

# MASTER FILE STRUCTURE

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**Hypothesis (top, constantly referenced)**

## **WORKING HYPOTHESIS**

**James Comey and John Brennan coordinated to frame Trump for Russian collusion while suppressing investigation of the Clinton campaign's plan to fabricate that same narrative, with Comey potentially committing perjury about leak authorization"**

**Sub-Hypotheses to Test:**

1. Comey lied about authorizing leaks (McCabe contradiction)
2. The timeline shows Brennan→Comey→Clinton sequence
3. Clinton investigation was shut down to prevent discovery
4. NY FBI forced October surprise

## 2015

### Late 2015

**CLAIMED:** Brennan allegedly begins operations against Trump

- Source: Scott Horton interview
  - Verification: No mainstream reporting found to corroborate
  - Note: Trump wasn't presumptive nominee until May 2016
- 

## 2016

### January 2016 (CJR Analysis)

**VERIFIED:** Media landscape at start of year

- Most Americans trusted traditional media per [Edelman Trust Barometer](#)
- "Fake news" phrase limited to few reporters
- "Enemy of the people" phrase not yet in use
- Source: [CJR's Jeff Gerth investigation](#) (Jan. 30, 2023)

## January 2016

**DOCUMENTED:** First intercepted memorandum mentioned in Durham Annex

- Content: Alleges Obama intended to shut down Clinton email investigation
- Participants named: Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Leonard Benardo (Soros Foundation), Jeffrey Goldstein
- Source: [Declassified Durham Annex via Sen. Grassley](#) (July 31, 2025)
- **Critical caveat:** [Rolling Stone reports](#) Durham assessed these emails as "likely Frankenstein fabrications" by Russian intelligence (Aug. 1, 2025)

## March 2016

**DOCUMENTED:** Second intercepted memorandum mentioned in Durham Annex

- Content: Alleges Clinton campaign plan to link Trump to Russia
- Source: [Declassified Durham Annex via Grassley](#)
- **Critical caveat:** Same Russian fabrication concerns per [Washington Post](#) (Aug. 1, 2025)

## April 2016

**VERIFIED:** Clinton campaign/DNC hire Fusion GPS

- Law firm Perkins Coie (Marc Elias) hires Fusion GPS on behalf of Clinton campaign/DNC
- Purpose: Opposition research on Trump's Russia connections
- Previous client: Washington Free Beacon (ended May 2016)
- Sources: [Washington Post](#), [CNN](#)

## **May/June 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Fusion GPS hires Christopher Steele

- Former MI6 officer hired to investigate Trump's Russia ties
- Steele paid \$168,000 for his work
- Sources: [Washington Post](#), [CBS News](#)

## **June 9, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Trump Tower meeting

- Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, Paul Manafort meet with Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya
- Promise of "dirt" on Hillary Clinton
- Sources: Multiple outlets, [Senate Intel Report](#)

## **June 14, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** DNC announces it was hacked

- CrowdStrike investigates servers
- FBI doesn't examine servers directly
- Source: [Washington Post](#)

## **June 20, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** First Steele dossier memo completed

- Alleges Russia cultivating Trump for 5 years
- Claims compromising material from Ritz-Carlton Moscow
- Source: [Washington Post timeline](#)

## **July 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Bruce and Nellie Ohr connections to Steele/Fusion GPS

- Nellie Ohr worked for Fusion GPS as contractor (\$\$ amount unclear)
- July 30: Bruce and Nellie Ohr meet with Steele at Mayflower Hotel
- July 31: FBI opens Crossfire Hurricane investigation
- Sources: [Wikipedia/Bruce Ohr](#), [Grassley](#)

## **July 5, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Comey announces no charges for Clinton

- Public statement: "No reasonable prosecutor" would bring charges
- Sources: [NPR](#), [CNN](#), all major outlets

## **July 26, 2016**

**DOCUMENTED:** CIA receives intelligence on alleged Clinton Plan

- Source: [Durham Report per CNN](#) (May 15, 2023)
- Note: Durham found FBI should have investigated but didn't

## **July 31, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** FBI opens Crossfire Hurricane investigation

- Target: Trump campaign links to Russia
- Sources: [Durham Report](#), [DOJ IG Report](#)

**August 3, 2016**

**DOCUMENTED:** CIA Director Brennan briefs Obama on Clinton Plan intelligence

- Attendees: Obama, other officials
- Source: Durham Report, confirmed by [CNN](#)
- Note: Intelligence was "uncorroborated"

**September 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Yahoo News publishes first story citing Steele's work

- Michael Isikoff article about Carter Page
- First public reporting based on dossier claims
- Clinton campaign promoted as "bombshell report" without disclosing they funded it
- Source: [CJR's Jeff Gerth investigation](#)

**September 19, 2016**

**DOCUMENTED:** Fusion GPS contacts State Department

- Glenn Simpson emails Jonathan Winer (State Dept official)
- Days before Yahoo article publication
- Source: [Clinton Foundation Timeline](#)

## **September 26, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** FBI obtains Weiner's devices

- Devices: iPhone, iPad, laptop via search warrant
- Investigation: Sexting with minor
- Sources: [DOJ IG Report](#), [NPR](#), [NBC News](#)

## **September 28-29, 2016**

**DOCUMENTED:** FBI learns of Clinton emails on Weiner laptop

- Number: 300,000+ emails found "within hours"
- NY FBI notifies McCabe, Strzok, Priestap
- Conference call with Midyear team Sept. 29
- Source: [DOJ IG Report](#)

## **October 3-4, 2016**

**DOCUMENTED:** FBI leadership discussions about Weiner laptop

- McCabe, Strzok, others aware
- Then "no evidence that anyone... took any action" until late October
- Sources: [DOJ IG Report](#), [Slate analysis](#) (June 15, 2018)

## **October 20, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Wall Street Journal article about Clinton Foundation investigation

- Anonymous source confirms FBI probe
- Source later revealed as McCabe authorization
- Sources: [WSJ article referenced in DOJ IG Report](#)

## **October 28, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Comey reopens Clinton investigation

- Letter to Congress about Weiner laptop emails
- 11 days before election
- Sources: [NPR](#), [NBC News](#), [Washington Post](#)

## **October 30, 2016**

**DOCUMENTED:** WSJ publishes second article with McCabe-authorized leak

- Content: McCabe's conversation with DOJ official about Clinton Foundation
- Sources: [ProPublica investigation](#) (March 2, 2020), [DOJ IG Report](#)

## **November 6, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Comey clears Clinton again

- FBI reviewed emails, no change in conclusions
- Source: [FactCheck.org](#) (Aug. 24, 2018)

## **November 8, 2016**

**VERIFIED:** Presidential election

- Trump defeats Clinton
- 

## 2017

### January 10, 2017

**VERIFIED:** BuzzFeed publishes full Steele dossier

- First publication of complete dossier
- CNN reported its existence earlier that day
- Clinton reportedly learned of dossier only after publication
- Sources: [NPR](#), [CBS News](#)

### January 2017 (CJR Analysis)

**DOCUMENTED:** Media credibility begins decline

- "Fake news" and "enemy of the people" slogans emerge from flawed Trump-Russia stories
- Both grew from stories with anonymous sources later shown to be flawed
- By 2022: US media has lowest credibility (26%) among 46 nations
- Source: [CJR's Jeff Gerth investigation](#)

### May 3, 2017

**VERIFIED:** Comey Senate Judiciary testimony

- Sen. Grassley: "Have you ever been an anonymous source?"
- Comey: "Never"
- Sen. Grassley: "Have you ever authorized someone else at the FBI to be an anonymous source?"
- Comey: "No"
- Source: [Sen. Cruz statement](#)

**May 9, 2017**

**VERIFIED:** Trump fires Comey

- Sources: All major outlets

**June 8, 2017**

**VERIFIED:** Comey testifies to Senate Intelligence Committee

- Admits asking friend (Daniel Richman) to leak memo contents to NYT
  - "I thought it might prompt the appointment of a special counsel"
  - Sources: [NPR](#), [NBC News full transcript](#), [Senate Intelligence Committee](#)
- 

**2018**

**March 16, 2018**

**VERIFIED:** McCabe fired by AG Sessions

- 26 hours before retirement
- Reason: "Lacked candor" about WSJ leak authorization
- Sources: [Wikipedia/Andrew McCabe](#), [NBC News](#)

**April 13, 2018**

**DOCUMENTED:** DOJ IG Report on McCabe released

- Finding: McCabe "lacked candor" about authorizing WSJ leak
- McCabe says he told Comey; Comey says McCabe didn't
- Source: [NBC News](#)

**December 7, 2018**

**VERIFIED:** Comey House Judiciary testimony

- Closed-door session
  - [Transcript available](#)
- 

**2020**

**February 14, 2020**

**VERIFIED:** DOJ declines to prosecute McCabe

- No charges for alleged false statements
- Source: [NPR](#)

**September 30, 2020**

**VERIFIED:** Comey Senate Judiciary testimony (virtual)

- Sen. Ted Cruz asks about McCabe contradiction
  - Cruz: "McCabe... stated that he leaked... and that you were directly aware"
  - Comey: "I stand by the testimony... I gave in May of 2017"
  - Sources: [ABC News](#), [Rev transcript](#)
- 

**2023**

**May 12, 2023**

**VERIFIED:** Durham Report released

- 306-page unclassified report
  - 29-page classified appendix (not released)
  - Finding: FBI "rushed" into Trump-Russia probe
  - Sources: [CNN](#), [Washington Times](#)
- 

**2025**

**July 31, 2025**

**VERIFIED:** Durham Annex declassified

- Released by AG Bondi, FBI Director Patel, CIA Director Ratcliffe
- Claim: Found in "FBI burn bags"
- Sources: [Sen. Grassley](#), [Washington Post](#), [Rolling Stone](#)

**September 24, 2025**

**VERIFIED:** News breaks of potential Comey charges

- Allegation: False statements to Congress
- Deadline: September 30 (5-year statute of limitations)
- Sources: [CNN](#), [ABC News](#)

**September 26, 2025**

**VERIFIED:** Additional details emerge

- Focus appears to be Clinton investigation, not Trump-Russia
- "Person 3" identified as Daniel Richman
- Source: [CNN](#)

**September 27, 2025**

**VERIFIED:** Fox News analyst questions case strength

- Andy McCarthy: "I don't think there's a case"
- Notes McCabe told Comey "after the fact"
- Source: [The Hill](#)

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