OPERATION COPPER GREEN

**Copper Green** is reported by [American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) investigative journalist [Seymour Hersh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seymour_Hersh) to be one of several [code names](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_name) for a [U.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) [black ops](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_ops) program, according to an article in the May 24, 2004, issue of [*The New Yorker*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_Yorker). According to Hersh, the task force was formed with the direct approval of Secretary of Defense [Donald Rumsfeld](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Rumsfeld) during the [U.S. invasion of Afghanistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Afghanistan_%282001%E2%80%93present%29), and run by Deputy Undersecretary [Stephen Cambone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Cambone). Hersh claims the [special access program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_access_program) members were told "Grab whom you must. Do what you want." The program allegedly designed physical coercion and sexual humiliation techniques for use against [Muslim](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim) [Arab](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab) men specifically, to retrieve information from suspects, and to blackmail them into becoming informants.

According to the article, the sexual humiliation techniques were based on the book, [*The Arab Mind*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Arab_Mind), written by [cultural anthropologist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_anthropology) [Raphael Patai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raphael_Patai) in 1973. The book claimed to be a "study of Arab culture and psychology". According to Hersh's anonymous intelligence source, the Patai book was "the bible of the [neocons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neocons) on Arab behavior", which gave life to two themes: "One, that Arabs only understand force and, two, that the biggest weakness of Arabs is shame and humiliation".

Hersh claims to have spoken to a senior [CIA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CIA) official who said the program was designed by Rumsfeld to wrest control of information from the CIA, and place it in the hands of [the Pentagon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Defense). According to Hersh's sources, the program was so successful in [Afghanistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghanistan), that Cambone decided to introduce the SAP program to operations during [2003 invasion of Iraq](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq), eventually leading to the use of common soldiers instead of using special ops forces exclusively. In Hersh's view, the program was used on detainees at the [Abu Ghraib prison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Ghraib_prison), leading directly to the [prisoner abuse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Ghraib_prisoner_abuse) by US soldiers there.

[Department of Defense](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Defense) spokesperson [Lawrence DiRita](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Lawrence_DiRita&action=edit&redlink=1) immediately issued a statement about the accusations, referring to them as "outlandish, conspiratorial, and filled with error and anonymous conjecture". Senators on Capitol Hill, most notably the former [POW](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/POW) [John McCain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain), promised to investigate the reported claims, "regardless of where it leads".

Copper Green was mentioned in Lt. Col. [Anthony Shaffer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Shaffer_%28intelligence_officer%29)'s memoir, [*Operation Dark Heart*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Dark_Heart) on page 257: "The interrogation program, called Copper Green, was authorized, but a lot of us felt it wasn't appropriate and just wasn't right." The Pentagon blacked out the words "Copper Green" in the second printing.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copper_Green#cite_note-1)

References[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Copper_Green&action=edit&section=1" \o "Edit section: References)]

* 1. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copper_Green#cite_ref-1) ["Dark Contrast"](http://www.fas.org/sgp/news/2010/09/dark-contrast.pdf), September 29, 2010, [Federation of American Scientists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation_of_American_Scientists)

External links[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Copper_Green&action=edit&section=2)]

* Seymour Hersh, *The New Yorker*, May 24, 2004, ["The Gray Zone"](http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/24/040524fa_fact), published online May 15, 2004
* [Department of Defense press release](https://web.archive.org/web/20100302003647/http%3A/www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=7372) (in response to Hersh article)
* ["Pentagon denies the existence of Copper Green"](http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/05/17/iraq.abuse.main/)