

# The Truth *is* Out There

By  
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It's finally here! The moment I have been waiting for 6 Years! Being a diehard X-Files fan (or X-Phile), I am thrilled to see it coming back to the silver screen. The title of the movie "The X-Files: I Want to Believe", brings back nostalgic memories of Fox Mulder's iconic poster brandishing the wall behind the desk of his basement office in the J. Edgar Hoover FBI building. Every week I would anticipate eagerly the next paranormal encounter with Mulder and Scully. I would not say that the X-Files got me interested in paranormal investigation but it did peak my curiosity with having a life long fascination with unexplained phenomenon. In the 6 years since the show ended, my interest in unexplained phenomenon has grown and this interest has drawn me in to paranormal investigation. Now that I am involved in the field in a scientific capacity, I started pondering a lot of the themes and mythos of the show from a new perspective.

The caption "I want to believe" was Fox Mulder's mantra on the program. He was constantly in search of proof of paranormal phenomenon which stemmed from his belief that his sister was abducted by aliens at a young age. "I want to believe" sounds good on the surface, but what does the phrase really mean? The relationship between belief and knowledge is subtle. Believers in a claim typically say that they *know* that claim. For instance, those who believe that the world is flat will report that they *know* that the world is flat. However, the terms *belief* and *knowledge* are used differently in the scientific community. Those that believe something to be true or *want* to believe it to be true will have a greater propensity to take a subjective rather than an objective point of view. In other words, if you have strong desires to believe something you are more likely to take any experiential or scientific data and force it to fit your desired belief. Being involved in paranormal investigation, would I like to believe in ghosts? Not really, I want to *know*. To have that *belief* would render me completely useless in the field. By carrying that belief in to each investigation, I would be susceptible of taking every noise, cold spot or orb and using that to justify

my belief. The only *belief* a paranormal investigator should have is the belief in possibilities. It is that belief that drives every person in the field of science.

While Mulder had the fascination and passion for exploring the unexplained, he was always kept grounded by his counterpart, Scully. She was “the resident skeptic” and refused to believe anything on face value. In a sense she kept Mulder “honest”. As paranormal investigators, we don’t have the luxury of having a Scully to keep us objective. It is up to each of us to keep a skeptical nature about everything, regardless of what we may want to believe.

Probably the best caption for Fox Mulder’s famous poster would be “I want to know”. To know something is to have full *knowledge* of all facts and evidence on a subject to where you are making an objective conclusion. The person that truly *knows* something is the one that has examined every piece of data available to arrive at their conclusion. As most fans of the show are aware, the poster in Mulder’s office had a bogus picture of a UFO. The character was aware of the illegitimacy of the photo but used it as a motivator to pursue answers. After considering that, I believe I have come up with a design for a poster to hang in my office. It will have a picture of an orb with the caption below reading “I Want To Know”. To all of my fellow paranormal investigators and X-Philes, I leave you with these parting words of wisdom from the show. “Question everything” because “the truth *is* out there”.