

Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	vi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	viii
Introduction	1
The Total Synthesis of Natural Products.....	2
Steroids.....	3
Steroid Biosynthesis.....	4
The Synthesis of Steroids.....	9
A Free Radical Cascade Approach to the Steroids.....	15
Ring-D Aromatic Steroids.....	17
Results and Discussion: Part 1. A Cascade Radical-Mediated Approach towards Nicandrenone	21
The Development of a Radical Cascade Strategy towards Ring-D Aromatic Steroids.....	23
A Radical-Mediated Macrocyclisation-Transannulation Cascade.....	28
A Ring-D Aromatic Model System.....	33
Syntheses of the Sulfone 122 and the Aldehydes 121a,b	36
Syntheses of the Iododienynones 117a-d	39
The Proposed Radical Cascades from the Precursors 117a-d The Radical Cascades from the <i>Z</i> -Iododienynones 117a,c	41
The Radical Cascades from the <i>E</i> -Iododienynones 117b,d	45
Results and Discussion: Part 2. A Cascade Radical-Mediated Approach towards Veratramine	54

A Ring-D Aromatic Model System.....	57
A Model Stille Coupling Reaction using Vinylcyclopropyl Stannanes.....	59
Retrosynthetic Analysis of the Precursor 161	65
Synthetic Routes to the Radical Precursor 193	66
Synthesis of the Radical Cascade Precursor 193	70
The Macrocyclisation-Transannulation Radical Cascade from the Seleno Ester 193	76
Experimental	85
General Details.....	86
Experimental Details.....	89
Procedures for Compounds 117 to 155	89 to 132
Procedures for Compounds 168 to 248	132 to 166
References	167
Appendix 1 X-Ray Crystallographic Data for Compound 147	
Appendix 2 Cascade radical-mediated cyclisations with conjugated ynone electrophores. An approach to the synthesis of steroids and other novel ring-fused polycyclic carbocycles, G. Pattenden, D. A. Stoker, N. M. Thomson, <i>Org. Biomol. Chem.</i> 2007, 5 , 1776-1788.	
Appendix 3 ¹ H and ¹³ C NMR Spectra for Compound 194b	

Abstract

The work presented in this Thesis describes several new and novel radical macrocyclisation-transannulation cascade reactions directed towards the single step construction of ring-D aromatic steroid ring systems.

The **Introduction** introduces the steroid class of natural products, their biosynthesis and previous literature strategies towards their construction. The ring-D aromatic steroids, together with their possible total synthesis *via* a novel free-radical cascade strategy, are then discussed.

The **Results and Discussion** Chapter summarises the radical cascade strategies towards ring-D aromatic steroid ring systems that have been investigated. It is divided into two sections:

Part 1 describes the evolution of our current radical cascade approaches relating to the iododienynone precursors **117a-d** (Schemes 26-29). We proposed that the precursors **117a-d** would lead to the 6,6,6,6 ring-D aromatic steroid ring system (such as that found in the natural product nicandrenone **67**), *via* a cascade of radical ring-forming reactions. However, the proposed radical cascade from the *Z*-iododienynones **117a,c** halted at the macrocyclisation stage producing the macrocycles **137a,b**, whilst a radical cascade from the *E*-iododienynones **117b,d** instead led to the unusual bridged tricyclic structures **148a,b** and **155** (depending on whether benzene or heptane was

used as the solvent), rather than the anticipated linear tetracycles **116a,b**. A rationale for these outcomes is given.

Part 2 discusses an approach to 6,6,5,6 ring-D aromatic steroids *via* a macrocyclisation-transannulation radical cascade from the vinylcyclopropyl seleno ester precursor **193**. A synthesis of the radical precursor **193** was first examined using a novel aryl-vinylcyclopropane Stille reaction coupling protocol (the development of which is discussed), as well as several alternative routes. A practical, albeit more lengthy, synthesis of the precursor **193**, was then developed. The proposed radical cascade from the vinylcyclopropyl seleno ester **193** led to the desired ring-D aromatic steroid ring system **194a** (with the correct *trans*, *anti*, *trans* stereochemistry) together with the methyl epimer **194b**. Also isolated from the product mixture was the macrocycle **232**, together with the products of reduction and decarbonylation of the acyl radical intermediate **235**, *i.e.* **231** and **230**, and the dioxolane **233**.

The **Experimental** section describes all the procedures used to synthesise the precursor compounds **117a-d** and **193** and the products of their radical mediated cascade cyclisations. Full NMR, and other spectroscopic data, alongside mass spectrometry data are also given.

The **Appendices** include some relevant X-ray and NMR spectroscopic details.