

= Fight Club (The X @-@ Files) =

" Fight Club " is the twentieth episode of the seventh season of the science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . It premiered on the Fox network in the United States on May 7 , 2000 . It was written by series creator Chris Carter , directed by Paul Shapiro , and featured a guest appearance by Kathy Griffin . The episode plot serves as a " Monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ Week " story , which is unconnected to the series ' wider mythology . " Fight Club " earned a Nielsen household rating of 6 @. @ 9 , being watched by 11 @. @ 70 million people in its initial broadcast . The episode received mostly negative reviews from television critics .

The show centers on FBI special agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) who work on cases linked to the paranormal , called X @-@ Files . Mulder is a believer in the paranormal , while the skeptical Scully has been assigned to debunk his work . In this episode , Mulder and Scully cross paths with a pair of doppelgangers whose close proximity yields unlimited mayhem . Splitting up , the agent tries to find out " why " and " what " they are doing .

" Fight Club " was inspired by a " long @-@ lost nugget " of a story that series creator Chris Carter had thought up a while back about " mis @-@ matched twins that had an almost nuclear reaction when they were around each other . " Steve Kiziak and Arlene Pileggi ? David Duchovny 's stunt double and Mitch Pileggi 's wife , respectively ? were chosen to play the Mulder and Scully look @-@ alike at the start of the episode . " Fight Club " contained several scenes of intense action that necessitated the use of various stunt doubles and extras .

= = Plot = =

In Kansas City , Kansas , two religious missionaries visit two women at two different homes in the same neighborhood who look exactly alike . The second woman yells at them to go away and the two men , inexplicably , get into a fight in the second woman 's front yard . Later , two FBI agents who look and sound remarkably similar to Mulder and Scully visit the first woman , Betty Templeton (Kathy Griffin) . Betty claims to have never seen the other woman before . The other woman then passes her by in a car and the two agents begin fighting each other , much like the missionaries . They are severely injured after the gruesome mauling . Both agents , who had worked together for seven years , said that they were possessed . Meanwhile , the other woman , Lulu Pfeiffer (also Kathy Griffin) , applies for a job at Koko 's Copies , but does not get it because she has had 17 jobs in 17 states in the past three years and moves around too much . She becomes aggravated and suddenly , all the copies become black . The other woman , Betty , goes to another job with the same name and same resume .

Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) begin to investigate the case . Later , in a bar , a man by the name of Bert Zupanic (Randall " Tex " Cobb) comes across Betty . Moments later , Lulu walks into the bar and an earthquake occurs that breaks all the glass in the bar . Lulu then runs out . Mulder finds out through a man named Argyle Saperstein (Art Evans) that Zupanic and one of the women are in a relationship and that Zupanic is a professional wrestler . Scully finds that for the past 12 years the women have followed each other across 17 states and left mayhem in their wake . Saperstein calls Zupanic and it is revealed that Zupanic owes Saperstein money . In addition , Betty and Bert have been in a relationship , but he has been having an affair with Lulu . A second earthquake occurs as Lulu prepares to walk in on Zupanic and Saperstein exchanging money . After Betty emerges from the bathroom , the two see each other and the glass in the building begins breaking . Zupanic is knocked unconscious and Saperstein takes the money and leaves .

Mulder and Scully decide to split up and interrogate the doppelgangers . Betty tells Mulder that Lulu is causing all of the problems and forcing her to leave , while Lulu tells Scully the same thing . Later , the two look @-@ alike pass each other and a sewer grate blows open , sucking Mulder into the storm drain and sealing him in . Scully finds that the girls share the same father , a man by the name of Bob Damphouse , who is in prison . Damphouse is revealed to be mentally insane , and is always in a fit of rage . Eventually , Mulder finds his way out of the storm drain . At the prison , Scully meets

a man that looks exactly like Bert Zupanic . Lulu and Betty meet at a stadium and everyone in the audience breaks into a fight . The other Bert Zupanic shows up and everyone stops fighting . The two Zupanics see each other and a fight breaks out again . The episode ends with Mulder and Scully shown bruised and beaten .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

The inspiration for " Fight Club " was a " long @-@ lost nugget " that series creator Chris Carter had thought up a while back . He explained , " I had this idea for a long time to do a story about mis @-@ matched twins that had an almost nuclear reaction when they were around each other . " Carter began to write the episode at the same time as the pilot for the X @-@ Files spin @-@ off , The Lone Gunmen . Because of the " insanity " in juggling two scripts at once , many more " crazy " elements made it into " Fight Club " . When executive producer Frank Spotnitz first looked at the script , he noted that " [the episode] had an odd tone . It felt like a wild show . "

= = = Casting = = =

The casting for the episode was reportedly hectic . Rick Millikan , the show 's casting director , cast noted boxer @-@ turned @-@ actor Randall " Tex " Cobb as Bert Zupanic and comedian Kathy Griffin ? who had previously starred in the NBC comedy Suddenly Susan ? as the doppelgangers . Two real wrestlers , Gene LeBell and Rob Van Dam , were hired to play the parts of the bartender and Zupanic 's opponent , respectively . Near the beginning of the episode , two FBI agents who bear a striking resemblance , in both physical appearance and voice , to Mulder and Scully appear . These characters were played by Steve Kiziak and Arlene Pileggi . Kiziak had previously served as David Duchovny 's stunt double since the third season episode " 2Shy " . Pileggi is the wife of Mitch Pileggi , who portrayed Walter Skinner on the show . Duchovny and Anderson later dubbed their voices for the lines that the two look @-@ alike FBI agents say .

Jack McGee was cast as Bob Damfuse ? referred to colloquially as " Angry Bob " ? the father of the half @-@ sisters with a severe anger issue . During rehearsals for his scene , McGee purposely kept his voice down to prevent a severe headache . He recalled , " I remember the director [Paul Shapiro] , he wanted me to scream during rehearsal , and I was , like , ' Look , you don ? t understand : If I do this , I ? m gonna have a headache in 30 fucking seconds . ' " The scenes were rehearsed about five or six times before the actual tape was filmed .

= = = Filming and effects = = =

First @-@ time X @-@ Files director Paul Shapiro was tasked with directing the episode . Many of the physical effects in the episode were coordinated by Danny Weselis , who noted that the episode contained several scenes featuring extensive stunt work . He explained , " during the bar explosions we had a room full of stunt people showered with broken glass . And we used stunt people for much of the missionary and special agent fights . " The final scene , featuring a stadium full of people attacking each other after the Templetons make an appearance , was filmed at the Grand Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles . Several hundred extras were contacted via ads on the internet and in select publications . The scene took two days to completely film . The crowd supplemented sixteen stuntmen and over 200 cardboard cutouts to give the stadium a filled @-@ out feel . In order to create a mock fight , staff members gave the several hundred extras soft props to hit each other with . Producer Harry Bring later noted , " a few of [the audience] members got carried away and we had to tell them to settle down . " During the finished episode , a split screen was inserted as a way to enhance the scene and allow the viewer to " focus on various angles of action " .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" Fight Club " first aired in the United States on May 7 , 2000 . This episode earned a Nielsen rating of 6 @. @ 9 , with an 11 share , meaning that roughly 6 @. @ 9 percent of all television @- @ equipped households , and 11 percent of households watching television , were tuned in to the episode . It was viewed by 11 @. @ 70 million viewers . The episode aired in the United Kingdom and Ireland on Sky1 on July 30 , 2000 and received 0 @. @ 67 million viewers , making it the third most watched episode that week . Fox promoted the episode with the tagline " They say everyone has a double out there somewhere . "

Critical reception to " Fight Club " was largely negative . Zack Handlen of The A.V. Club gave the episode a " D ? " ; he called it " dire stuff " and wrote that " there ? s something rancid about forced quirk ; it ? s rotten and smug " . Handlen both criticized Griffin 's inability to portray two separate characters , as well as Carter 's failure at writing a comedic script . He also felt that the " relentless self @- @ awareness isn ? t amusing anymore " . Tom Kessenich , in his book Examinations , gave the episode a scathing review . He wrote " If it is indeed true that somewhere out in this vast world we all have an identical twin , I have but one wish for mine . I sincerely hope he was spared the hour of torture that ' Fight Club ' imposed upon me . " Christina Brzustoski from 11th Hour Magazine opined that " Just when you thought The X @- @ Files couldn 't get a more grating guest star than Victoria Jackson , Chris Carter manages to top himself yet again with not one , but two , for the love of God , two Kathy Griffins in the Carter @- @ penned episode ' Fight Club . ' It 's a safe bet this disjointed , lame episode will probably not be easily confused with the far superior David Fincher movie of the same name . But then the current state of The X @- @ Files makes Elmo in Grouchland look like an Oscar contender . "

Kenneth Silber from Space.com was very negative towards the episode , saying , " This episode conveys a strong sense of a writer , director and actors merely going through the motions , collecting their sizable paychecks while running out the clock on the season and series . The plot is not compelling , the agents themselves seem not to take it seriously , and the doppelgangers around whom the action revolves are little more than ciphers . " Robert Shearman and Lars Pearson , in their book Wanting to Believe : A Critical Guide to The X @- @ Files , Millennium & The Lone Gunmen , rated the episode one star out of five . The two wrote , " ' Fight Club ' is a marker for a series that seems to want to die now , please . [?] it 's tonally one of the most atypical episodes the series ever made , conceived in spite and self @- @ loathing and sheer exhaustion . " Paula Vitaris from Cinefantastique gave the episode a largely negative review and awarded it one star out of four . Vitaris criticized the use of Kathy Griffin and asserted , " the guest cast is one of the worst ever . [?] Griffin [?] simply is not up to the task ; she can not differentiate Betty and Lulu at all [?] and she reads every line as if she were still on her cancelled sitcom . " i09 reviewer Cyriaque Lama named " The Kathy Griffin Twins " the tenth " Most Ridiculous X @- @ Files Monsters of the Week " , and derided her performance as the Templeton twins . In 2016 , in a ranking of all episodes of the series from best to worst , Vulture.com named " Fight Club " the worst episode of the series .

Not all reviews were so negative . Rich Rosell from DigitallyObsessed.com awarded the episode 4 @. @ 5 out of 5 stars and noted that " There are some great visual moments in Fight Club , and Chris Carter reveals an almost Vince Gilligan @- @ side to him with his comic writing here . "