

## Blu-Ray Review: 'The X-Files: I Want to Believe' Satisfies Fans More Than in Theaters

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 8, 2008 - 1:26pm

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CHICAGO – “The X-Files: I Want to Believe” was an unqualified disaster in theaters. One of the worst movies of 2008, the film downplayed the strengths of the first few seasons of the influential series and emphasized the weaknesses of the show’s ignominious end.

But the Blu-Ray release of “I Want to Believe” completely ignores the critical drubbing the film received in theaters and plays to the fans of the show and movie, all of whom will be more than satisfied by an impressive and extensive release. “I Want to Believe” is yet another example of a BD that’s better than the film itself.

Coming a full decade after the first “X-Files” film, “I Want to Believe” is not merely an underwhelming follow-up, something we should have expected after so many years of anticipation. No, this is a failure on every level, a pale shadow of what Chris Carter’s creation was in its prime.

The fatal flaw of “I Want to Believe” is the head-scratcher of a screenplay. After years of delay, the story that Carter was dying to tell is laughably bad. Not only does the horrendous dialogue derail any chance for actual suspense or drama, but the snicker-worthy plot contains no real suspense, action, or, believe it or not, science fiction. Video store workers will struggle with what category to place the film in.

The melodrama of “I Want to Believe” centers on faith. An FBI agent is kidnapped and only a convicted pedophilic priest named Father Joe (Billy Connolly) can find her with his psychic visions. Are his visions for real? Can he be forgiven his past sins with his ability to solve the case? Mulder (David Duchovny) and Scully (Gillian Anderson) are brought to once again explain the unexplainable.



'The X-Files: I Want to Believe' is available on DVD/Blu-ray December 2, 2008.

Photo credit: *Diyah Pera, 205h Century Fox*

In the years since the series ended, Scully has been working with sick and dying children at Our Lady of Sorrows Hospital, and Mulder has continued his conspiracy-driven ways. Scully convinces a skeptical Mulder to help out the FBI agents played by, in one of the most bizarre casting decisions in years, rapper Xzibit and Amanda Peet. There’s a manipulative and melodramatic subplot involving a controversial

treatment that Scully wants to use on a dying child. The biggest mystery of "I Want to Believe" is how the once-talented Carter thought such blatant heartstring pulling would be accepted by fans of his show.

In the end, what's most shocking is that there's so little going on in "I Want to Believe". With no suspense, the film simply never works.

What does work is the Blu-Ray release of "I Want to Believe" in its "Ultimate X-Phile Edition." The film itself looks good-not-great in 1080p widescreen with a 2.40:1 aspect ratio, but the sound mix is very impressive with a 5.1 DTS-HD Master Audio track that almost makes it possible to overlook some of the film's more blatant flaws. The balance of dialogue, score, and effects is flawless.

What makes the "X-Phile Edition" of "I Want to Believe" such a remarkable BD release is the collection of special features, all aimed directly at not just fans of the movie but also the show in general. As much as I disliked the film itself, I would recommend hardcore fans of the show (and I certainly was one not that long ago) pick it up just for the "Interactive Timeline," a series of clips from the entire run of the series that fans can navigate by theme, character, or chronology. It's an exhaustively detailed interactive feature that really places the entire franchise in perspective. It's also, naturally, the best featurette on the disc as it has the least to do with "I Want to Believe" itself.

However, fans of the film won't possibly be dissatisfied with the detailed special features related solely to it. Carter and co-writer/producer Frank Spotnitz appear for an informative audio commentary that may be a bit too in love with the final product but also provides just enough information and trivia to stay entertaining. There is also a remarkably in-depth documentary about the making of the film called "Trust No One: Can the X-Files Remain a Secret?" that runs nearly as long as the feature and contains interviews with everyone involved. If that's not enough, "Chris Carter: Statements on Green Production", a visual effects featurette, deleted scenes, still galleries, a gag reel, and more round out one of the more extensive collections of special features of the season.

"I Want to Believe" also marks Fox's first foray into BD-Live, and there couldn't be a more appropriate title. The rabid fan community around all things Mulder and Scully can not only communicate as they watch the film but they can also participate in exclusive features, games, and additional content. There is even an online game with new cases posted weekly to the BD-Live web portal. The potential of BD-Live continues to expand and it's nice to see Fox jump on the bandwagon.

Finally, "I Want to Believe" includes an extended cut of the film that runs four minutes longer than the theatrical version. The difference is negligible with a few extended character moments and some violent scenes that feel a shot or two longer than the PG-13 rating demanded.

*'The X-Files: I Want to Believe' is released by Twentieth Century Fox Entertainment and stars David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson, Billy Connolly, Amanda Peet, and Xzibit. It was written by Chris Carter & Frank Spotnitz and directed by Carter. It was released on December 2nd, 2008.*

[Read Adam Fendelman's theatrical review of 'The X-Files: I Want to Believe'.](#) [15]

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