

DOES PETRAEUS PLEA SAY NO CLASSIFIED INFO APPEARS IN “ALL IN”?

Sorry to be all Petraeus-centric.

But I wanted to follow up on one more detail about his plea deal, because it has been a point of discussion on whether he faces an appropriate punishment.

A number of people are saying that Paula Broadwell did not publish any classified information that David Petraeus shared with her.

Do we actually know that?

I’m not sure whether we know that to be true or not. What the plea deal says (and unless I’m mistaken, all it says) is that she did not publish any information from his Black Books, those notebooks full of code word intelligence and covert operatives identities and deliberative conversations with NSC.

No classified information from the Black Books appeared in the aforementioned biography.

That’s different from saying that he did not share and she did not publish any classified information.

This plea deal, as all plea deals I’ve seen do, notes that not everything known is in the plea deal.

This Factual Basis does not attempt to set forth all the facts known to the United States at this time.

The early stories on this leak suggested that FBI saw things in their emails and in things seized from her home that suggested he had

shared classified information with Broadwell. The Black Books were likely the most classified thing he shared with her (one would hope), but that leaves open the possibility that he shared a lot less classified information (which would be less problematic to share with a Reserve Officer, but not if she published it).

I don't know one way or another. But unless I'm mistaken, neither does anyone else, based on the public record. Clearly DOJ wanted to set Petraeus up with a sweet plea deal, which it did. That would have been a lot harder to do if it also admitted that Broadwell's book included classified information she got from him.

To some degree it doesn't matter (after all, Leon Panetta got away with classified information too!). But I just want to note that I, for one, don't actually know whether Broadwell published any information that was classified.

Update: This piece seems to suggest there may be a good deal of classified information in Broadwell's book. It shows that Broadwell sourced some key discussions from June 2011 involving National Security Council discussions to an interview with Petraeus the day after he retrieved his Black Books which would have included descriptions of those discussions.