

Abstract Submitted  
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**The del squared V club, and the Kapitza club** RONALD EDGE,  
University of South Carolina — Two famous physics graduate student societies were founded in Cambridge in the last century, but are now defunct. Why did they vanish? The earliest of these was the del squared Vclub. This was inaugurated in 1900, probably by GFC Searle, (who had anticipated Einstein about the terminal velocity of light). with the objective of furthering knowledge in physics. Experimental physics was discussed in the Kapitza club, which Peter (or Pyotr) Kapitza started. In setting up the Kapitza Club in 1922, he had shaken his postgraduate colleagues out of their lethargy and persuading them to attend a weekly seminar on a topical subject in physics. The speakers, normally volunteers from the club's members, spoke with the aid only of a piece of chalk and a blackboard and they had to be prepared for a series of interruptions, mediated by Kaptiza with the quick wit and elan of a modern-day game-show host. Ultimately, in 1934 Kapitza was held after a Russian visit. He remained sequestered for the next twenty or so years, although visitors from the west (such as Schoenberg and Dirac) kept him up to date. The Kapitza club ended at a meeting in 1966 with the return of Kapitza, Dirac and Cockcroft being present.

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