

= Walter Skinner =

FBI Assistant Director Walter Sergei Skinner is a fictional character in the Fox science fiction @-@ supernatural television shows The X @-@ Files and The Lone Gunmen . Skinner supervised the X @-@ Files office , which is concerned with cases with particularly mysterious or possibly supernatural circumstances that were left unsolved and shelved by the FBI . Fox Mulder , the FBI agent in charge of the X @-@ Files , considers the X @-@ Files the truth behind the supposed conspiracy . Portrayed by American actor Mitch Pileggi , Skinner was a main character in the ninth and tenth seasons of the show and a recurring character throughout the first eight seasons .

Skinner made his first appearance in the first season 1994 episode " Tooms " . At the start of the series , Skinner was unfriendly towards Mulder because of his belief in the extraterrestrial , while throughout the series run Skinner has moved on to respect and agree with Mulder 's idea , which is finally proven in " Requiem " , when he saw an Alien spacecraft . Walter Skinner has received critical acclaim and has become a fan favorite . Pileggi received the role of Walter Skinner after " two or three " auditions for the role . Beginning with only a small cameo , his character frequently made more appearances during the second season . Pileggi was honored with numerous awards and award nominations for his portrayal of Skinner .

= = Character arc = =

Skinner is a former Marine and a Vietnam War veteran . In the war he once killed a boy at a very short distance , an experience which has scarred him for life . He is married to Sharon Skinner . He has been treated at a sleep disorder clinic , suffering from recurring dreams of an old woman , which may either be a hallucination arising from drug use during Vietnam or a succubus . Skinner 's hobbies include jogging and boxing , the latter of which has been shown in his ability to outfight Fox Mulder and X and to defend himself reasonably well when he was attacked by Alex Krycek and his men .

Initially , Skinner acts solely as a supervisor to Agent Mulder and Dana Scully 's investigations of the paranormal . In the early episodes , it is unclear whether he is entirely independent of his actions or controlled by men such as the " Cigarette Smoking Man " . Eventually , Skinner begins trusting Mulder and Scully and becomes their ally , saving both of their lives on multiple occasions . He stands up to the conspirators that tried to control him , for which he frequently pays throughout the series .

After Skinner has long broken free of the " Cigarette Smoking Man " , he is again forced to take orders , this time from Alex Krycek . He is covertly infected with nanotechnology , which gives Krycek the leverage to control him . Two years later , Skinner is finally able to rid himself of Krycek , when during an attempt by Krycek on Mulder 's life , Skinner fatally shoots Krycek . At Mulder 's murder trial , Skinner is asked to act as Mulder 's lawyer , having become a supporter of Mulder 's cause . Later , Skinner and Deputy Director Alvin Kersh confront the " Toothpick Man " in Kersh 's office , after Agents John Doggett and Monica Reyes discover that the X @-@ Files office had been emptied out . This results in another , apparently permanent , closing of the X @-@ Files division . Six years later , with the X @-@ Files still closed down , Skinner assists Scully in finding Mulder after he goes missing while consulting on the FBI 's investigation into the disappearance of a missing agent . Mulder and Skinner are shown to still be on friendly terms , despite Mulder 's animosity towards the FBI for the events following the trial .

= = Conceptual history = =

= = = Creation and development = = =

The role of Walter Skinner was played by actor Mitch Pileggi , who had unsuccessfully auditioned for two or three other characters on The X @-@ Files before getting the part . At first , the fact that

he was asked back to audition for the recurring role slightly puzzled him , until he discovered the reason he had not previously been cast in those roles ? Chris Carter had been unable to envision Pileggi as any of those characters , due to the fact that the actor had been shaving his head . When the actor had attended the audition for Walter Skinner , he had been in a grumpy mood and had allowed his small amount of hair to grow back . Pileggi 's attitude fit well with Walter Skinner 's character , causing Carter to assume that the actor was only pretending to be grumpy . After successfully auditioning for the role , Pileggi thought he had been lucky that he had not been cast in one of the earlier roles , as he believed he would have appeared in only a single episode and would have missed the opportunity to play the recurring role of Walter Skinner .

Pileggi himself thought he got the role because of Gillian Anderson 's ( who portrayed Dana Scully ) pregnancy during the second season , saying the producers felt they needed to take the " show in a different direction " while she was pregnant . So Pileggi felt at the start that he " compensated " for the situation of the show , and after a while the character started to grow on the producers and fellow cast , as Pileggi puts it , " the character just started kind of clicking and working " . At the end of the second season , the producers wanted Pileggi to return in future episodes , so he signed a six @-@ year contract with them .

In an interview with X @-@ Files fan site host Robin Mayhall , Pileggi commented once that he felt David Duchovny 's ( portrayed Fox Mulder ) semi @-@ departure in season eight and the introduction of Robert Patrick 's John Doggett , and the fact that he started to believe in Aliens at the end of season seven , Skinner was given the " opportunity to grow " , further stating " new avenues " had been opened . While Pileggi stated that he missed Duchovny 's presence in The X @-@ Files , he continued saying that he didn 't have the opportunity to work with him during the seventh season . He even went as far as saying that there was no " interaction between " the two characters . He was positive to the new storyline conceived during Duchovny 's departure , saying it gave the show a " shot in the arm , " which reinvented the show .

= = = I Want to Believe = = =

As writers Carter and Frank Spotnitz aimed to avoid complicating the storyline of The X @-@ Files : I Want to Believe with superfluous appearances of characters from the television series , Skinner is the only returning character in the movie . He was included in the film 's plot only when a fitting opportunity to involve him arose , and Spotnitz and Carter were very happy to write Skinner into the story . The scenes of The X @-@ Files : I Want to Believe that include Skinner were filmed very late in the movie 's filming schedule , and the particular scene that acts as the character 's introduction in the movie was filmed , for reasons of time , in two different locations .

= = Reception = =

The character received critical acclaim from fans and critics alike and since became a fan 's favourite of the show . Mitch Pileggi received acclaim for his portrayal of the character .

While not winning or getting nominated for any of his work alone in The X @-@ Files , Mitch Pileggi and several other cast members were nominated in the category " Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series " by the Screen Actors Guild Awards in 1997 , 1998 and 1999 but did not win . Following the broadcast of " One Breath " , in which Skinner recalls serving as a US Marine during the Vietnam War , Pileggi received several fan letters from Vietnam veterans . Ben @-@ Rawson Jones named the character of Skinner a " Spy cult icon " in 2008 , describing him as the " corporate middle man " .

George Avalos and Michael Liedtke from the Contra Costa Times both reacted positively to the death of Alex Krycek at the hands of Skinner , saying it was the best scene of the eighth season finale , " Existence " . Another review from the same site and writers said the season eight episode , " Via Negativa " , said the story " clicked " largely thanks to Skinner along with Alvin Kersh , saying that Skinner " delivered another Mulderesque " . In a review of The X @-@ Files feature film , Soren Andersen from The News Tribune said the character was " underused " both in the series and film .

Entertainment Weekly reviewer Bruce Fretts said Skinner brought " a real element of danger to the show . "