The laser 312 is projected upon the droplets 308 as they pass through tube 308 between the laser 312 and the detector 313.

In the system 300, the DNA-containing solution is partitioned into many microdroplets 308 and suspended in an immiscible carrier fluid 314. The microdroplets 308 are formed by forcing the PCR mix (sample and reagent) through the small orifice or microjet 306. These microdroplets 308 are then captured in the immiscible fluid 314, such as mineral oil, and flowed past the heating element 310 and cooler 315. An optical signal (e.g., fluorescence or optical absorption), generated by degradation of the dye/quencher pair on the primer, is detected using a confocal imaging system such as that employed in conventional flow cytometers. Scattering profiles from individual microdroplets, as in conventional flow cytometers, can be used to eliminate background signal from other particles. Once exposed to multiple heating cycles, the microdroplets can be identified and probed for an optical signal at rates of several thousand per second.

The FPDD system achieves a reduction in the total number of cycles by limiting the dilution of the optically generated signal (e.g., fluorescence or absorption). The formation of partitioned fluid volumes of the DNA-containing solution effectively isolates the fluid volumes which contain the target DNA from the fluid volumes that do not contain the target DNA. Therefore, the dilution of the optical signal is largely eliminated, allowing much earlier detection. This effect is directly related to the number of fluid partitions formed from the initial sample/reagent pool. The effect of the number of fluid partitions on the number of cycles required for detection is described by the Equation E1 set out earlier.

The FPDD technique reduces the duration of each temperature cycle by effectively increasing the concentration of

reactants by enclosing them in picoliter type volumes. Since reaction rates depend on the concentration of the reactants, the efficiency of a partitioned fluid volume or droplet should be higher than in an ordinary vessel (such as a test tube) where the reactant quantity (DNA quantity) is extremely low. It is estimated that through the reduction in the number of cycles and the reduction in the time required for each cycles that the FPDD technique can reduce the detection time by an order of magnitude as compared to bulk solution DNA detection techniques

[The FPDD technique facilitates removal of interference from competing DNA templates. Given the extremely small volumes involved with FPDD, it is possible to isolate a single template of the target DNA in a given partitioned volume or microdroplet. For example, the formation of 2000 partitioned fluid volumes or microdroplets (each with a volume of 5×10^{-9} liters) made by dividing a bulk solution of 10 microliters containing 200 DNA molecules, would result in one DNA molecule per microdroplet on average. This makes it possible to amplify only one template in mixtures containing many kinds of templates without interference. This is extremely important in processing of real world aerosol samples containing complex mixtures of DNA from many sources, and has direct application in screening of cDNA libraries.] *The FPDD technique facilitates removal of interference from competing DNA templates. Given the extremely small volumes involved with FPDD, it is possible to isolate a single template of the target DNA in a given partitioned volume or microdroplet. For example, the formation of 2000 partitioned fluid volumes or microdroplets (each with a volume of 5×10^{-9} liters) made by dividing a bulk solution of 10 microliters containing 2000 DNA molecules, would result in one DNA molecule per microdroplet on average. This makes it possible to amplify only one template in mixtures containing many kinds of templates without interference. This is extremely important in processing of real world aerosol samples containing complex mixtures of DNA from many sources, and has direct application in screening of cDNA libraries.*

With this new bioassay technique, each partitioned DNA-containing fluid volume contains the necessary biochemical constituents for selectively amplifying a specified portion of a sample DNA via polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The target DNA is detected by monitoring for the colorimetric indicator (e.g., fluorescence or optical absorption) generated with each DNA template duplication sequence.

The system 300 provides a fast, flexible and inexpensive high throughput, bioassay technology based on creation and suspension of microdroplets in an immiscible carrier stream. Each microdroplet contains the necessary biochemical constituents for selectively amplifying and fluorescently detecting a specified portion of a sample DNA via polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Once exposed to multiple heating cooling cycles, the microdroplets can be identified and probed for fluorescent signal at rates of several thousand per second.

Isolating the PCR reaction in such small (picoliter) volumes provides an order of magnitude reduction in overall detection time by:

- (1) reducing the duration of each temperature cycle—the concentration of reactants increases by enclosing them in picoliter type volumes. Since reaction kinetics depend on the concentration of the reactant, the efficiency of a microdroplet should be higher than in an ordinary vessel (such a test tube) where the reactant quantity is infinitesimal

- (2) reducing the total number of cycles—dilution of the fluorescently generated signal is largely eliminated in such a small volume, allowing much earlier detection. This effect is directly related to the number of microdroplets formed from the initial sample/reagent pool. Since PCR is an exponential process, for example, 1000 microdroplets would produce a signal 10 cycles faster than typical processing with bulk solutions.
- (3) removing interference from competing DNA templates—given the extremely small volumes involved, it is possible to isolate a single template of the target DNA in a given microdroplet. A pL microdroplet filled with a 1 pM solution, for example, will be occupied by only one molecule on average. This makes it possible to amplify only one template in mixtures containing many kinds of templates without interference. This is extremely important in processing of real world aerosol samples containing complex mixtures of DNA from many sources, and has direct application in screening of precious cDNA libraries.

Referring now to FIG. 4, an illustration of another embodiment of a system constructed in accordance with the present invention is illustrated. The system is designated generally by the reference numeral 400. The system 300 provides system for nucleic acid amplification of a sample. The system 400 includes means for partitioning the sample into partitioned sections and means for performing PCR on the partitioned sections of the sample.

The sample is separated into immiscible slugs 406, 407, and 408. The immiscible slugs 406, 407, and 408 are formed through a system of microfluidics. Background information on microfluidics is contained in U.S. Pat. No. 5,876,187 for micropumps with fixed valves to Fred K. Forster et al., patented Mar. 2, 1999. As stated in U.S. Pat. No. 5,876,187, “Miniature pumps, hereafter referred to as micropumps, can be constructed using fabrication techniques adapted from those applied to integrated circuits. Such fabrication techniques are often referred to as micromachining. Micropumps are in great demand for environmental, biomedical, medical, biotechnical, printing, analytical instrumentation, and miniature cooling applications.” Microchannels 403, 404, and 405 are formed in substrates 401 and 402. The disclosures of U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,876,187 and 5,876,187 are incorporated herein by reference.

The immiscible slugs 406, 407, and 408 can be moved through the microchannels using magnetohydrodynamics. Background information on magnetohydrodynamics is contained in U.S. Pat. No. 6,146,103 for micromachined magnetohydrodynamic actuators and sensors to Abraham P. Lee and Asuncion V. Lemoff, patented Nov. 14, 2000. As stated in U.S. Pat. No. 6,146,103, “Microfluidics is the field for manipulating fluid samples and reagents in minute quantities, such as in micromachined channels, to enable handheld bioinstrumentation and diagnostic tools with quicker process speeds. The ultimate goal is to integrate pumping, valving, mixing, reaction, and detection on a chip for biotechnological, chemical, environmental, and health care applications. Most micropumps developed thus far have been complicated, both in fabrication and design, and often are difficult to reduce in size, negating many integrated fluidic applications. Most pumps have a moving component to indirectly pump the fluid, generating pulsatile flow instead of continuous flow. With moving parts involved, dead volume is often a serious problem, causing cross-contamination in biological sensitive processes. The present invention utilizes MHDs for microfluid propulsion and fluid sensing, the microfabrication methods for such a pump, and

the integration of multiple pumps for a microfluidic system. MHDs is the application of Lorentz force law on fluids to propel or pump fluids. Under the Lorentz force law, charged particles moving in a uniform magnetic field feel a force perpendicular to both the motion and the magnetic field. It has thus been recognized that in the microscale, the MHD forces are substantial for propulsion of fluids through microchannels as actuators, such as a micropump, micromixer, or microvalve, or as sensors, such as a microflow meter, or viscosity meter. This advantageous scaling phenomenon also lends itself to micromachining by integrating microchannels with micro-electrodes.” The disclosure of U.S. Pat. No. 6,146,103 is incorporated herein by reference.

The means for performing PCR on the partitioned sections of the sample can be a system for alternately heating and cooling the immiscible slugs 406, 407, and 408. Alternatively, the means for performing PCR on the partitioned sections of the sample can be a system for alternately heating and cooling the immiscible slugs 406, 407, and 408 can be a system for moving the immiscible slugs 406, 407, and 408 through zones for heating and cooling. An example of such a system is shown in U.S. patent application No. 2002/0127152 published Sep. 12, 2002 for a convectively driven PCR thermal-cycling system described as follows: “A polymerase chain reaction system provides an upper temperature zone and a lower temperature zone in a fluid sample. Channels set up convection cells in the fluid sample and move the fluid sample repeatedly through the upper and lower temperature zone creating thermal cycling.” The disclosure of U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0127152 is incorporated herein by reference.

In another embodiment of the invention, the DNA-containing solution is partitioned by adding a gelling agent to the solution to form cells of partitioned volumes of fluid separated by the gelling agent. Using this approach for fluid partitioning, the DNA-containing solution is gelled in a tube or as a very thin layer. For example, it can be in a thin layer between flat plates and the surface of the thin film can be optically probed spatially in directions parallel to the film surface to detect micro-regions in the film where the colorimetric indicator suggests the presence of the target DNA.

Another embodiment of the invention is to partition the DNA-containing solution as microdroplets in an immiscible fluid where the droplets are arranged in a two-dimensional array such that the array of microdroplets can be optically probed to detect the colorimetric indicator which signals the presence of the target DNA. In this approach a solid hydrophobic substrate supports the microdroplets. For example, in small indentations, and the immiscible “partitioning” fluid is less dense than the aqueous DNA-containing solution.

In another embodiment of the invention the DNA-containing solution is partitioned using mechanical means. For example, the DNA-containing solution can be partitioned into an array of capillaries, microtubes, or wells. In this approach, the micro vessels holding each partitioned fluid volume can be scanned optically to detect the colorimetric indicator signaling the presence of the target DNA.

Referring now to FIGS. 5A, 5B, and 5C example representations of the mechanical partitioning approach for DNA detection using fluid partitioning are shown. In FIG. 5A a line of capillaries or micro-tubes 501 are used for partitioning and holding the DNA containing solution. In FIG. 5B an array 502 of capillaries or micro-tubes are used for partitioning the DNA-containing solution. In FIG. 5C a microwells or micro-vessels unit 503 is used for partitioning and holding the DNA-containing solution.

11

While the invention may be susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments have been shown by way of example in the drawings and have been described in detail herein. However, it should be understood that the invention is not intended to be limited to the particular forms disclosed. Rather, the invention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the following appended claims.

The invention claimed is:

[1. An apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample, comprising:

means for partitioning said sample into partitioned sections, wherein said means for partitioning said sample into partitioned sections comprises an injection orifice, and

means for performing PCR on said partitioned sections of said sample.]

[2. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 wherein said injection orifice is an injection orifice that produces microdroplets.]

[3. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 wherein said injection orifice is an injection orifice that injects said sample and a PCR reagent.]

[4. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 wherein said means for performing PCR on said partitioned sections of said sample comprises a continuous tube for circulating said partitioned sections of said sample through a heater to perform PCR.]

[5. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 wherein said means for performing PCR on said partitioned sections of said sample comprises a continuous tube for circulating said partitioned sections of said sample through a heater and cooler to perform PCR.]

[6. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 wherein said means for performing PCR on said partitioned sections of said sample comprises a pump, a continuous tube, and a heater.]

[7. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 including means for detection and analysis of said partitioned sections of said sample comprising a laser and a detector.]

[8. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 including means for detection and analysis of said partitioned sections of said sample comprising a blue laser and a detector.]

[9. The apparatus for nucleic acid amplification of a sample of claim 1 wherein said means for partitioning said sample into partitioned sections comprises means for separating said sample into immiscible slugs.]

12

[10. A method of nucleic acid amplification of a sample, comprising the steps of:

partitioning said sample into partitioned sections, wherein said step of partitioning said sample into partitioned sections comprises flowing said sample through an injection orifice, and

subjecting said partitioned sections of said sample to PCR.]

11. A method of nucleic acid amplification of a sample, comprising the steps of:

partitioning the sample into partitioned sections,

wherein the sample comprises a nucleic acid and components for performing nucleic acid amplification,

wherein the step of partitioning the sample into partitioned sections comprises flowing the sample through an injection orifice into an immiscible carrier fluid,

wherein the partitioned sections comprise a gelling agent or a gel, and

subjecting the partitioned sections of the sample to nucleic acid amplification.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the injection orifice injects the sample and a PCR reagent.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the injection orifice connects a sample flow pathway to a channel or tube comprising an immiscible fluid.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the partitioned sections are separated by the immiscible carrier fluid.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the nucleic acid amplification comprises amplification of a DNA target.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the partitioned sections contain, on average, a single template of a DNA target, and wherein the single template is amplified within the partitioned sections.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the partitioned sections are exposed to multiple heating and cooling cycles.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising moving the partitioned sections through a microchannel.

19. The method of claim 11, further comprising detecting the products of the nucleic acid amplification.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the detecting comprises confocal imaging.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the detecting comprises laser excitation.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the partitioned sections are probed for fluorescent signal.

23. The method of claim 11, wherein the partitioned sections comprise microdroplets or slugs.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : RE46,322 E
APPLICATION NO. : 14/701392
DATED : February 28, 2017
INVENTOR(S) : Brian L. Anderson et al.

Page 1 of 1

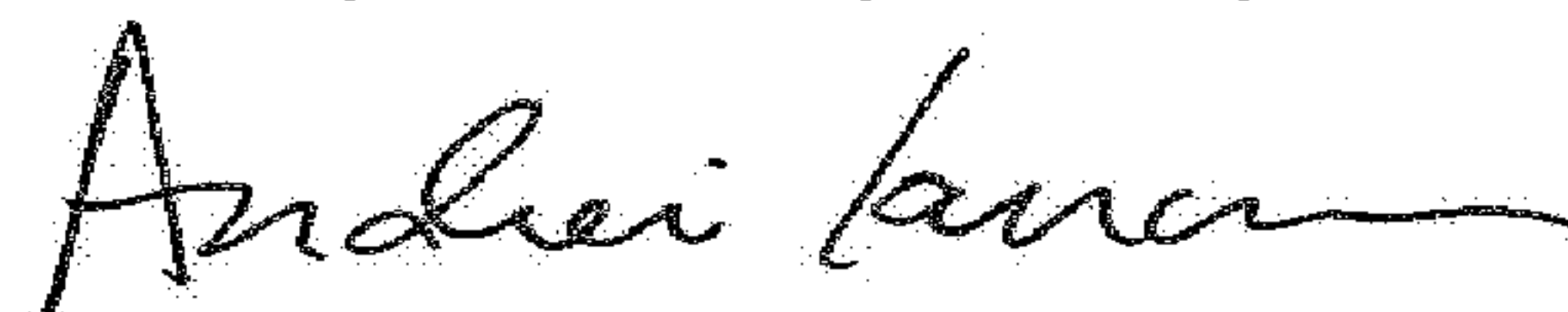
It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

In the Specification

Column 1, Lines 14-33 replace with:

--More than one reissue application has been filed for the reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481, the reissue applications are Application Ser. No. 15/421,141, filed January 31, 2017, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue Application Ser. No. 14/701,392, filed April 30, 2015, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. RE46,322, issued February 28, 2017, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 13/436,693, filed Mar. 30, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 45,539, issued Jun. 2, 2015, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 12/891,733, filed Sep. 27, 2010, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 43,365, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue application Ser. No. 12/118,418, filed May 9, 2008, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 41,780, which is a reissue application of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481. The present application is a Reissue of application Ser. No. 10/389,130, filed May 14, 2003, issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481 on May 9, 2006 and adds new claims relative to U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481.--

Signed and Sealed this
Twenty-ninth Day of May, 2018



Andrei Iancu
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : RE46,322 E
APPLICATION NO. : 14/701392
DATED : February 28, 2017
INVENTOR(S) : Brian L. Anderson et al.

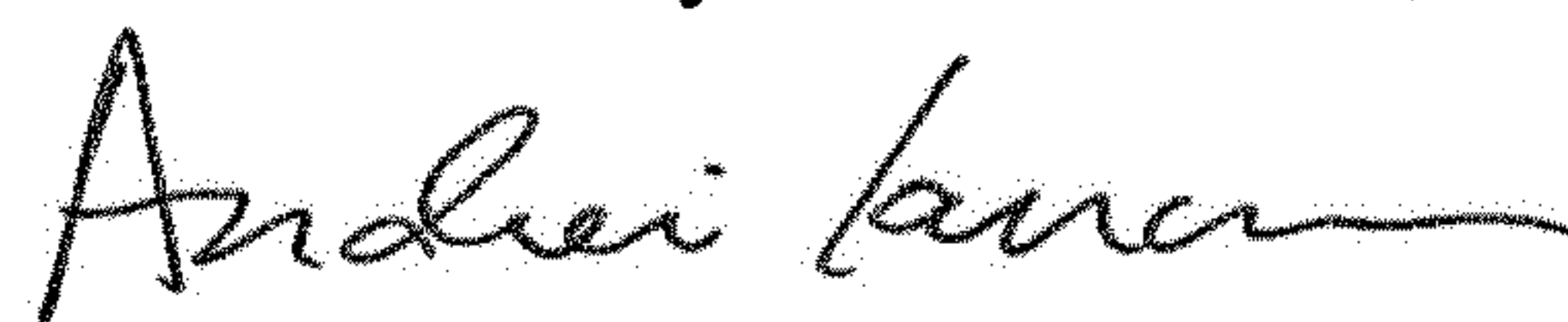
Page 1 of 1

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

In the Specification

At Column 1, Line 14, "More than one reissue application has been filed for the reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481, the reissue applications are Application Ser. No. 15/421,141, filed January 31, 2017, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue Application Ser. No. 14/701,392, filed April 30, 2015, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. RE46,322, issued February 28, 2017, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 13/436,693, filed Mar. 30, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 45,539, issued Jun. 2, 2015, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 12/891,733, filed Sep. 27, 2010, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 43,365, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue application Ser. No. 12/118,418, filed May 9, 2008, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 41,780, which is a reissue application of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481. The present application is a Reissue of application Ser. No. 10/389,130, filed May 14, 2003, issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481 on May 9, 2006 and adds new claims relative to U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481." should read --More than one reissue application has been filed for the reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481, the reissue applications are: Application Ser. No. 16/115,187, filed August 28, 2018, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue Application Ser. No. 15/421,141, filed January 31, 2017, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 47,080, issued Oct. 9, 2018, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue Application Ser. No. 14/701,392, filed April 30, 2015, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 46,322, issued February 28, 2017, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 13/436,693, filed Mar. 30, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. Re. 45,539, issued Jun. 2, 2015, which is a continuation reissue application of application Ser. No. 12/891,733, filed Sep. 27, 2010, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 43,365, which is a continuation reissue application of reissue application Ser. No. 12/118,418, filed May 9, 2008, issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 41,780, which is a reissue application of U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481. The present application is a Reissue of application Ser. No. 10/389,130, filed May 14, 2003, issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481 on May 9, 2006 and adds new claims relative to U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,481.--

Signed and Sealed this
Seventeenth Day of November, 2020



Andrei Iancu
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office