

Peer Review

Review of: "The Contentious Origins of SARS-CoV-2: A Comprehensive Review of Current Knowledge"

Paul Komesaroff¹

1. Monash University, Victoria, Australia

This is a useful article that is well-constructed and clearly written. The conclusions appear to be well-founded, and it will therefore make a helpful addition to the existing literature.

I have just three comments:

1. What is the process for data synthesis? Careful searches have been conducted, but there is no indication of how the data, claims, or conclusions of the various papers have been assessed and brought together. What does it mean to refer to a "consensus"? Does this have a precise meaning, or does it merely refer to the general impression of the author? Some discussion of how the content of the various papers was processed will be helpful.
2. Some further discussion of the continued propagation of the lab leak hypothesis in the absence of any actual supporting data would be of interest. In many cases, these appear to reflect political rather than scientific interests, which potentially has significant consequences for the conduct of scientific research. In other cases, it has been used to draw attention to previous (now defunct) collaborations between the US and China, which may or may not have sought to use gain of function techniques. It may be helpful for readers to contextualize the ongoing discussions about what is presented as a factual question but in reality, directly or indirectly, may be raising quite separate matters.
3. Finally, it might be helpful to draw attention to the missing links: that is, what data would resolve the present uncertainty relating to each hypothesis. It is likely that at this stage, little further progress can be made without actual additional data. Can you specify what those data could possibly be and from where they might arise?

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.