

= The X @-@ Files (season 8) =

The eighth season of the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files commenced airing in the United States on November 5 , 2000 , concluded on May 20 , 2001 , and consisted of twenty @-@ one episodes . Season eight takes place after Fox Mulder 's (David Duchovny) alien abduction in the seventh season . The story arc for the search of Mulder continues until the second half of the season , while a new arc about Dana Scully 's (Gillian Anderson) pregnancy is formed . This arc would continue , and end , with the next season . The season explores various themes such as life , death , and belief .

For this season , Duchovny elected to return only as an intermittent main character , appearing in only half of the episodes . Actor Robert Patrick was hired as a replacement for Mulder , playing John Doggett . The season also marked the first appearance of Annabeth Gish as Monica Reyes , who would become a main character in the ninth season . In addition to the cast change , series creator Chris Carter updated the opening credits , which had remained unchanged since the first season .

Season eight was received well by critics but was less warmly received by fans , many of whom were unhappy that Duchovny reduced his role and that Patrick took over as co @-@ lead alongside Anderson . Ratings for the season were initially strong , but it eventually averaged a total of 13 @.@ 53 million viewers , down from the seventh season 's 14 @.@ 2 million . Concurrent with the airing of this season , Carter and The X @-@ Files production team created and aired a short @-@ lived spinoff titled The Lone Gunmen .

= = Plot overview = =

At the end of the seventh season finale , " Requiem " , Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) was abducted by aliens . Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) meets Special Agent John Doggett (Robert Patrick) , the leader of an FBI taskforce organized to conduct a search for Mulder . Although the search ultimately proves unsuccessful , Doggett is assigned to the X @-@ Files and works with Scully to look for explanations to several cases . When Scully learns that several women have reportedly been abducted and impregnated with alien babies , she begins to question her own pregnancy and fears for her unborn child .

Doggett introduces Scully to Special Agent Monica Reyes (Annabeth Gish) , an FBI specialist in ritualistic crime , shortly before Mulder 's deceased body suddenly appears in a forest at night . Following Mulder 's funeral , Assistant Director Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) is threatened by Alex Krycek (Nicholas Lea) that he must kill Scully 's baby before it is born . Billy Miles (Zachary Ansley) , a multiple abductee who disappeared on the same night as Mulder , is returned deceased but his dead body is resurrected and restored to full health . Mulder also returns from death , with Scully supervising his recovery . Fully rejuvenated , Mulder investigates several X @-@ Files , against orders to do so , but soon gets fired , leaving Doggett in charge of the cases . Mulder continues to provide input in an unofficial capacity .

Reluctantly accepting Krycek 's assistance , Mulder , Doggett and Skinner learn that an alien virus recently created in secret by members of the United States government has replaced several humans , including Miles and several high @-@ ranking FBI personnel , with so @-@ called alien " Super Soldiers " . Krycek claims that the soldiers are virtually unstoppable aliens who want to make sure that humans will not survive the colonisation of Earth . They have learned that Scully 's baby is a miraculously special child and are afraid that it may be greater than them . They have only recently learned of the baby 's importance , which is why Krycek told Skinner to kill the unborn child earlier . When Miles arrives at the FBI Headquarters , Mulder , Doggett , Skinner and Krycek help Scully to escape along with Reyes who drives her to a remote farm . Shortly after Skinner kills Krycek , Scully delivers an apparently normal baby while the alien super soldiers surround her . Without explanation , the aliens leave the area as Mulder arrives . While Doggett and Reyes report to the FBI Headquarters , Mulder takes Scully and their newborn son , William , back to her apartment .

= = = Themes = = =

The eighth season of The X @-@ Files takes place in a science fiction environment and employs the common science fiction concepts of strongly differentiated characters fighting an unequivocally evil enemy , in this case , the alien Colonists . The first episode of the season , " Within " explores " loss " , " loneliness " and " pain " after the disappearance of Mulder . " Per Manum " included basic themes common in the series , such as " dark , foreboding terror " , an " overriding sense of paranoia " , and " the fear of the unknown " , among others . Later on , death and resurrection emerged as a major sub @-@ theme during the season , starting with " The Gift " , wherein John Doggett is killed and resurrected , and later in " Deadalive " when Mulder is brought back to life after apparently being dead for three months . This sub @-@ theme would continue well into the ninth season . The main story arc of the season dealt with the idea that , at times , humanity is a greater danger to itself . This theme is made manifest by the Syndicate and the human conspiracy with the aliens .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The series ' original title sequence , crafted in 1993 during the show 's first season had remained unchanged for seven seasons . With the partial loss of Duchovny after the seventh season finale , the decision was made to update the credits , which were first featured in the premiere episode of season eight , " Within " . The opening sequence now included new images , updated FBI badge photos for Duchovny and Anderson , and the addition of Patrick to the main cast . Duchovny 's badge features in the opening credits only when he appears in an episode . The opening contains images of Scully 's pregnancy and , according to Frank Spotnitz , shows an " abstract " explanation for Mulder 's absence in this season , with him falling into an eye .

After the partial departure of Duchovny , Carter decided to focus almost solely on the character of Doggett during the first half of the season . This led to some unhappiness from the cast and critics , most notably Duchovny and Anderson . According to Tom Kessenich in his book Examinations , Anderson reportedly " wasn 't thrilled " with the lack of attention her character was getting ; instead , the writers were crafting episodes solely for Doggett because he was the show 's new " voice " . Duchovny , on the other hand , was unhappy because Mulder 's abduction was never properly examined . Reportedly , Duchovny offered to write and direct an episode based around the conceit of Mulder being trapped in the alien spaceship , as seen in the season opener " Within " and " Without " . Carter , however , nixed the idea because " it was not about Doggett . "

= = = Casting = = =

The show 's seventh season was a time of closure for The X @-@ Files . Characters within the show were written out ? including Cigarette Smoking Man (William B. Davis) and Mulder 's mother (Rebecca Toolan) ? and several plot threads were resolved , including the fate of Fox Mulder 's sister Samantha . Furthermore , after settling his contract dispute , Duchovny quit the show . This contributed to uncertainties over the likelihood of an eighth season . Carter and most fans felt the show was at its natural endpoint with Duchovny 's departure , and Carter penned " Requiem " , the finale episode of the seventh season , as a possible series finale . However , at the last minute , a new season was ordered and Duchovny agreed to star part @-@ time , returning for 12 episodes instead of 21 . Due to this change , the producers found it difficult to write Duchovny 's character out of the script , but also eventually explain Mulder 's absence if there were to be an upcoming season . Eventually , it was decided to have the character abducted by aliens .

Hoping to continue the series , Carter introduced a new central character to replace Mulder : John Doggett . More than 100 actors auditioned for the role , with only about ten considered by the producers . Lou Diamond Phillips and Hart Bochner were among the auditionees , and Phillips ,

Bochner and Bruce Campbell (who played Wayne Weinsider in a previous episode of The X @-@ Files) were considered for the role , but the producers eventually choose Robert Patrick . The season also introduced Monica Reyes (portrayed by Annabeth Gish) , who would become a main character in the following season .

== = Crew == =

Chris Carter , who also served as executive producer and showrunner during the season , wrote or co @-@ wrote the bulk of the episodes for the season , with nine of the twenty one episodes . Of the nine , four were co @-@ written with executive producer Frank Spotnitz . Carter also wrote five episodes solo , and Spotnitz wrote four episodes solo . The rest of the writing staff contributed one or two episodes . Vince Gilligan was promoted to executive producer and wrote one episode . John Shiban was promoted to co @-@ executive producer and wrote one episode . David Amann was promoted to producer and wrote one episode . Jeffrey Bell was promoted to executive story editor and wrote one episode . Greg Walker was promoted to executive story editor and wrote two episodes . Steven Maeda was promoted to story editor and wrote two episodes . Daniel Arkin , who wrote a freelance episode for the series previously , returned to contribute to the story for one episode .

Kim Manners was promoted to co @-@ executive producer and directed the most of episodes of the season with seven . Directors who directed multiple episodes for the season included Tony Wharmby who directed four , Rod Hardy directed three , and Richard Compton directed two . Peter Markle , Terrence O 'Hara , and Barry K. Thomas each directed one episode . Carter directed a single episode , while writer Spotnitz made his directorial debut .

== Cast ==

== = Main cast == =

David Duchovny as Special Agent Fox Mulder (12 episodes) a

Gillian Anderson as Special Agent Dana Scully (20 episodes) b

Robert Patrick as Special Agent John Doggett (21 episodes)

a ^ Although appearing in only 12 episodes , Duchovny is listed credited as " starring " in the opening credits for the episodes in which he appeared .

b ^ She does not appear in " The Gift " , except in archived footage .

== = Recurring cast == =

== = = Also starring == = =

Mitch Pileggi as Walter Skinner (12 episodes)

Annabeth Gish as Monica Reyes (4 episodes)

Nicholas Lea as Alex Krycek (3 episodes)

== = = Guest starring == = =

== Episodes ==

Episodes marked with a double dagger () are episodes in the series ' Alien Mythology arc .

== Reception ==

=== Ratings ===

Reportedly , Patrick was cast due to the hopes that his featured role in Terminator 2 : Judgment Day (1991) would attract a great 18- to 35 @-@ year @-@ old male demographic to the show . Early on , Fox executives reported a 10 percent overall increase in the demographic , solely due to Patrick 's casting . " Within " , the season 's first episode , earned a Nielsen household rating of 9 @. @ 5 , meaning that it was seen by 9 @. @ 5 % of the nation 's estimated households . The episode was viewed by 15 @. @ 87 million viewers , which marked an 11 % decrease from the seventh season opener , " The Sixth Extinction . " The highest @-@ rated episode of the season was " This is Not Happening " , which was viewed by 16 @. @ 9 million viewers , making it the most @-@ watched episode of the series , in terms of viewers , since " The Sixth Extinction " . The season finale , " Existence " , earned a Nielsen household rating of 8 @. @ 4 , meaning that it was seen by 8 @. @ 4 % of the nation 's estimated households . The episode was watched by 14 million viewers , overall . The nine episodes of the season that did not feature Mulder averaged only 13 million viewers , whereas the twelve episodes that did feature Mulder averaged 13 @. @ 93 million viewers , almost a difference of one million . The season averaged a total of 13 @. @ 53 million viewers , down from the seventh season 's 14 @. @ 2 million .

During 2000 , companies were paying Fox \$ 225 @, @ 000 for every 30 @-@ second spot that would air between acts of The X @-@ Files . Many Information technology (IT) companies were buying commercials during the show , largely due to the fact that " many [' coders IT geeks '] get their weekly fix of science fiction from this prime @-@ time show . "

=== Reviews ===

The show 's eighth season received mixed to positive reviews from critics . The A.V. Club noted that the first eight seasons of The X @-@ Files were " good @-@ to @-@ great " , and that the eighth season of the show was " revitalized by the new ' search for Mulder ' story @-@ arc . " John C. Snider of SciFiDimensions gave the season a favorable review , calling it " great " and describing its episodes as " pretty strong " . Collin Polonowski of DVD Times said that the season included " more hits than misses overall " but was throughout negative about the mythology episodes claiming them to be the " weakest " episodes in the season . Many critics eventually accepted Doggett 's character . Anita Gates of The New York Times said that most fans had " accepted " the introduction of the character and further stated that he actually looked " Like a Secret Service Agent . " Carter commented on the character , saying " Everybody likes Robert Patrick and the character " , but further stating that the fans " miss " Duchovny 's character , Mulder . Dave Golder of SFX called Patrick " superb " and noted that his entrance in the series " inject [ed] a sense of pragmatism and good old @-@ fashioned plain @-@ speaking in to the show which we didn 't realise was missing until we got it . " Entertainment Weekly reviewer Ken Tucker said that Patrick 's portrayal of Doggett was " hardboiled alertness " , giving mostly positive reviews about his inclusion . Cynthia Littleton of The Hollywood Reporter described the season as the show 's " swan song " .

Not all reviews were positive . Jesse Hassenger from PopMatters gave a negative review to the season , claiming that Patrick was mis @-@ cast and calling David Duchovny 's appearances as Fox Mulder shallow . Golder criticized the season for " recycling plots with gusto " and for featuring Mulder falling into Scully 's eye in the opening credits , noting that it " gives Duchovny too much of a lingering presence on the show , reinforcing prejudices against Patrick as some kind of ' imposter ' . "

=== Accolades ===

" This Is Not Happening " was nominated for an American Society of Cinematographers award for cinematography . Robert Patrick won a Saturn Award in the category " Best Television Actor " in

2001 for his role as Doggett , that year Gillian Anderson was nominated in the category " Best Actress on Television " and the series itself was nominated in the category " Best Network Television Series " in the Saturn Awards , but failed to win . Anderson was nominated for a Screen Actors Guild award the very same year in the category " Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Drama Series " . The X @-@ Files won its last Emmy Award with " Deadalive " , and Bill Roe received a nomination for " Outstanding Cinematography for a Single @-@ Camera Series " .

= = DVD release = =