

# Charles Kaplan

**Research Professor and Associate Dean of Research, Department of Adult Mental Health and Wellness and Faculty Associate, USC Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work**

Los Angeles, CA, US

Charles Kaplan explores the patterns of drug use, drug treatment strategies and social policy.

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## Description

Although a medical sociologist by training, Dr. Charles Kaplan has sought a balance between social work, sociology and social epidemiology during the course of his prolific research career exploring the patterns of drug use, drug treatment strategies and social policy. His path can only be described as multidisciplinary and can be traced back to his undergraduate days as a political science major at Tulane University. Kaplan found he was less interested in diplomacy or international relations and more attracted to sociology, particularly after taking a seminar on the subject during his senior year. Drawn to the social upheaval occurring in 1960s California, he headed to UCLA to earn a master's degree and doctorate in sociology.

During his time at UCLA, he received training in biomedical research through the National Institute of General Medical Science and began examining the connection between brain function and language, one of the first efforts to link neuroscience and sociology. His experiences in the lab sparked an interest in drug abuse and addiction, then a nascent field in terms of research. After a few years as an assistant professor at Rutgers University, Kaplan accepted an invitation to participate in an exchange program with Frankfurt University.

Europe was just beginning to experience the effects of the heroin epidemic when Kaplan arrived. Due to his previous sociological experience and interest in drug addiction, he quickly gained traction studying the patterns and spread of illicit substance use. Kaplan later joined the Department of Social Psychiatry of Erasmus University in Rotterdam and established the Addiction Research Institute before taking a position as research professor at Maastricht University, where he led the Drug Abuse Research Division of the International Institute for Psychosocial and Socioecological Research. In addition to exploring the spread of heroin throughout Germany, he became interested in differing treatment standards and drug policies among European countries, eventually exploring various community approaches and residential treatment care methods in 13 nations—then the largest funded research project in Europe on drug addiction.

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## Industry Expertise

Education/Learning, Research

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## Topics

Substance Abuse, Hiv/Aids, Diversity/Cross Cultural, Behavioral Health, Health, Social Development/Policy

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## Affiliations

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## **Education**

**University of California**  
Ph.D.

**University of California**  
M.A.

**Tulane University**  
B.A.

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