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What is claimed is:

1. A nucleic acid separation method, comprising:

exposing a sample comprising cells containing nucleic acid to an aqueous mixture comprising a lytic reagent and one or more beads capable of binding the nucleic acid released from said cells to form a nucleic acid-bead complex; and

passing the nucleic acid-bead complex through a substantially immiscible liquid layer to separate the nucleic acid from the aqueous mixture.

2. The method of claim **1**, wherein the sample is a buccal sample.

3. The method of claim **1**, wherein the sample is blood.

4. The method of claim **1**, wherein the one or more beads are magnetic, and the nucleic acid-bead complex is passed through the substantially immiscible liquid layer with an applied magnetic field.

5. The method of claim **1**, wherein the substantially immiscible liquid layer comprises organic liquid.

6. The method of claim **1**, wherein the substantially immiscible liquid layer comprises wax.

7. The method of claim **1**, wherein the substantially immiscible liquid layer is heated to facilitate passage of the nucleic acid-bead complex.

8. A method of transferring nucleic acid, comprising:

contacting nucleic acid at a first location with one or more beads to form a nucleic acid-bead complex in a liquid; and

transporting the nucleic acid-bead complex to a second location separated from the first location by an intermediary layer, wherein said intermediary layer is substantially immiscible with the liquid.

9. The method of claim **8**, wherein the nucleic acid and one or more inhibitors of nucleic acid amplification processes are substantially insoluble in the intermediary layer.

10. A nucleic acid separation method, comprising:

introducing a sample comprising biological cells through a first layer to a second layer comprising magnetic beads, wherein said first layer is substantially contiguous with said second layer;