

From the Front Row

Movie News, Reviews, and Commentary by Matthew Lucas

Saturday, June 20, 2009

Review: "Under Our Skin"

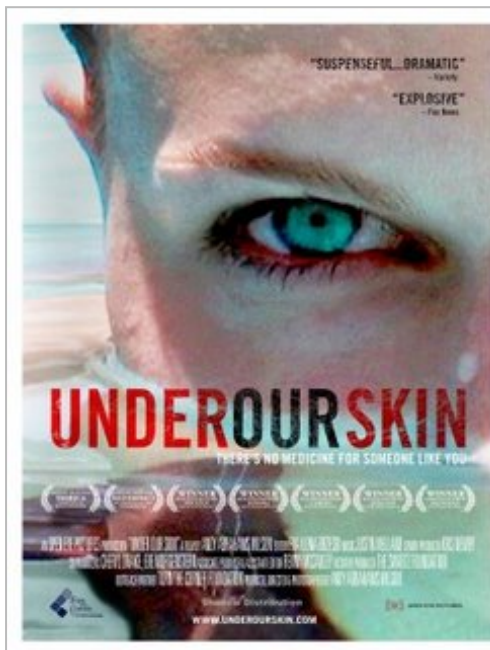
One of the most rewarding things about documentary films are their ability to expose little known injustices in a compelling and artistic way.

In Andy Abrahams Wilson's terrifying new documentary, *Under Our Skin*, one of the most controversial and overlooked medical emergencies of our time. One that some doctors say doesn't even exist.

The epidemic in question is Lyme disease, a tick-borne illness that can only be spread through the bites of certain ticks.

But is there more to the story than originally thought?

Lyme disease is named after the town of Lyme, Connecticut, where in 1975 the mysterious disease was affecting whole families without any diagnosis.



About



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Warnings

seem insufficient to halt the growing Lyme disease epidemic. From *UNDER OUR SKIN*, a film by

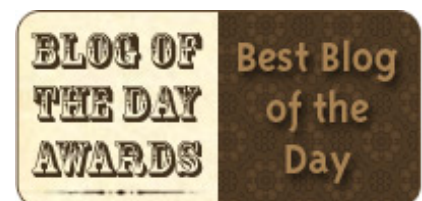
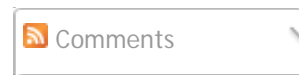
Andy Abrahams Wilson.

Now, the illness known as Lyme disease has a very specific set of symptoms that are widely accepted to be easy to detect and treat. But many patients are reporting far worse symptoms that suggest that Lyme may be a far more severe, debilitating illness than previously thought, even becoming a terminal problem in some cases, causing permanent neurological damage and even death. The problem is that many doctors claim that the symptoms are all in the patients' heads, some even going so far as to say that Lyme doesn't exist at all, that it is all purely a psychological condition.

The vast distance between the opinions of the medical establishment and the cutting edge research on Lyme is quite frightening, and while it is clear that *Under Our Skin* is of the opinion that Lyme is far worse than mainstream doctors admit, Wilson wisely gives voice to both sides of the argument. Using interviews with real people who have struggled with Lyme disease for many years, the documentary takes on a more personal look at how it has affected their every day lives. While the film is not particularly unique in its presentation, its examination of the personal stories of those who have fought back against Lyme and the doctors who have supported them at the risk of their own medical licenses, is what makes the film so compelling.



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Currently in Theaters



Sean Cobb


tends to his wife Mandy Hughes as she suffers a seizure in *UNDER OUR SKIN*, a film by Andy Abrahams Wilson.

I had heard of Lyme disease before in connection with ticks, but I had no idea that there was such a huge medical controversy surrounding its very existence. With opinions varying so greatly on the symptoms and nature of the disease, it's downright scary to think of the ramifications. Some scientists have made some startling discoveries involving Lyme and other terminal diseases such as Alzheimer's and Lou Gerhig's disease, including one who found the bacteria that causes Lyme present in 7 out of 10 Alzheimer brains.

A discovery of that nature could be a major medical breakthrough, and while one can't help but wonder if this is sound science or needless hysteria, *Under Our Skin* makes a very convincing case. If what it claims is true, this could be one of the greatest medical failures of all time, one that should no longer be ignored. Now that the film has given voice to those who have been previously ignored, perhaps some real change can at last be made.

GRADE - ★ ★ ★ (out of four)

UNDER OUR SKIN; Directed by Andy Abrahams Wilson; Not Rated; *Now playing at the IFC Center in NYC.*

posted at 8:44 PM 



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