

# Fred Kaplan

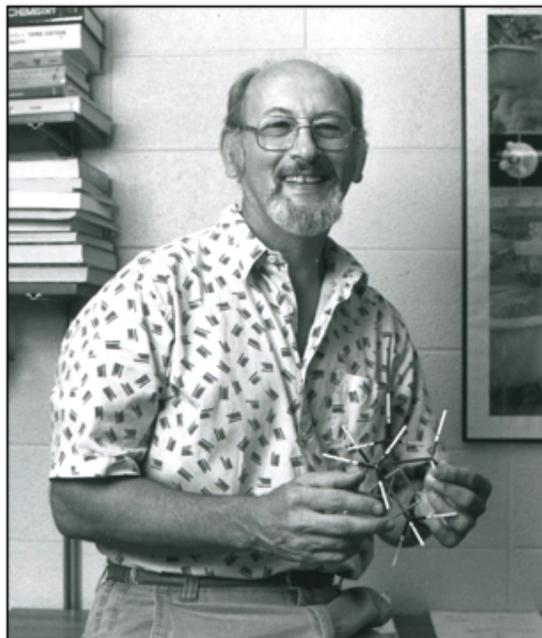
(1934-2013)

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The Department of Chemistry of the University of Cincinnati regrettably reports the death of Professor Emeritus Fred Kaplan on 02 May 2013. Kaplan was born on 02 September 1934 in Brooklyn, New York, the second of three children of Isabelle Chernofsky and Harry Kaplan. His mother was a first-generation immigrant from the Ukraine and his father a native New Yorker, who in later years owned and operated a shoe store in Queens. Educated at PS 135 and Samuel J. Tilden High School in Brooklyn, Kaplan was inspired by his high-school chemistry teacher, Mr. Suttenger, to pursue a career in chemistry. After receiving his BA from New York University in 1955, he began graduate work in chemistry at Brandeis University, but transferred to Yale in 1958 when his thesis director, Harold Conroy, accepted a position there. On returning from a year-long (1959-1960) fellowship with Oskar Jeger at the *Eidgenossische Technische Hochschule* in Zurich, Kaplan officially received his doctorate from Yale for his earlier work with Conroy on "Electronic Effects on the Stereochemistry of the Diels-Alder Reaction." In September of 1960 he accepted a postdoctoral position with John D. Roberts at the California Institute of Technology, and in 1961 was appointed to the faculty of the University of Cincinnati, where he remained until his retirement in the spring of 2002.

Kaplan was part of the first generation of chemists to be trained in the new technique of nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy and he pioneered its applications at Cincinnati. In later years he also made use of the technique of ion cyclotron resonance spectroscopy to investigate gas-phase ion-molecule reaction mechanisms and to measure gas-phase proton affinities. Among his more important contributions were the proposal that NMR coupling constants could have either positive or negative signs, a determination of the structure and stability of the "nonclassical" norbornyl carbocation, the discovery of a rotational barrier in the  $\alpha$ -diazoketones and a study of the role of the resulting stereochemistry in determining the nature of their de-



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composition products, and a method of determining the fragmentation pathways for ions in mass spectroscopy based on collision-induced dissociation.

In 1979 Kaplan closed down his research group and devoted the remainder of his career at Cincinnati to teaching and to mediation work at both the departmental and university levels. His introductory organic courses soon became some of the most popular in the department. In 1957 he married Phyllis Rowe, by whom he had two children – a son, Deen, and a daughter, Madeleine. In 1973 he married Mary Charles Wesel, by whom he had two sons – Michael and Adam.

## Publication History

Based on an oral presentation given at the memorial service on 11 May 2013.