

Supplementary Information for

Reactions of Triflate Esters and Triflamides with an Organic Neutral Super-Electron-Donor

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Supplementary Information

Experimental Details.

All Gas Chromatography Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS) was performed on an Ion Trap Mass Spectrometer/Trace GC instrument with ZB-5 column (30 metres), at 1ml/min He gas flow rate and temperature range of 50 to 320 °C with an increment of 10 to 20 °C/min.

Flash chromatography was performed using silica gel 60 (200-400 mesh). Thin layer chromatography (TLC) was performed using aluminium sheets of silica gel 60 F₂₅₄ and was visualised under UV lamp (254 nm). The plates were developed with acidic methanolic vanillin solutions.

All reagents were obtained from commercial suppliers and used without further purification unless otherwise stated. As required, organic solvents were dried and / or distilled prior to use. Tetrahydrofuran, dichloromethane, hexane, diethyl ether and toluene were dried and deoxygenated with a column-based solvent purification system by and the moisture content of the solvents was analysed using a Karl Fischer coulometer. A 500 ml bottle of anhydrous DMF was sealed with a septum and degassed with argon bubbled through a needle, with stirring over 2h. The sealed bottle was transferred to a glovebox and stored under oxygen-free, moisture-free conditions.

All reactions requiring anhydrous conditions were performed in flame-dried apparatus under a nitrogen or argon atmosphere. Organic extracts were, in general, dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate (Na₂SO₄).

The IUPAC names of some compounds were obtained using ChemDraw Ultra version 11.0.

N,N,N',N'-Tetramethyl-7,8-dihydro-6H-dipyrido[1,2-a;2',1'-c][1,4]diazepine-2,12-diamine (**13**)¹

A mixture of 1,3-bis(*N,N*-dimethyl-4-aminopyridinium)propane diiodide (8.10 g, 15 mmol, 1 eq.) and NaH (60% dispersed in mineral oil, 6 g, 150 mmol, 10 eq.) was placed under argon in a Schlenk flask equipped with a dry-ice cooler. The mixture was washed with hexane and the hexane removed. While stirring, ammonia gas was condensed into the flask (70 ml), the mixture was kept under reflux for 4 h and then the ammonia was allowed to evaporate over 3 h, followed by putting under vacuum. The solid was then extracted with diethyl ether, the solvent was removed and the residue dried under vacuum to give *N,N,N',N'*-tetramethyl-7,8-dihydro-6H-dipyrido[1,2-a;2',1'-c][1,4]di-azepine-2,12-diamine **13** (3.56 g, 83.4%) as a purple-black, moisture-sensitive and oxygen-sensitive powder, M.pt. = 131-133 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, C₆D₆) : δ 1.00 (2H, quintet, *J* = 6.3 Hz), 2.46 (12H, s), 3.03 (4H, t, *J* = 6.3 Hz), 4.91 (2H, dd, *J* = 7.5, 2.2 Hz), 5.14 (2H, d, *J* = 2.2 Hz), 5.64 ppm (2H, d, *J* = 7.5 Hz); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, C₆D₆) : δ_C 24.5, 40.8, 52.6, 95.8, 96.2, 116.0, 138.7, 143.7 ppm. λ_{max} (MeCN) = 260 (ε = 30000 M⁻¹ cm⁻¹), 345 (ε = 15000 M⁻¹ cm⁻¹), 520 (ε = 2500 M⁻¹ cm⁻¹) nm.

General procedure A - preparation of triflates: Alcohol or phenol starting material (1.0 eq.) was dissolved in dry dichloromethane (2 ml), pyridine (1.0 eq.) was added and the flask cooled to -78°C. A solution of trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (1.5 eq.) in DCM (2 ml) at -78°C was added dropwise to the stirred alcohol or phenol solution. The dry-ice bath was removed from and the reaction mixture allowed to warm to room temperature. Water (10ml) was then added, followed by dichloromethane (10ml). The reaction solution was then washed with further portions of water (3 x 10 ml) and brine (1 x 10ml), dried over Na₂SO₄ and the solvent was evaporated. The crude organic residue was then eluted (dichloromethane on silica gel), to afford the pure corresponding trifluoromethanesulfonate ester.

3-Phenylpropyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate (21):^{2a}

Phenylpropan-1-ol **24** (0.08 ml, 0.6 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure A to afford 3-phenylpropyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **21** as a colourless oil (0.153g, 0.57 mmol, 95%); IR (thin film) ν = 3066, 3030, 2935, 2865, 1498, 1455, 1412, 1246, 1207, 1145, 984, 930, 831, 800, 747, 700, 615, 576 and 519 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 2.14-2.20 (2H, m), 2.78 (2H, t, *J* = 7.3 Hz), 4.54 (2H, t, *J* = 6.3 Hz), 7.20 (2H, d, *J* = 7.4 Hz), 7.25 (1H, t, *J* = 7.4 Hz) and 7.33 ppm (2H, t, *J* = 7.4 Hz); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 31.1, 31.5, 76.9, 119.0 (q, *J* = 318 Hz, CF₃) 126.9, 128.7, 129.1, 139.8 ppm. *m/z* (EI) 268.0 ([M]⁺, 18%), 118.0 (35), 117.0 (71), 91.0 (100).

Figure below: Phenylpropyl triflate **21** (Spartan'04 using DFT 6-31G*)

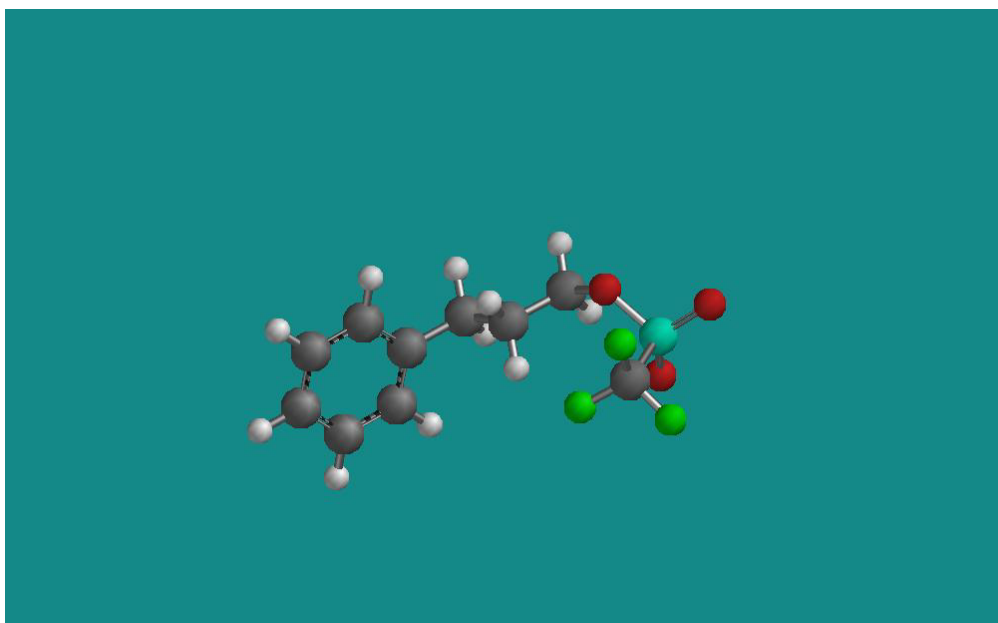
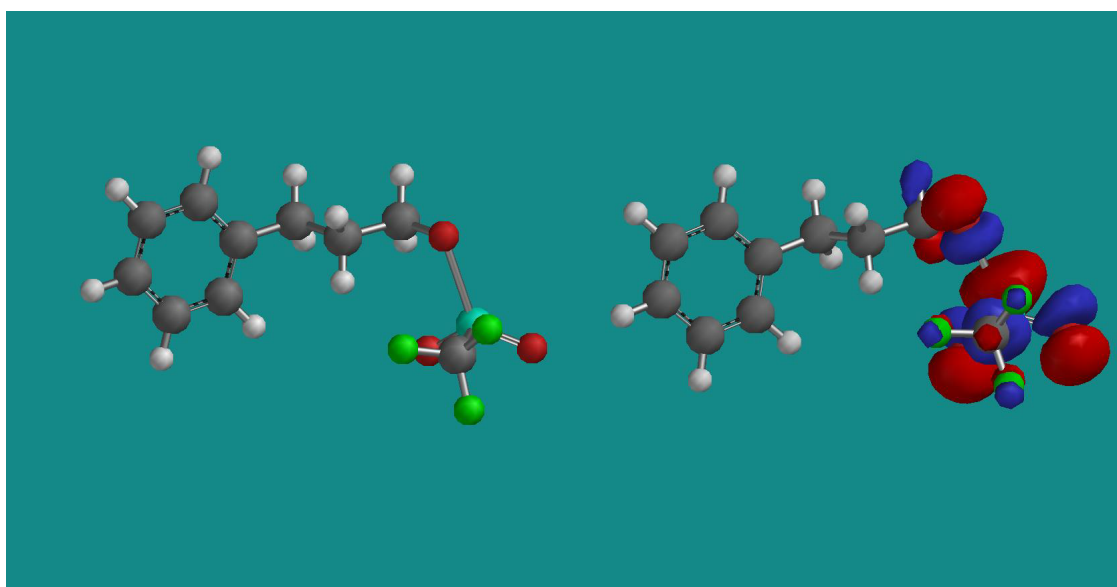


Figure below: Phenylpropyl triflate **21** radical-anion (Spartan'04 using DFT 6-31G*) (SOMO is depicted bottom right)



4-Phenylbutyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate (**22**):^{2b}

4-Phenylbutan-1-ol **25** (150 mg, 1.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure A to afford 4-phenylbutyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **22** as a colourless oil (263 mg, 0.93 mmol, 93%); IR (thin film) ν = 3064, 3029, 2944, 2864, 1497, 1454, 1412, 1246, 1206, 1146, 991, 932, 838, 748, 700, 615, 578 and 526 cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 1.75-1.81 (2H, m), 1.84-1.90 (2H, m), 2.69 (2H, t, J = 7.4 Hz), 4.58 (2H, t, J = 6.3 Hz), 7.18-7.32 ppm (5H, m); ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 27.0, 28.9, 35.2, 77.8, 119.0 (q, J = 318 Hz, CF_3), 126.4, 128.6, 128.8, 141.5 ppm. m/z (ESI) 281.9 ($[\text{M}]^+$, 23%), 132.0 (34), 104.1 (83), 91.1 (100), 65.1 (27).

5-Phenylpentyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate (**23**)³

5-Phenylpentan-1-ol **26** (164 mg, 1.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure A to afford 5-phenylpentyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **23** as a colourless oil (279 mg, 0.94 mmol, 94%); IR (thin film) ν = 3030, 3934, 2865, 1412, 1247, 1207, 1145, 930, 799, 746 and 616 cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 1.55-1.61 (2H, m), 1.66-1.72 (2H, m), 1.84-1.90 (2H, m), 2.69 (2H, t, J = 7.4 Hz), 4.58 (2H, t, J = 6.3 Hz), 7.17-7.22 (3H, m) and 7.26-7.31 ppm (2H, m); ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 25.0, 29.5, 31.0, 35.9, 77.8, 119.0 (q, J = 317 Hz, CF_3), 126.2, 128.7, 128.7 and 142.2 ppm. m/z (EI) 295.9 ($[\text{M}]^+$, 22%), 146.1 (32), 104.1 (38), 91.2 (100), 65.1 (22).

2,3-Dihydro-1H-inden-5-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (**40**)⁴

2,3-Dihydro-1H-inden-5-ol **41** (201 mg, 1.5 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure A to afford 2,3-dihydro-1H-inden-5-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate **40** as a colourless oil (359 mg, 1.35 mmol, 90%); [Found: (M)⁺, 266.0220. $\text{C}_{10}\text{H}_9\text{F}_3\text{O}_3\text{S}$ requires (M)⁺, 266.0219]; IR (thin film) ν = 2957, 2850, 1611, 1593, 1480, 1423, 1250, 1212, 1142, 1100, 933, 870, 852, 608, and 502 cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 2.45 (2H, quintet, J = 7.4 Hz), 2.93 (2H, t, J = 7.4 Hz), 2.96 (2H, t, J = 7.4 Hz), 7.02 (1H, m), 7.12 (1H, d, J = 1.8 Hz) and 7.25 ppm (1H, d, J = 7.2 Hz); ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 26.1, 32.7, 33.3, 117.7, 119.1 (q, J = 319 Hz, CF_3), 119.2, 125.8, 145.0, 147.2, 148.6 ppm.

2-Allylphenyl trifluoromethanesulfonate (**45**)⁵

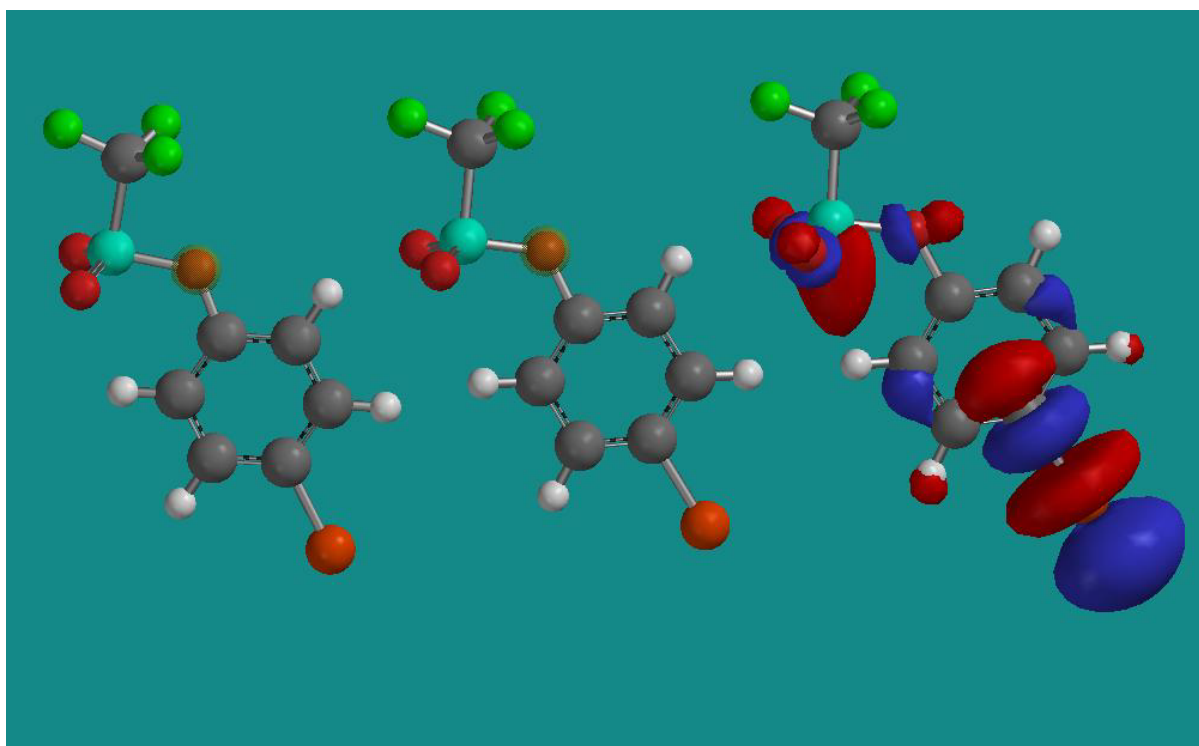
2-Allylphenol (268 mg, 2.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure A to afford 2-allylphenyl trifluoromethanesulfonate **45** as a colourless oil (493 mg, 1.85 mmol, 93%); [Found: (M)⁺ 266.0219. $\text{C}_{10}\text{H}_9\text{F}_3\text{O}_3\text{S}$ requires (M)⁺, 266.0219]; IR (thin film) ν = 3085, 2985, 2923, 1642, 1488, 1454, 1422, 1250, 1214, 1140, 1105, 1073, 891, 181, 767 and 606 cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 3.49 (2H, dt, J = 6.6, 1.3 Hz), 5.11-5.18 (2H, m), 5.89-5.97 (1H, m) and 7.28-7.36 ppm (4H, m); ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 34.3, 117.8, 119.0 (q, J = 318 Hz, CF_3), 121.7, 128.5, 128.7, 131.8, 133.2, 134.9, 148.3 ppm.

4-Bromophenyl trifluoromethanesulfonate (**47**)⁶

4-Bromophenol **48** (346 mg, 2.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure A to afford 4-bromophenyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **47** as a colourless oil (591 mg, 1.94 mmol, 97%); [Found: (M)⁺ 303.9011 $\text{C}_7\text{H}_4\text{BrF}_3\text{O}_3\text{S}$ requires (M)⁺, 303.9011]; IR (thin film) ν = 3103, 1481, 1428, 1401, 1251, 1216, 1174, 1141, 1071, 1013, 886, 832, 779, 750, 628, 607 and 525 cm^{-1} ; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 7.18 (2H, d, J = 9.0 Hz) and 7.60 ppm (2H, d, J = 9.0 Hz); ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 119.0 (q, J = 319 Hz, CF_3), 122.4, 123.4, 133.8, 148.8 ppm.

Compound **47**: calculations below with Spartan'04 (Wavefunction Inc) using DFT 6-31G*

Below left: *p*-bromophenyl triflate Spartan'04 using DFT 6-31G*
Below Centre: *p*-bromophenyl triflate radical-anion Spartan'04 using DFT 6-31G*
Below right: *p*-bromophenyl triflate radical-anion Spartan'04 using DFT 6-31G* showing SOMO



General procedure B - reductions of triflates: Donor **13** (128 mg, 0.45 mmol, 1.5 eq.) was dissolved in degassed DMF (2 ml) in a glove-box. This solution was directly pipetted onto the dry and degassed selected substrate (0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.). The mixture was left to stir for 2 h at ambient temperature, then added to water (75 ml), before extracting with diethyl ether (4 x 50 ml). The combined organic layers were then washed with water (2 x 50 ml), brine (50 ml) and dried over Na₂SO₄. The crude organic residue, obtained after evaporation under reduced pressure, was eluted with ethyl acetate on silica gel, to afford the pure corresponding products as reported.

3-Phenylpropan-1-ol (24)⁷

3-Phenylpropyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **21** (81 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure B to afford 3-phenylpropan-1-ol **24** as a colourless oil, (37 mg, 0.27 mmol, 90%); IR (Thin film) $\nu = 3335, 3033, 2932, 2941, 1605, 1495, 1450, 1055, 1032, 749$ and 701 cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 1.62$ (s, OH), 1.89-1.95 (2H, m), 2.72 (2H, t, $J = 7.7$ Hz), 3.70 (2H, t, $J = 6.5$ Hz), 7.20-7.23 (3H, m), 7.31 ppm (2H, t, $J = 7.4$); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 32.4, 34.5, 62.6, 126.2, 128.7, 128.8, 142.1$. m/z (EI) 135.93 ([M]⁺).

4-Phenylbutan-1-ol (25)⁷

4-Phenylbutyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **22** (85 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure B to afford 4-phenylbutan-1-ol **25** as a colourless oil, (41 mg, 0.28 mmol, 91%); IR (Thin film) $\nu = 3294, 3028, 1497, 1429, 1249, 1217, 1078, 1029, 746$ and 698 cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 1.38$ (1H, s), 1.60-1.65 (2H, m), 1.69-1.75 (2H, m), 2.66 (2H, t, $J = 7.6$ Hz), 3.68 (2H, t, $J = 7.6$ Hz), 7.18-7.20 (3H, m) and 7.27-7.31 ppm (2H, m); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 27.8, 32.6, 36.0, 63.2, 126.1, 128.6, 128.7, 142.6$ ppm. m/z (ESI) 150.0 ([M]⁺, 30%), 132.2 (64), 104.3 (100), 91.1 (42), 65.2 (12).

5-Phenylpentan-1-ol (26)⁷

5-Phenylpentyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **23** (89 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure B to afford 5-phenylpentan-1-ol **26** as a colourless oil, (42 mg, 0.26 mmol, 85%); IR (thin film) $\nu = 2957, 2850, 1611, 1593, 1480, 1423, 1250, 1212, 1142, 1100, 933, 870, 852, 608,$ and 502 cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 1.39$ -1.45 (2H, m), 1.59-1.64 (2H, m), 1.65-1.70 (2H, m), 2.64 (2H, t, $J = 7.7$ Hz), 3.65 (2H, t, $J = 6.6$ Hz), 7.18-7.12 (3H, m), 7.27-7.30 (2H, m); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 25.7, 31.6, 33.0, 36.2, 63.3, 126.0, 128.6, 128.7, 142.9$ ppm. m/z (ESI) 186.93 ([M+Na]⁺).

2,3-Dihydro-1H-inden-5-ol (41)⁷

2,3-Dihydro-1H-inden-5-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate **40** (80 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure B to afford 2,3-dihydro-1H-inden-5-ol **41** as a white solid (36 mg, 0.27 mmol, 89%); M.pt. = 56-57 °C (Lit.⁸ = 56 °C), ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 2.08$ (2H, quintet, $J = 7.4$ Hz), 2.84 (2H, t, $J = 7.2$ Hz), 2.87 (2H, t, $J = 7.2$ Hz), 4.51 (1H, br. s) 6.61 (1H, dd, $J = 8.0, 2.5$ Hz), 6.72 (1H, d, $J = 2.0$ Hz) and 7.08 ppm (1H, d, $J = 8.1$ Hz); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 26.2, 32.3, 33.4, 111.7, 113.3, 123.3, 136.7, 146.4, 154.5$ ppm. m/z (ESI) 133.07 ([M-H]⁻, 100%).

(Trifluoromethylsulfonyl)methylbenzene (44)⁹

Donor **13** (128 mg, 0.45 mmol, 1.5 eq.) was dissolved in degassed DMF (2 ml) in a glovebox. This solution was directly pipetted onto the dry and degassed 2,3-dihydro-1H-inden-5-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate **40** (80 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.). The mixture was left to stir for 2h at ambient temperature, before benzyl bromide (308 mg, 1.8 mmol, 4.0 eq.) was added to the reaction mixture and stirred overnight. The reaction vessel was sealed and removed to a fumehood and water (75 ml) added, before extraction with diethyl ether (5 x 50 ml). The combined organic layers were then washed with water (2 x 50 ml), brine (50 ml) and dried over Na₂SO₄. The crude organic obtained after evaporation under reduced pressure was purified by column chromatography to give (trifluoromethylsulfonyl)-methylbenzene **44** as a white crystalline solid (61 mg, 274 μmol, 91%); M.pt. 100-101 °C (Lit.⁹ = 104 °C); Found (M)⁺, 224.0114. C₈H₇F₃O₂S requires (M)⁺, 224.0113. IR (KBr) $\nu = 3007, 2953, 1625, 1494, 1459, 1361, 1202, 1120, 774, 720, 697, 634, 525$ and 507 cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 4.49$ (2H, s) and 7.43-7.48 ppm (5H, m); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 56.5, 120.1$ (q, $J = 326$ Hz, CF₃), 123.5, 129.6, 130.4, 131.6 ppm.

2-(Prop-1-enyl)phenol (46)⁷

2-Allylphenyl trifluoromethanesulfonate **45** (80 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure B to afford 2-(prop-1-enyl)phenol **46** as a colourless oil, (38mg, 0.286 mmol, 95%); IR (Thin Film) $\nu = 3410, 3034, 2912, 2852, 1654, 1581, 1446, 1284, 1172, 964$ and 746 cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 1.93$ (3H, dd, $J = 6.6, 1.7$ Hz), 4.96 (s, OH), 6.23 (1H, dq, $J = 15.9, 6.6$ Hz), 6.59-6.63 (1H, m), 6.81 (1H, dd, $J = 8.0, 1.0$ Hz), 6.91 (1H, td, $J = 7.7, 7.4, 1.0$ Hz), 7.12 (1H, td, $J = 8.0, 7.4, 1.6$ Hz) and 7.32 ppm (1H, dd, $J = 7.7, 1.6$ Hz); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 19.3, 116.0, 121.2, 125.4, 125.7, 127.7, 128.3, 128.7, 152.7$. m/z (ESI) 133.10 ([M-H]⁻).

4-Bromophenol (48)⁷

4-Bromophenyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate **47** (92 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure B to afford 4-bromophenol **48** as a colourless crystalline solid, (44mg, 0.252 mmol, 84%); M.pt. = 66-68 °C (Lit.¹⁰ = 66-68 °C); IR (thin film) $\nu = 3342, 3062, 2943, 2665, 1588, 1487, 1437, 1331, 1211, 1116, 1070, 999, 936, 827, 695$ and 632 cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 4.69$ (1H, s, OH), 6.73 (2H, d, $J = 8.9$ Hz) and 7.35 ppm (2H, d, $J = 8.9$ Hz); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 113.3, 117.5, 132.8, 155.0$ ppm. m/z (ESI) 170.9 ([M-H]⁻, 100%).

1-(Benzyloxy)-4-bromobenzene (49) and (Trifluoromethylsulfonyl)methylbenzene (44)

Donor **13** (427 mg, 1.5 mmol, 1.5 eq.) was dissolved in degassed DMF (5 ml). This solution was directly pipetted onto the dry 4-bromophenyl trifluoromethanesulfonate **47** (305 mg, 1.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.). The mixture was left to stir for 16h at ambient

temperature, before benzyl bromide (1.03 g, 6.0 mmol, 6.0 eq.) was added to the reaction mixture and stirred overnight. The reaction vessel was sealed and removed to a fumehood and water (75 ml) added, before extraction with ethyl acetate (5 x 50 ml). The combined organic layers were then washed with water (2 x 50 ml), brine (50 ml) and dried over Na₂SO₄. The crude organic obtained after evaporation under reduced pressure was purified by column chromatography in diethyl ether and petroleum ether (40 - 60 °C) to give 1-(benzyloxy)-4-bromobenzene **49** as a white crystalline solid (231 mg, 0.88 mmol, 88%) and trifluoromethylsulfonylmethylbenzene **44** as a white crystalline solid (132 mg, 0.59 mmol, 59%);

1-(Benzyloxy)-4-bromobenzene: M.pt. 58-60 °C [Lit.¹¹ 59-60 °C]. IR (thin film) ν = 3338, 3034, 2891, 2080, 1893, 1573, 1491, 1453, 1379, 1285, 1233, 1112, 1073, 1047, 993, 909, 823 and 739 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 5.06 ppm (2H, s), 6.87 (2H, d, *J* = 9.0 Hz) and 7.33-7.45 ppm (7H, m). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 69.7, 112.6, 116.2, 126.9, 127.6, 128.1, 131.8, 136.1, 157.4 ppm.

Data for (Trifluoromethylsulfonyl)methylbenzene **44** were consistent with those reported above.

Reaction of substrate **21** in ¹⁸O labelled dimethylformamide:

(i) Preparation of ¹⁸O- dimethylformamide.¹²

Dry dimethylformamide (7.7 ml, 0.1 mol) and dry benzoyl chloride (11.6 mL, 0.1 mol) were taken in a three necked flask equipped with a calcium chloride drying tube. The flask was then cooled to 0 °C and ¹⁸O labelled water (20% mole of ¹⁸O isotope, 1.83g, 0.1 mol) was introduced slowly into the reaction flask. The contents solidified instantaneously due to the formation of benzoic acid. Mass spectrometry of the crude reaction mixture indicated the presence of ¹⁸O labelled dimethylformamide. Petroleum ether (40 - 60 °C, 10 ml) was added to the reaction flask and stirred for 10 min and sodium bicarbonate (8.4 g, 0.1 mol) was added to the reaction flask. When the evolution of carbon dioxide ceased, the contents were extracted with acetone (3 x 20 ml). The combined acetone layers were dried over anhydrous potassium carbonate and filtered, and the resulting solution was concentrated under vacuum. The crude product was purified by distillation (90 °C @ 30 mm Hg) and provided ¹⁸O-labelled dimethylformamide (13% mole of ¹⁸O isotope, 5.6 g, 78 %).

¹⁸O-DMF IR (Thin film) ν = 3480, 2939, 1660, 1388, 1257, 1092 and 1060 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ = 2.80 (3H, s), 2.89 (3H, s) and 7.94 ppm (1H, s); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ = 31.3, 36.4 and 162.4 ppm; *m/z* (ESI) 76.2 ([M+H]⁺, 13%), 74.2, ([M+H]⁺, 100).

(ii) Reaction with substrate **21**

Dry ¹⁸O-enriched DMF (2 mL) was added to 3-phenylpropyl-1-trifluoromethanesulfonate (80 mg, 0.3 mmol), followed by 4-DMAP donor (128 mg, 0.45 mmol, 1.5 equiv) in a glove box and the reaction flask was sealed. After stirring at room temperature for 2 h, the reaction was then quenched with water (10 mL) and extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 10 mL). The combined ether phases were washed again with water (10 mL), brine (10 mL) and dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate. The resulting solution was concentrated and purified by column chromatography (20% diethyl ether in petroleum ether) to provide 3-phenylpropan-1-ol (18 mg, 44%). The spectral data were consistent with the previous data of the same compound. Mass spectroscopy showed that there was no enrichment of ¹⁸O in the alcohol product and the data were given in the supporting information.

Preparation of triflamides:

9-(Trifluoromethylsulfonyl)-2,3,4,9-tetrahydro-1H-carbazole (**51**)

2,3,4,9-Tetrahydro-1H-carbazole **52** (685 mg, 4.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was dissolved in dry THF (10 ml). The reaction vessel was cooled to -78°C before *n*-butyllithium was added dropwise (4.4 mmol, 1.1 eq.) and stirred for 30 min. Trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (1.24 g, 4.4 mmol, 1.1 eq.) in dichloromethane (10 ml) at -78°C, under argon was added dropwise to the stirred solution of 2,3,4,9-tetrahydro-1H-carbazole. On complete addition, the reaction vessel was warmed to room temperature and stirred overnight. The reaction mixture was quenched with water (25 ml) and washed with further portions of water (3 x 25 ml) and brine (1 x 20 ml) before being dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The crude organic residue was purified on silica gel, (10% ethyl acetate in hexane), to afford 9-(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)-2,3,4,9-tetrahydro-1H-carbazole **51** as colourless crystals (413 mg, 1.36 mmole 34%); M.pt. = 60-61°C; [Found: (M)⁺, 303.0533. C₁₃H₁₂F₃NO₂S requires (M)⁺, 303.0535]; IR (KBr) ν = 3437, 2944, 1441, 1412, 1224, 1196, 1151, 1116, and 609 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 1.86-1.95 (4H, m), 2.66-2.69 (2H, m), 2.86-2.96 (2H, m), 7.30-7.35 (2H, m), 7.43-7.45 (1H, m) and 7.93-7.94 ppm (1H,m); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 21.5, 22.2, 23.4, 24.3, 114.6, 118.8, 119.3 (q, *J* = 322.7 Hz, CF₃), 121.1, 125.1, 125.2, 130.9, 136.1, 136.5 ppm.

N-Benzyl-*N*-phenyl-1,1,1-trifluoromethanesulfonamide (**53**)^{13,14}

N-Benzylaniline **54** (277 mg, 1.51 mmol) in dry dichloromethane (5 ml) was cooled to -78°C under an inert atmosphere and triethylamine (202 mg, 2.0 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was added. Trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (846 mg, 3.0 mmol, 1.5 eq.) in dry dichloromethane (5 ml) was added, cooled to -78°C, to the stirred *N*-benzyl aniline solution. The cooling was then removed and the reaction mixture was stirred for a further 2h. It was then quenched with water (15 ml) and washed with further portions of water (4 x 15 ml) before drying and evaporation. The crude organic residue was purified on silica gel,

[10% ethyl acetate in hexane], to afford *N*-benzyl-1,1,1-trifluoro-*N*-phenylmethanesulfonamide **53** as pale yellow crystals, (318 mg, 1.00 mmol, 66%); M.pt. = 76-77°C (Lit.¹² 78-79°C); [Found (M)⁺, 315.0535. C₁₄H₁₂F₃NO₂S requires (M)⁺, 315.0531]. IR (KBr) ν = 3064, 3032, 2925, 2854, 1595, 1493, 1456, 1391, 1229, 1207, 1141, 1086, 1060, 882, 714, 695, 601, 575 and 524 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 4.92 (2H, s), 7.13-7.19 (4H, m), and 7.30-7.34 ppm (6H, m); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 57.7, 120.9 (q, *J* = 321 Hz, CF₃), 128.8, 129.0, 129.3, 129.5, 129.7, 129.7, 134.6, 136.9 ppm.

General procedure C - reductions of triflamides: Donor **13** (256 mg, 0.90 mmol, 3.0 eq.) was dissolved in degassed DMF (2 ml) in a glovebox. This solution was directly pipetted onto the dry and degassed selected substrate (0.3 mmol, 1 eq.). The mixture was left to stir overnight at 100 °C, then added to water (75 ml), and extracted with diethyl ether (50 ml and 4 x 50 ml). The combined organic layers were then washed with water (2 x 50 ml), brine (50 ml) and dried over Na₂SO₄. The crude organic residue obtained after evaporation under reduced pressure was purified by column chromatography to give the corresponding products as reported.

2,3,4,9-Tetrahydro-1H-carbazole (**52**)⁷

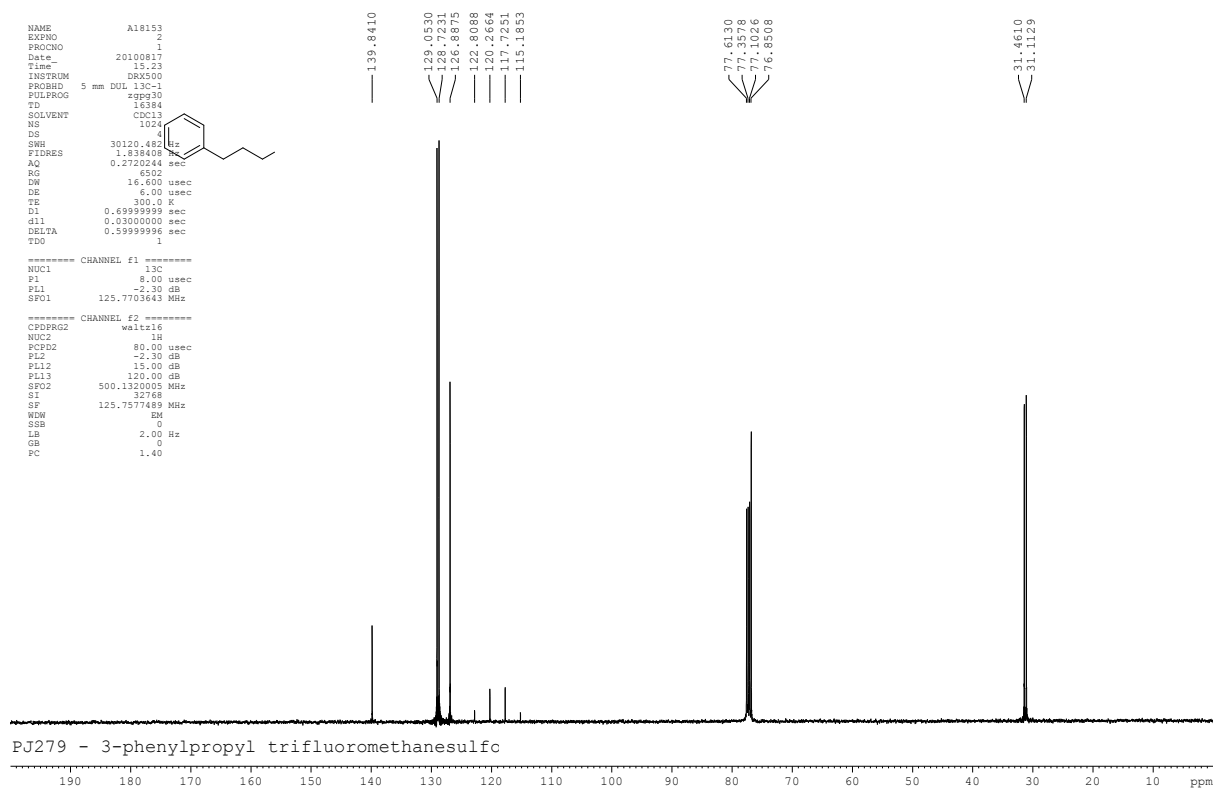
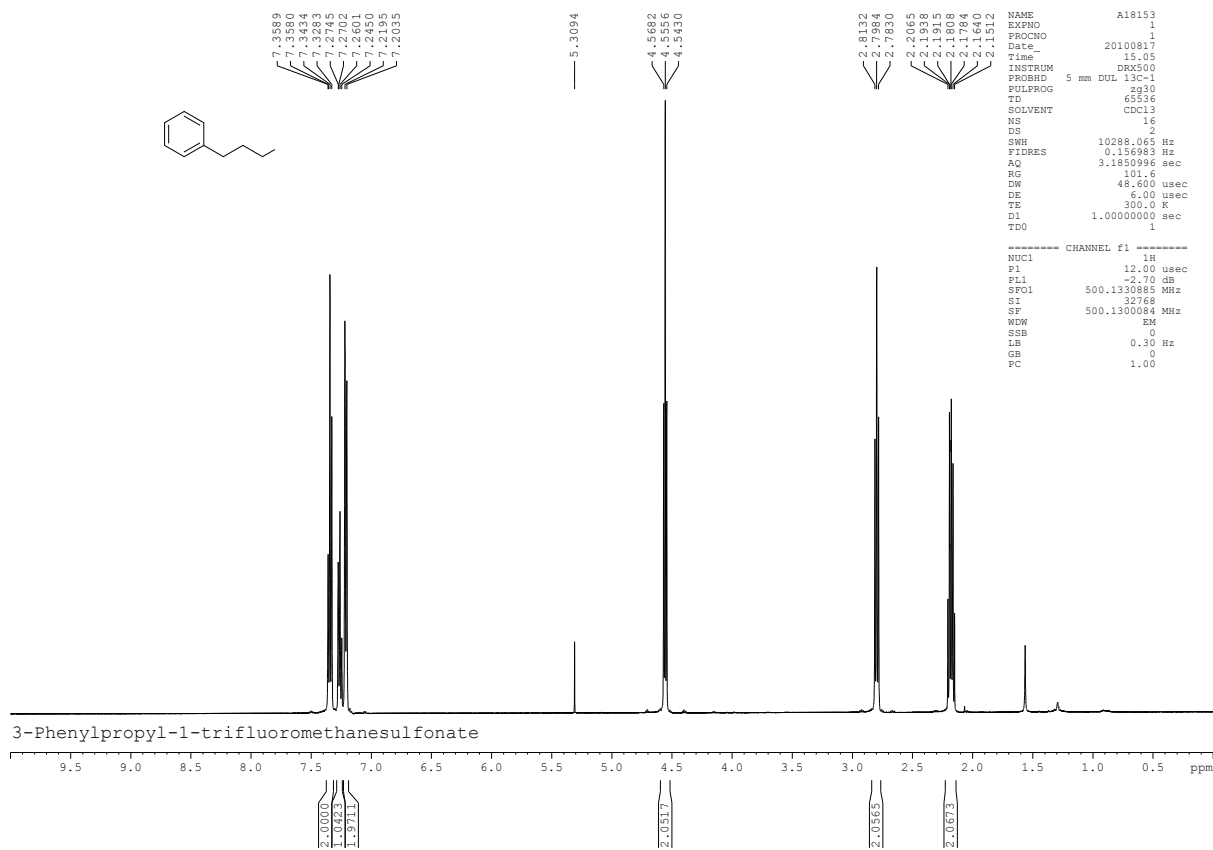
9-(Trifluoromethylsulfonyl)-2,3,4,9-tetrahydro-1H-carbazole **51** (91 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.) was reacted according to procedure C, to afford 2,3,4,9-tetrahydro-1H-carbazole **52** as a white solid, (27 mg, 0.16 mmol, 53%); M.pt. = 113-115 °C (Lit.¹⁵ 114-115 °C); IR ν (powder) = 3397, 2926, 2846, 1467, 1363, 1284, 1144, 1008, 972, 918 and 719 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 1.87-1.97 (4H, m), 2.72-2.76 (4H, m), 7.09 (1H, td, 7.4, 1.2 Hz), 7.13 (1H, td, 7.4, 1.4 Hz), 7.28-7.30 (1H, m), 7.47-7.49 (1H, m), and 7.65 ppm (1H, s); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 21.2, 23.6, 23.6, 23.6, 110.5, 110.7, 118.1, 119.4, 121.3, 128.2, 134.4, 136.0 ppm. *m/z* (ESI) 172.07 ([M+H]⁺).

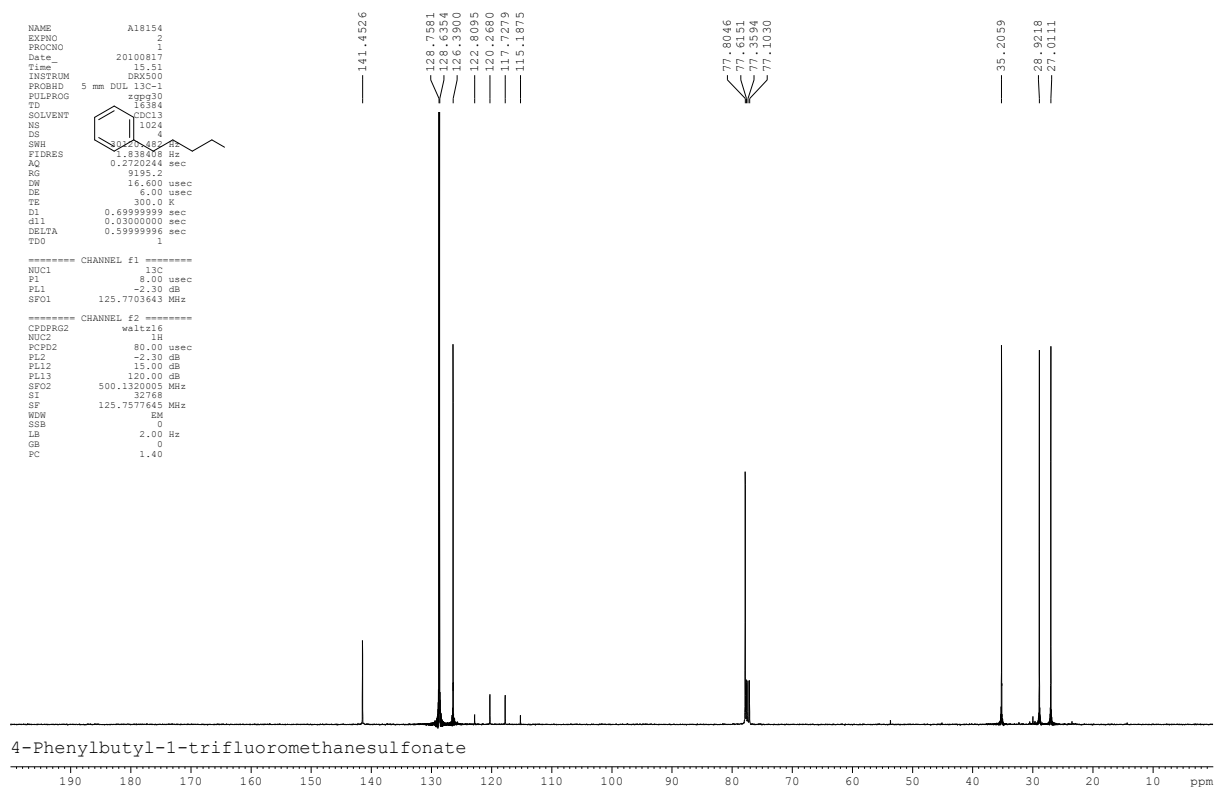
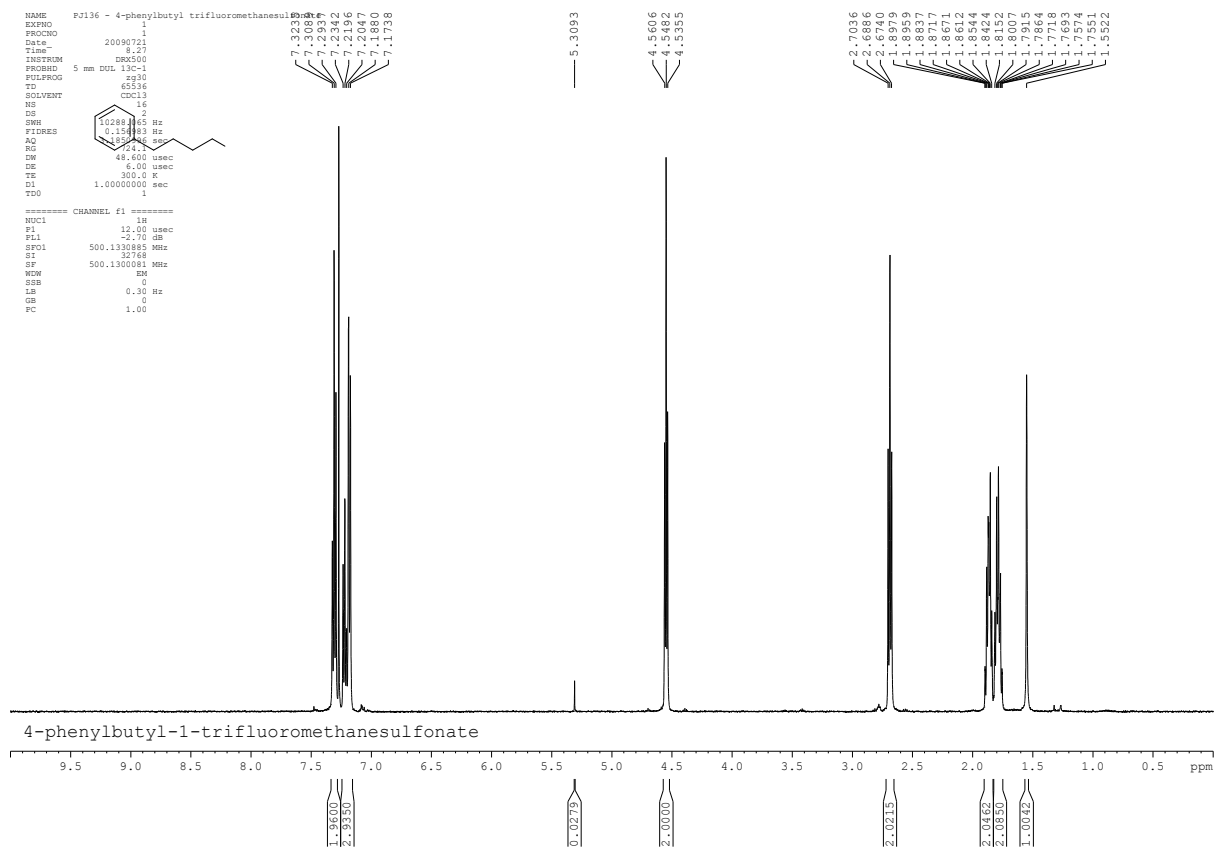
N-benzylaniline (**54**)⁷

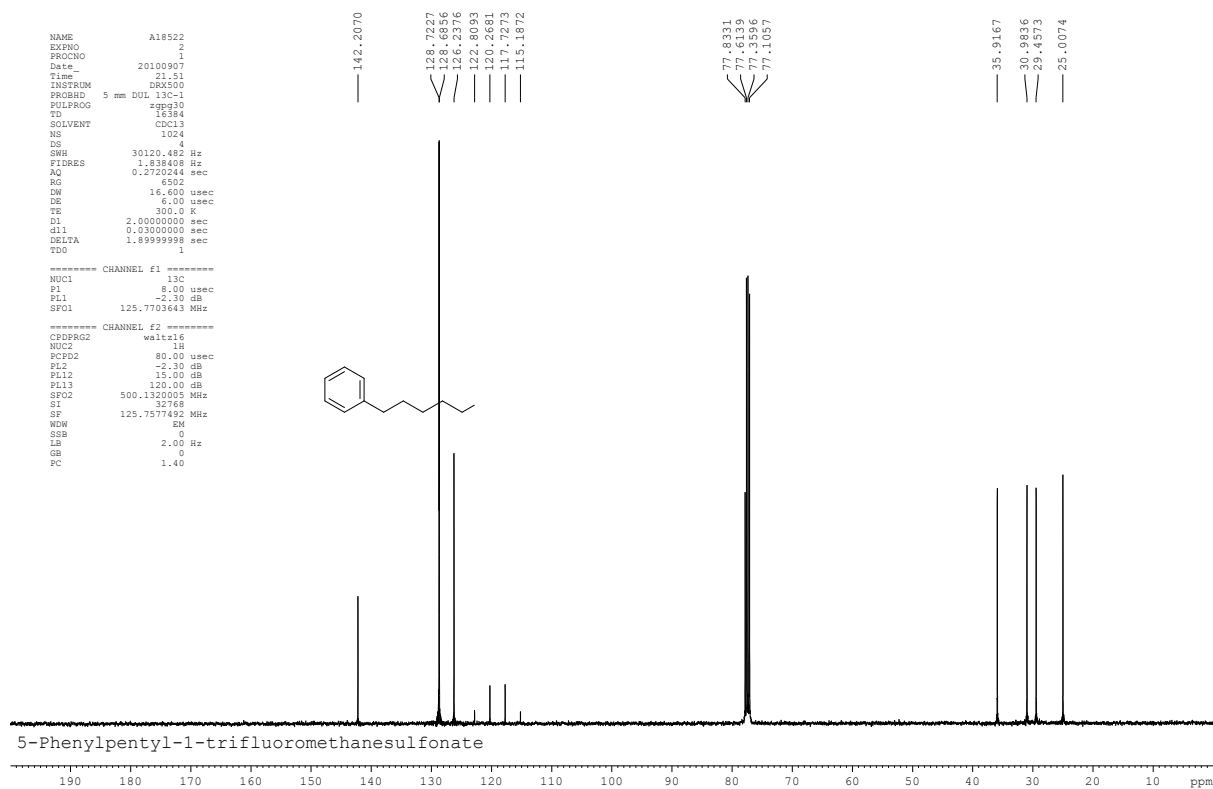
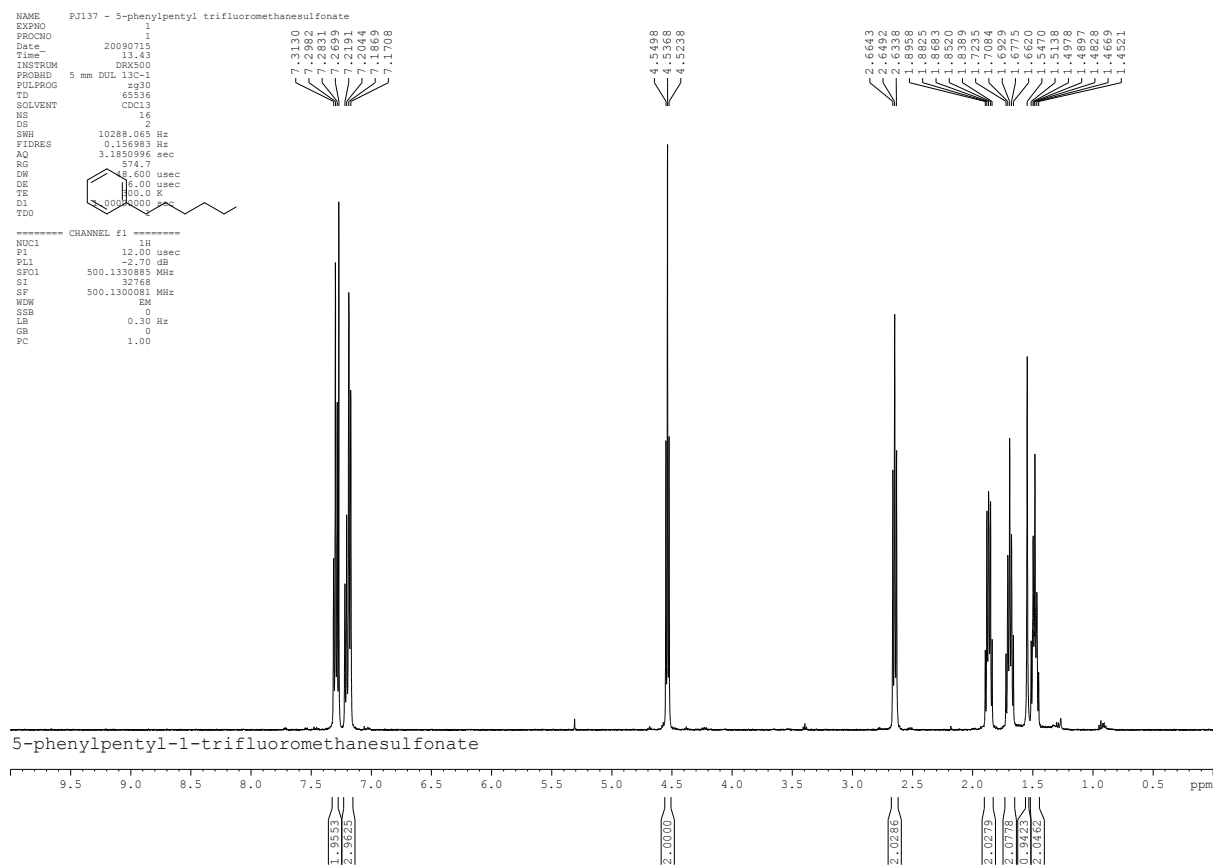
N-Benzyl-1,1,1-trifluoro-*N*-phenylmethanesulfonamide **53** (95 mg, 0.3 mmol, 1.0 eq.), was reacted according to procedure C, [but reacting for 2 days] to afford *N*-benzyl aniline **54** as a white/yellow crystalline solid (22 mg, 0.12 mmol, 40%); M.pt. = 32-34 °C (Lit.¹⁶ 33-34 °C); IR (powder) ν = 3417, 3051, 3022, 2926, 1601, 1508, 1447, 1360, 1301, 1105, 956, 827 and 688 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 4.35 (2H, s), 6.67 (2H, d, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 6.74 (1H, t, *J* = 7.3 Hz), 7.17-7.22 (2H, m), 7.28-7.31 (1H, m) and 7.40-7.41 ppm (4H, m); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 48.7, 113.2, 117.9, 127.6, 127.9, 129.0, 129.6, 139.8, 148.5 ppm; *m/z* (ESI) 183.98 ([M+H]⁺).

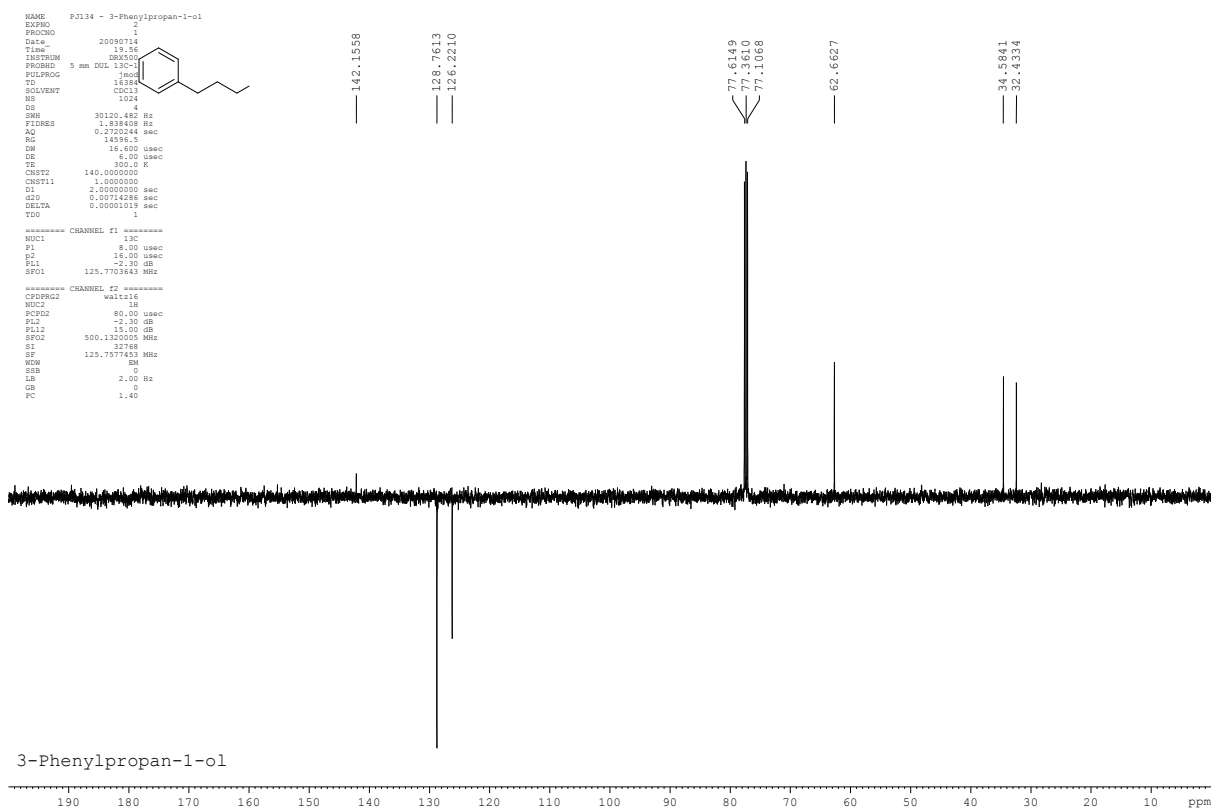
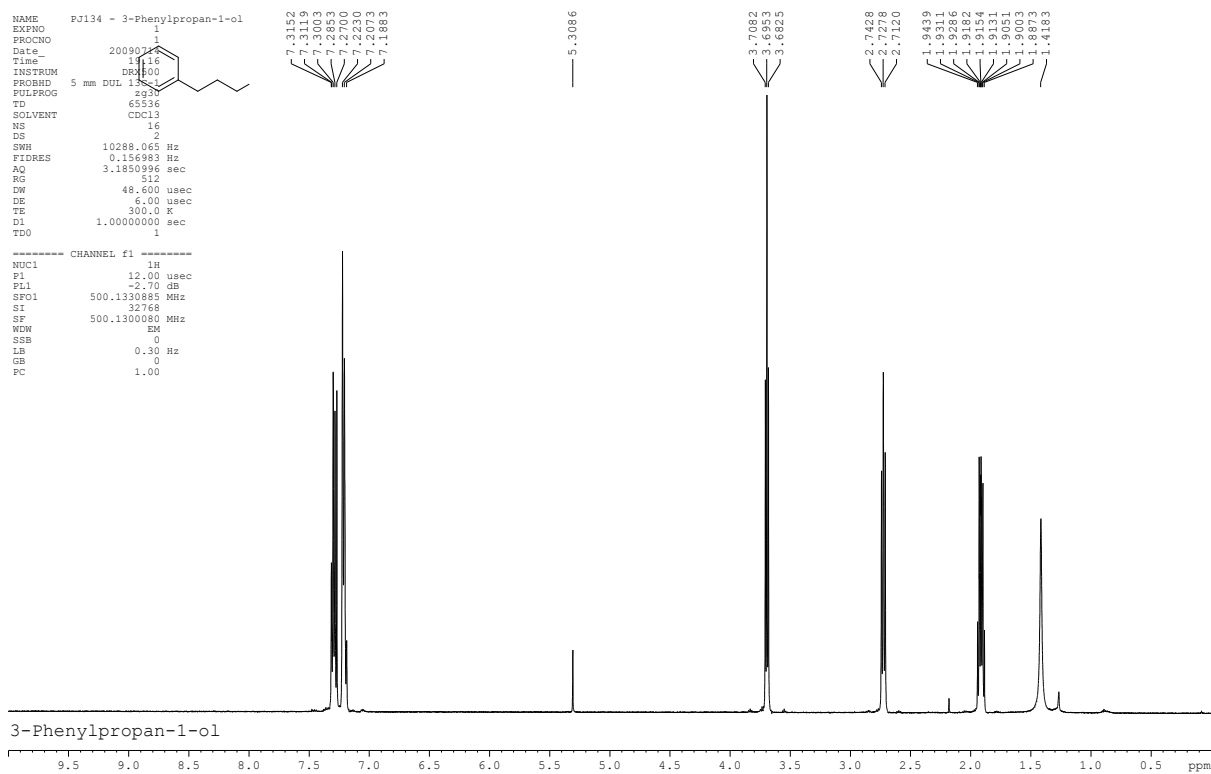
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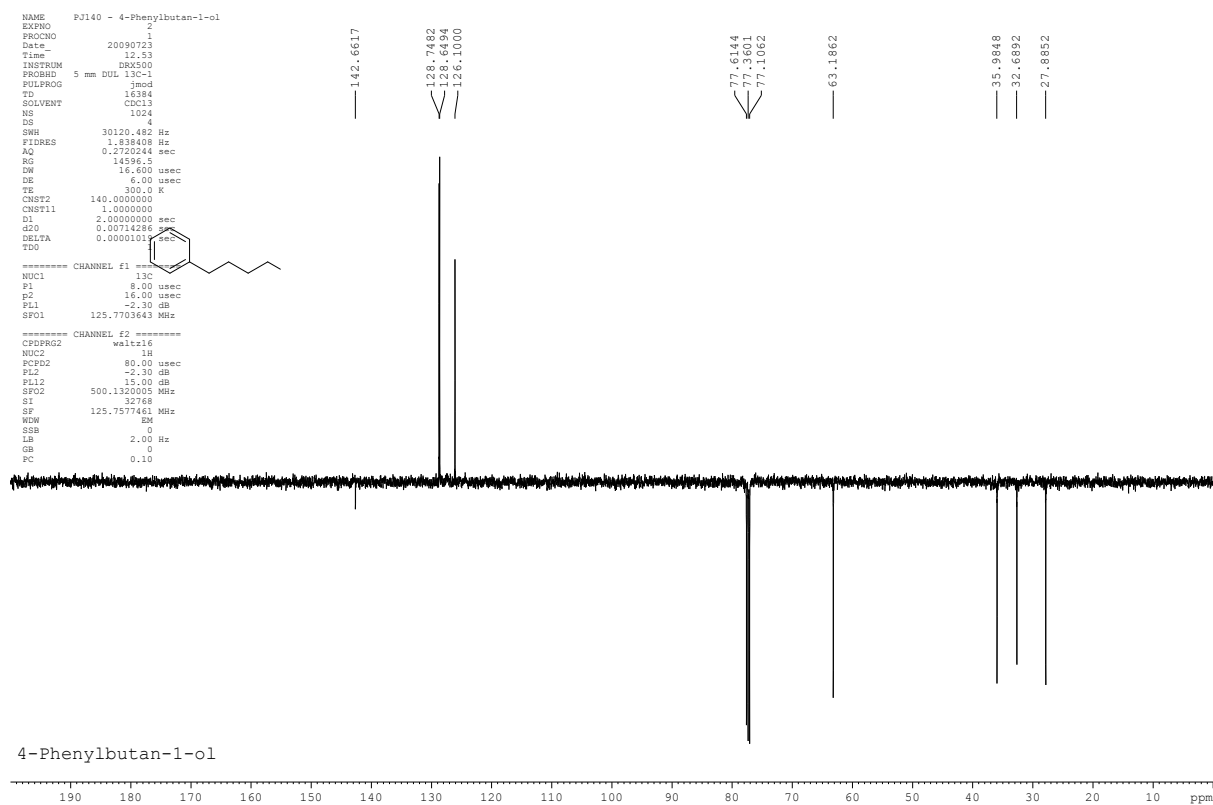
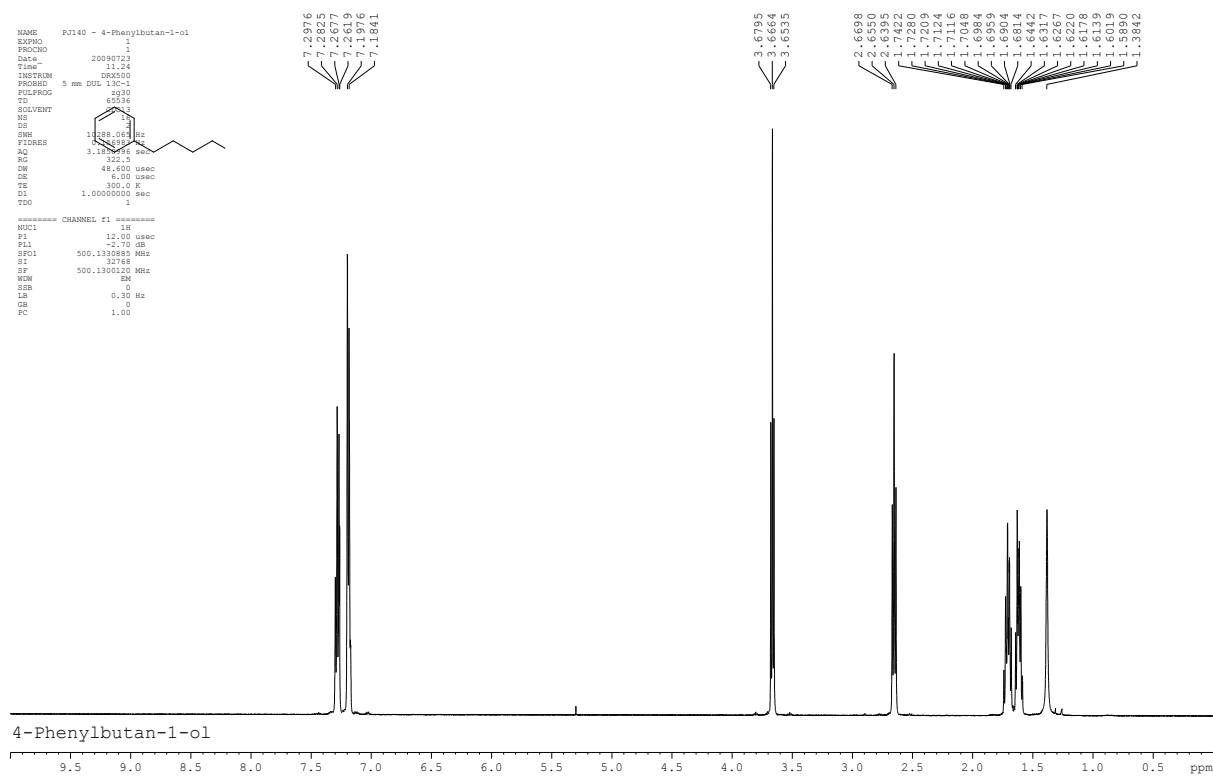
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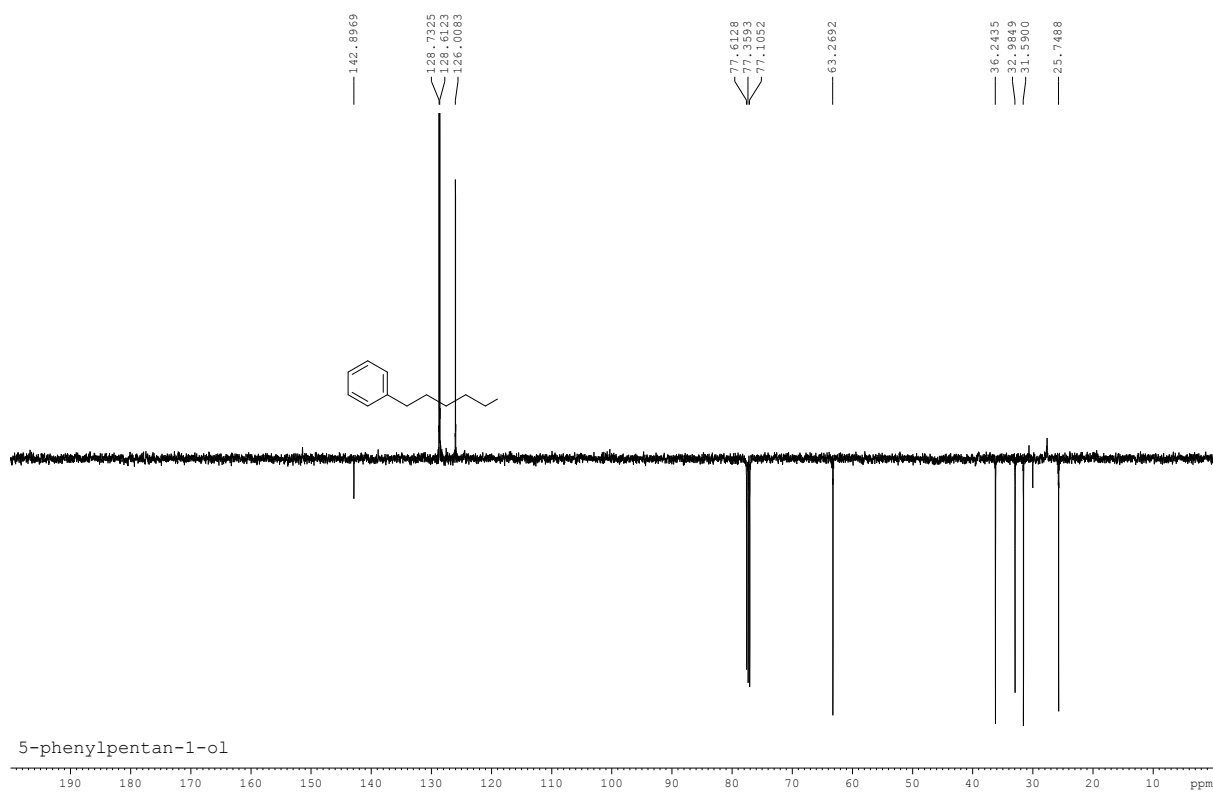
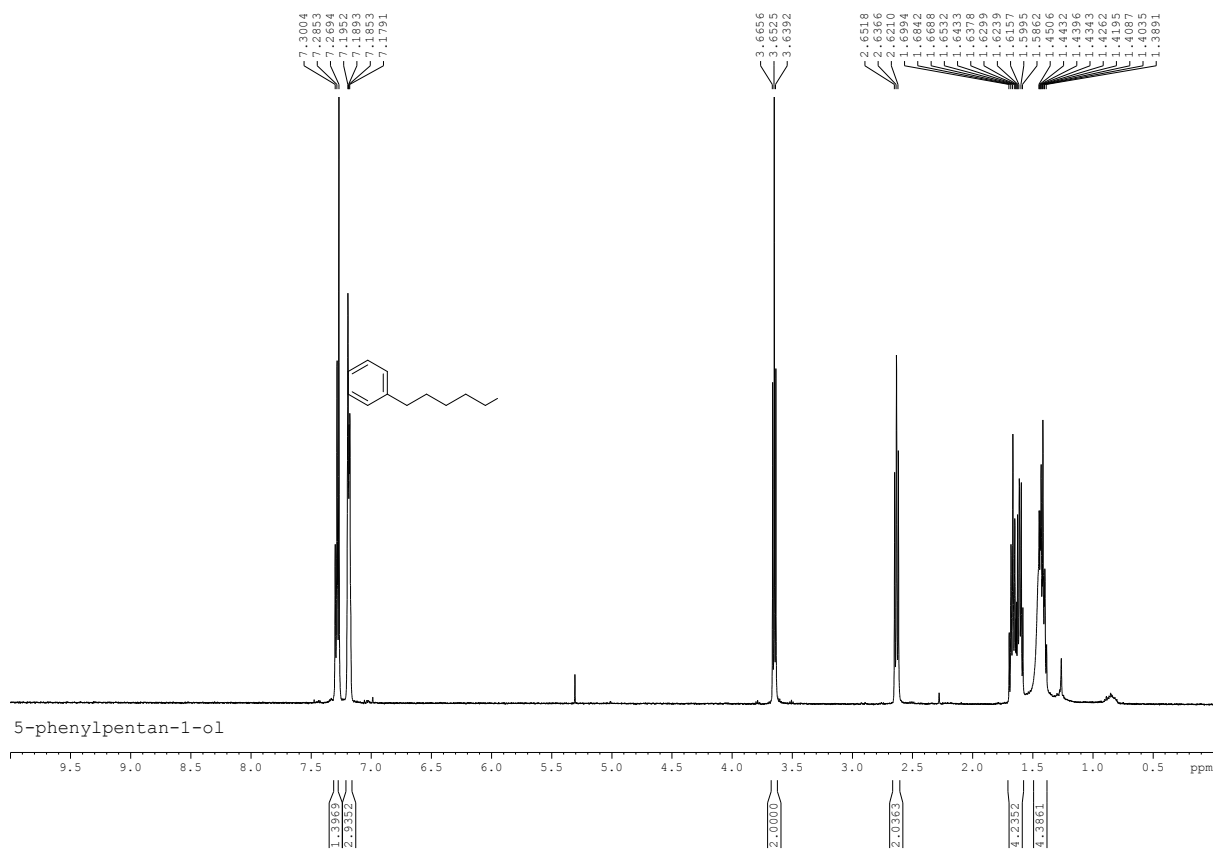












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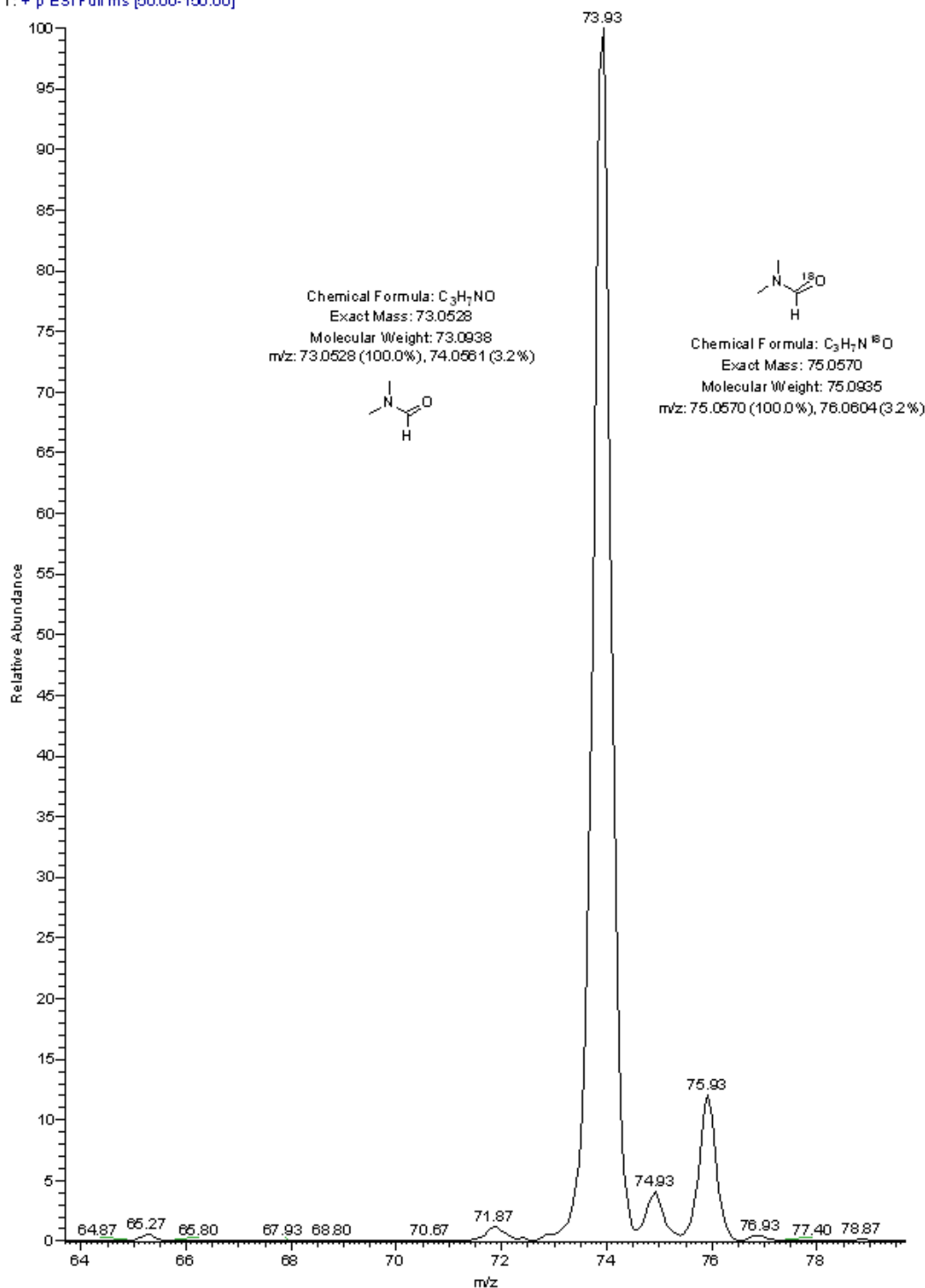
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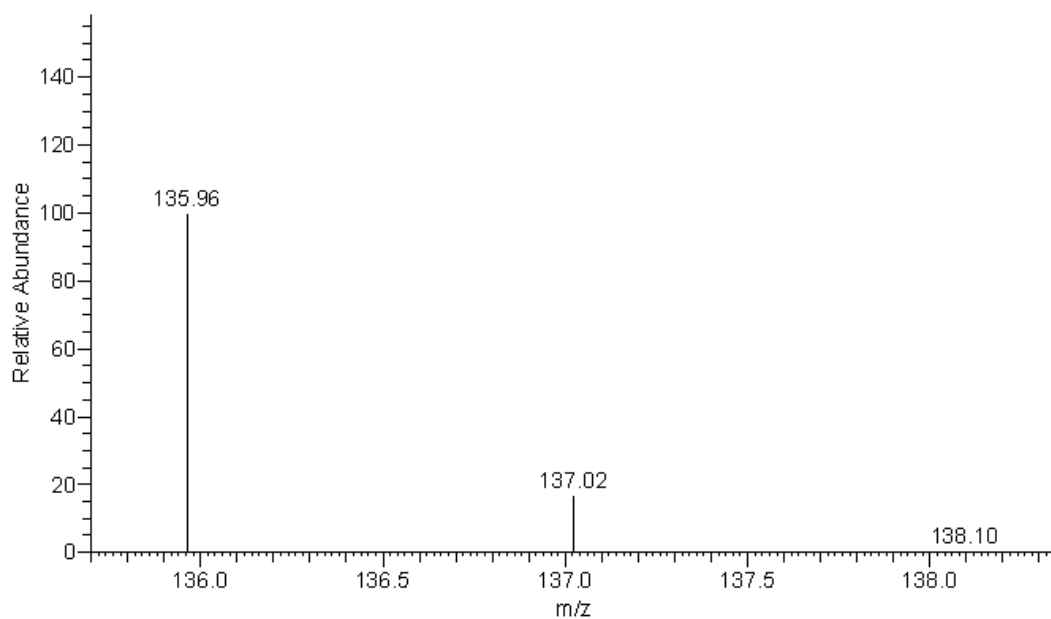
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T: + p ESI Full ms [50.00-150.00]



Mass spectrum of labelled DMF, showing incorporation of ^{18}O (75.93)



m/z	Intensity	Relative
135.96	14595.4	100.00
137.02	2439.1	16.71
138.10	106.1	0.73

Expansion of the mass spectrum of Ph(CH₂)₃OH **24** formed from the experiment conducted in ¹⁸O-enriched DMF. Mass spectrum shows no enrichment of the peak at 138.10 (M+2) compared to the unlabelled peak at 135.96 (M with ¹⁶O present).

