

Review of: "Somatic evolution of Cancer: A new synthesis"

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I found this article to be a well-written presentation of challenging and novel views that fulfill the promise of their title. A minor criticism is that they seem not to concede there could be other positions regarding their opening statement "Cancers have been interpreted either as somatic evolution of cheater cells that escape replication regulation or alternatively as non-healing wounds." I appreciate that their focus is on a new synthesis but I suggest that this should not exclude other possibilities (surely, such need not be addressed in detail). Also, building on the foundation of biological evolution by relying on its meager, known mechanisms (even with its own new syntheses) is of doubtful logic. Their approach regarding wound-healing mechanisms ("This suggests that cancer develops not by any de novo gain of function but by exaptation of... wound healing functions.") is quite interesting and could bear fruit. Also, it seems to me that the authors appear to inadequately consider the challenges posed by the varied nature of cancer itself. Overall, their arguments are well-reasoned and well-explained with much useful detail.