

Pedophiles at Phillip Academy, Andover over a 30-year period

Dave Amis, 53, has been trying to get Phillips Academy in Andover, MA to address its pedophile problems for almost 4 decades. Now it's time to share that story.

PART I: Dave meets his first Serial Predator

In 1983 as a fourth-year student, Dave was walking his girlfriend across campus when Dean David Cobb stopped them and ordered Dave to escort her home before curfew began. Dean Cobb had been Dave's English Instructor and mentor. However, the next day Artemis (pseudonym) told him that Dean Cobb had returned later that night, entered her dorm room, and raped her.

Both Dave and Artemis reported this to the school, but no action was taken¹. A few weeks later Dave went to Dean Sylvia Thayer for the second time to ask what the school was going to do. She told him "Artemis is known to use drugs and must be making this up." A few months later Artemis showed Dave flirtatious letters from Cobb. They both lost trust in the school.

A few years later in 1992, the school hired Dr. Richard Keller who would be the school's doctor for the next 19 years. Thus he made decisions on who should disrobe or reveal themselves for as many as 20,000² students during his career. In 2011 he was arrested for pedophilia-related crimes including purchasing photographs of children in sexual positions – received while at the Academy. Within 24 hours of his arrest, the school announced to the Andover community, "there is no evidence that Dr. Keller hurt anyone at the school".

David Cobb was arrested in 1995 and later convicted in both Maine and New Hampshire and eventually served nine years in prison. During his first trial his attorney and his psychiatrist argued that he never actually touched any of his victims. This despite the reports by Artemis and Dave plus unknown and countless other victims whose stories were not believed or hidden through settlement agreements. This failure by Andover to notify the court or provide evidence in its possession was not illegal, but it did help Cobb.

When Dave learned of Cobb's arrest, he again contacted the Academy and provided information to both attorneys and Head of School Barbara Landis-Chase. However, pretty soon the school went silent and refused to discuss the case further.

David Cobb is now known as the "pumpkin man" for sexually assaulting small children while wearing a mask. In his second trial in Lebanon, Maine, he was convicted of sexual molestation. (SouthCoastToday.com) For reasons unknown, the judge decided his sentence would run concurrently. Thus, he served zero additional time for assaulting those kids in Maine.

¹ As of 2018, the Andover Police Department has no record of this event, which suggests that the Deans failed to report, which would be a violation of Massachusetts law if true.

² Estimate based on 1200 students and an average of one visit per school year per student

After the convictions of both Cobb and Keller, members of the Andover community came out in support of them (not the victims, but the predators). This included professionals in the mental health and counseling center at Andover. In other words, counselors whose job including counseling student victims of sexual assault, openly and publicly supported Dr. Keller as a “good man...who has done many good things”.³

Just to clarify the sharp contrast of this unreal support. Several Andover health counselors who worked at the school wrote letters to the sentencing Judge supporting Keller. Meanwhile, somewhere in the world are children who were raped in front of a camera so Keller could buy the images for his own amusement and pleasure.

Over the years Dave would return to Andover and try to engage with other alums and faculty on these issues. For example, one school friend of his became the Dean of Residence (Cobb’s old job). But most Andover alums didn’t want to discuss this issue. Like most people, they wanted to forget about it or rationalize it away.

Partly because of this on-going travesty, Dave began to research serial predators including studying over 1,000 acts of violence while working at Strider SFV Lab. He also changed careers from international finance to law enforcement, entering the police academy at the age of 38. By 2017, he was the Chief Safety Officer of Strider Safety 501c3, an organization dedicated to understanding predation and helping people and organizations to be Safe-from-Violence™.

About David Amis

David was an Andover student from 1980-1984 and has degrees from both USC and Harvard Business School. He is also a former Colorado Ranger, Reserve Deputy Sheriff, and Police Academy Instructor. He is currently the Chief Safety Officer at Strider Safety 501c3.

About Strider Safety 501c3

Strider Safety does two things: 1. Identifies serial predators and investigates them and 2. helps people, especially women, to be Safe-from-Violence™. Strider operates the Close Call Academy which teaches a new methodology for women to be Safe-from-Violence™. The team’s first book, [27 Close Calls](#), by former Texas DPS Lieutenant Connie Hartsfield and Dave Amis is available on Amazon.

³ Their letters to the court are a matter of public record. There may be quotes in the Phillipian as well.