

= X ( The X @-@ Files ) =

X , sometimes referred to as Mr. X , is a fictional character on the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . He serves as an informant , leaking information to FBI Special Agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully to aid their investigation of paranormal cases , dubbed X @-@ Files . The character serves as a replacement for Deep Throat , who had been killed off in the first season finale , " The Erlenmeyer Flask " . X himself would be killed off after appearing in several seasons , eventually being replaced by Marita Covarrubias .

X is portrayed in the series by Steven Williams , and made his début in the second season episode " The Host " , although the character would not appear on @-@ screen until " Sleepless " , two episodes later . The role had originally been conceived as female , with Natalija Nogulich cast in the role ; however , her initial scenes were deemed unsatisfactory by the producers , leading to her replacement . Williams ' portrayal of X was intended to introduce a personality completely different to the character 's predecessor , Deep Throat , and has been positively received by critics and fans .

= = Conceptual history = =

The character of X was originally intended to be a woman , and Natalija Nogulich had been cast in the role . However , Nogulich was replaced by Steven Williams after shooting her first scene , as the writing staff felt Nogulich was not able to create the " right chemistry " with her co @-@ stars . Williams had previous experience with writers Glen Morgan and James Wong , although it was series creator Chris Carter who suggested him for the part .

Williams ' portrayal of the role was intended to act as a counterpoint to Jerry Hardin 's portrayal of X 's predecessor , Deep Throat . Whereas Deep Throat had been a selfless character , X was written and performed as a scared , selfish character . Prior to the episode " One Breath " , Glen Morgan had felt that the character of X was not " going over too well " with fans of the series , as he seemed to simply be a copy of Deep Throat . Believing Williams to be an actor worth having as a series regular , he included in the episode a scene in which X murders witnesses who have seen him speaking to Fox Mulder . Morgan felt that such a scene reflected X 's paranoia and the difference between him and his predecessor , noting that " Deep Throat was a guy willing to lose his life for letting out the secret , whereas X is a guy who 's still scared " . Williams has stated that he has never attempted to rationalize the character 's motives or imagine a backstory for him , preferring to play the role with as little background as possible ; he once stated " the less I know about him , the more interesting he becomes . "

Williams ' background in fight choreography , stemming from his role in Missing in Action 2 : The Beginning ( 1985 ) , allowed him to prepare for , and to help create , the character 's actions scenes , including choreographing the character 's brawl with Mitch Pileggi 's character Walter Skinner in the episode " End Game " . Williams has also stated that his portrayal of the role is based in part on Avery Brooks ' character Hawk on the series Spenser : For Hire .

= = Character arc = =

X was introduced on the series via a phone call made to Fox Mulder ( David Duchovny ) in the second season episode " The Host " , telling Mulder that he had " a friend in the FBI " . However , the character did not appear on @-@ screen until " Sleepless " , two episodes later , aiding Mulder in an investigation by leaking information on a secret military project from the Vietnam War . While X 's loyalties and his own agenda were often unclear , he proved more than once that he at least does not want Mulder dead . In the episode " End Game " , he is approached by Dana Scully ( Gillian Anderson ) , who pleads that she needs to know where Mulder is , believing his life to be in danger . Initially X refuses , and is subsequently confronted by Walter Skinner ( Mitch Pileggi ) , who seemed to recognize X. He relinquishes Mulder 's location , though not until after a brief but intense scuffle with Skinner . In the episode " 731 " , X 's loyalty to Mulder is further confirmed . Trapped on a train

car equipped with a time bomb , Mulder , about to escape , is attacked brutally by the Red Haired Man , a Men in Black assassin . X fatally shoots the Red Haired Man as he is about to step off the car , then boards the car with only enough time left to save either Mulder or the alien @-@ human hybrid the car was transporting . He opts to save Mulder , and carries him off to safety just as the car explodes .

In the season 4 opener " Herrenvolk " , X 's position as an informant is discovered by the Syndicate . When suspicion arises after the finding of photographs that were taken of The Smoking Man ( William B. Davis ) by X , false information is planted at the First Elder 's behest , in order to root out the leak . Attempting to relay the information to Mulder , X goes to his apartment and is surprised by fellow Men in Black operative , the Gray Haired Man , who fatally shoots him . With his last strength , X crawls to Mulder 's doorstep and writes in his own blood " SRSG " , meaning " Special Representative to the Secretary General " of the United Nations , and thus , this clue leads Mulder to Marita Covarrubias ( Laurie Holden ) . After his death , X appears two more times ? in The Lone Gunmen origin story " Unusual Suspects , " set before his death , and as a ghost in the series finale , " The Truth " .

= = Reception = =

The character of X has been well @-@ received by critics . Entertainment Weekly included the character in the list of the top 20 Black Sci @-@ Fi Icons in 2009 , at number 17 . Todd vanDerWerff , writing for The A.V. Club , has praised the " gravitas " of Williams ' acting , adding that he wished that the writers " had figured out a way to have him around more often than they did " . VanDerWerff 's fellow writer Zack Handlen felt that the character 's assassination in " Herrenvolk " was " appropriately shocking " , calling the scene " one of the most memorable death 's [ sic ] in the series " ; although he felt that the immediate introduction of the character 's successor , Marita Covarrubias , " deflates the importance of X 's loss " in the episode . Handlen has also called X " the best of Mulder 's informants " , explaining that this is " because he 's always pissed off , he 's always reluctant to provide information , and you can 't ever be sure what play he 's really running " . Series writer Frank Spotnitz has called X " the meanest , nastiest , most lethal killer on the planet " .

Steven Williams has noted that he feels the episodes " Nisei " and " 731 " were chiefly responsible for the character 's popularity with fans . In 1997 , Williams was nominated for a Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series for his work as X , alongside Gillian Anderson , William B. Davis , David Duchovny and Mitch Pileggi .