

SCANDAL SURGE: THE MID-SUMMER ADJUSTMENT

These NYT, WaPo, and WSJ reports go a long way to clarifying some problems with the early chronology of the David Petraeus scandal

The NYT states the investigation started in June with Jill Kelley's complaints to an FBI agent friend (note, earlier reporting had said the investigation started as early as February). WSJ says it began in May.

WaPo states that at some point FBI informed Kelley that Paula Broadwell was the one who had been sending the emails, though the story doesn't say **who** at the FBI told her.

The FBI informed Kelley that Broadwell was the sender and Kelley said she did not know her, according to a person close to Kelley.

For the record, I'm betting Kelley is lying when she claims she didn't know Broadwell.

WaPo further suggests that after being informed by the FBI, Kelley told Petraeus that Broadwell had sent the emails, and in response he asked Broadwell to stop. It also implies that's why Petraeus ended the affair.

At some point this summer, Kelley told Petraeus about the e-mails and named Broadwell as the person who had sent them. Apparently in response, the CIA director sent e-mails to Broadwell telling her to stop the harassment, two law enforcement officials said.

Mansoor, who during his last tour in Iraq spent 15 months in a bedroom adjacent to Petraeus's, said the affair ended four months ago. That roughly coincides with the time Petraeus

discovered that Broadwell was sending the e-mails to Kelley, although Mansoor would not say who ended the relationship.

And NYT makes it clear all this happened before FBI interviewed Broadwell for the first time (there's some dispute about when this first interview happened, September or October).

Before Ms. Broadwell spoke to the F.B.I. agents, Mr. Petraeus had learned that she had sent offensive e-mails to Ms. Kelley and asked her to stop, another official said.

Here's what this would seem to suggest: the FBI, during an ongoing investigation that was continuing because they had found evidence of Petraeus' involvement and potential national security exposure, told Kelley the preliminary results of their investigation: that Broadwell was the culprit.

And Petraeus almost immediately told Broadwell he knew about the email (it's unclear whether he told her he knew about the investigation).

That story doesn't make any sense!

By telling Kelley, the FBI tainted the investigation and may well have alerted the target of the investigation, Broadwell, to it.

Which is where this batshit crazy story from the WSJ seems to come in. It reveals that the FBI agent to whom Kelley first complained—the same guy who later told Eric Cantor about the investigation in late October—also sent Kelley a picture of himself shirtless.

However, supervisors soon became concerned that the initial agent might have grown obsessed with the matter, and prohibited him from any role in the investigation, according to the officials.

The FBI officials found that he had sent shirtless pictures of himself to Ms. Kelley, according to the people familiar with the probe.

That same agent, after being barred from the case, contacted a member of Congress, Washington Republican David Reichert, because he was concerned senior FBI officials were going to sweep the matter under the rug, the officials said. That information was relayed to top congressional officials, who notified FBI headquarters in Washington.

Now, WSJ doesn't say it. But I bet you good money this guy told Kelley—whom he was apparently trying to seduce himself—the preliminary results of the investigation back in July, which led to Broadwell being tipped (perhaps) to the investigation. Along the way Petraeus and Broadwell had plenty of opportunities to get their stories straight, up to and including an October 27 black tie event just before FBI interviews Petraeus.

Which—if I'm right—would explain why the FBI took him off the investigation and is now conducting an investigation (though not in the proper investigative body, the Inspector General, but rather in DOJ's cover-up specialty, Office of Professional Responsibility).

This investigation turned into a clusterfuck back in July, when the principles all started acting in response to the investigation.

Nevertheless, it continued for four more months (continues even this evening, as FBI searches Broadwell's house).