HETEROAROTINOIDS WITH TWO- AND THREE-

ATOM LINKERS AS POTENTIAL

ANTICANCER AGENTS

By

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Bachelor of Science

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By

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL

Introduction

Retinoids can be described as a group of compounds, whether natural or synthetic, that are structurally similar to retinol (1, vitamin A) or 9-*cis*-retinol (2) and that "can elicit



specific biological responses by binding to and activating a specific receptor or set of receptors".¹ Many retinoids have been produced and studied extensively for various therapeutic uses.¹

Vitamin A (1) deficiency has been known to cause epithelial defects since the early 1800° s.² However, in the 1960's Saffiotti and co-workers, as well as Chu and Malmgren, noted that vitamin A (1) had an inhibitory effect on the development of various carcinomas.³ Observations such as these have subsequently led to an explosion of research efforts. It has been found that all-*trans*-retinoic acid (3, *t*-RA), an oxidized



1 [Retinol, Vitamin A]

3 [all-trans-Retinoic acid]

vitamin A, was probably responsible for much of the anti-cancer activity. Since that time, the term "retinoid" has been used to describe any analog of vitamin A regardless of the observed biological activity. All-*trans*-retinoic acid (**3**, *t*-RA), 9-*cis*-retinoic acid (**4**, 9-*c*-RA), 11-*cis*-retinoic acid (**5**, 11-*c*-RA), and 13-*cis*-retinoic acid (**6**, 13-*c*-RA) are some examples of naturally occurring retinoids.¹



6 [13-cis-Retinoic Acid, "Accutane"]

Intense studies of the natural retinoids spawned molecular modification thereof, which has ultimately led to the birth of a wide variety of synthetic retinoids including arotinoids and heteroarotinoids (for more on heteroarotinoids, see the section on Heteroarotinoids and Other Reduced Toxicity Retinoids). Arotiniods, such as Etretinate $(7)^4$ and TTNPB (8),⁵ received the name 'arotinoids' because they have at least one aryl group in the basic structure. Several other types of retinoids are known.¹

AROTINOIDS





Early examples of synthetic retinoids, such as 7 and 8, have been the progenitors of a very large number of molecules that are now being synthesized and screened for potential pharmaceutical use. Natural and some synthetic retinoids are both powerful regulators of cell growth, differentiation, and homeostasis (relative state of equilibrium) in embryos and adult animals of several vertebrate species.⁶ Epidemiologic studies have suggested an inverse correlation between the development of cancer and dietary consumption of vitamin A (1) or beta-carotene.^{7,8} Histologic similarities between the epithelium of vitamin A-deficient organs and neoplastic tissue was first noted by Wolbach and Howe.⁷ In 1955, Lasnitski demonstrated that a pre-malignant phenotype of mouse prostate cancer that had had been induced with the carcinogen 3-methylcholanthrene could be altered by retinoid treatment.⁸ It was shown that in prostate cell cultures retinoid treatment caused the disappearance of atypical epithelial cells that had been induced by the carcinogen, and that the atypical cells were replaced by cells with a more normal morphology. Such epidemiologic studies and animal experiments have thus prompted researchers to test the efficacy of retinoids in the prevention and treatment of cancer in various organ tissues. including skin, stomach, lung, and breast, among several others.⁹

Retinoids have also been employed clinically for the treatment of various skin disorders such as acne, photo-damaged skin, hyperpigmentation, rosacea, actinic keratoses, wrinkles, superficial scarring, and epidermal atrophy.¹⁰⁻¹² In addition, retinoids have found use in the treatment of acute promyelocytic leukemia,^{13,14} in the management of central nervous system tumors,¹⁵ and in the treatment of AIDS-related cutaneous Kaposi's sarcoma.¹⁶ Furthermore, retinoids may find use in proper immune system functioning,¹⁷ as anti-inflammatory agents for dealing with rheumatoid arthritis,¹⁸

and/or as an improved treatment for emphysema.¹⁹ In light of these studies and the ability of retinoids to regulate proliferation and differentiation in both normal and malignant cells *in vitro* and *in vivo*, future investigations and therapeutic applications of retinoids promises to be significant.

Retinoid Receptors

The activity of retinoids is thought to be due, at least in part, to the interaction with and activation of a group of nuclear receptors termed "retinoid receptors".²⁰ Retinoid receptors were identified as being in cell nuclei in 1987,²¹ and there are now known two distinct subfamilies of retinoid receptors, namely Retinoic Acid Receptors²² (RARs—RAR- α , RAR- β , and RAR- γ) and Retinoid X Receptors²³ (RXRs—RXR- α , RXR- β , and RXR- γ), totaling six retinoid receptors. These receptors act as ligand-inducible, transcriptional regulators that transduce the effects of retinoids on cell growth, differentiation, and homeostasis during embryonic development and adult life.²¹ The discovery of the retinoid receptors has thus allowed for an intense investigation to elucidate their structure. Perhaps more importantly, it has provided an essential means that can provide insight into the complex molecular mechanisms by which retinoids influence developmental control of genes and cell differentiation.

Retinoic Acid Receptors (RARs). Chimeric-screening assays of orphan receptors allowed the functional identification of the first retinoic acid receptor, RAR- α , which is a polypeptide composed of 462 amino acid residues.^{22d} In 1987, Petkovich and co-workers,^{21a} as well as Giguere and co-workers,^{22d} independently isolated a human orphan receptor complementary DNA (cDNA) and were able to show that it encoded the first

known retinoic acid-activated transcription factor. This human retinoic acid (RA) receptor was called RAR- α , and it's discovery was pivotal to understanding the action of *t*-RA (3) because it simultaneously provided a mechanistic pathway for the activity of *t*-RA (3), as well as a potential way to identify a set of downstream developmental control genes.

The discoveries of the several loci present in the human genome related to RAR- α , along with the discovery of a family of RAR- α -related genes, provided evidence that other subtypes of the RAR might exist.²⁴ Subsequently, in 1988 a second receptor was found which responded to retinoic acid, and it was called RAR- β .²⁵ Furthermore, in 1989, Chambon and co-workers²⁶ reported the discovery of the third subtype of the RAR and named it RAR- γ . The genes encoding these three highly related RARs map on distinct chromosomes 17q21.1, 3p24, and 12q13 in the human genome.²⁷ Each RAR gene generates multiple isoforms of the receptors, which differ from each other in the number of amino acids that constitute their amino-terminal region (Figure 1).²⁸ Thus, RAR- α has isoforms – RAR- α_1 and RAR- α_2 ,^{28b} RAR- β has four isoforms – RAR- β_1 , RAR- β_2 , RAR- β_3 , and RAR- β_4 ,^{28c} and RAR- γ has two isoforms – RAR- γ_1 and RAR- γ_2 .^{28a} Each isoform of the RARs has a modular structure which can be divided into five distinct domains (A/B-F):

- 1) (domain A/B) ligand-independent activation function (AF-1),
- 2) (domain C) DNA-Binding Domain (DBD),
- 3) (domain D) hinge,
- (domain E) ligand-binding domain (LBD) which contains the ligand-dependent activation function (AF-2), and

Transactivation **DNA-Binding** Hinge Ligand-Binding Domain Function (AF-1) (DBD) Region (LBD) Undefined N-Terminus C-Terminus Zn-F, Zn-T AF-2 H₂N-A/B С D Е F -CO₂H С RAR-a1 A/B D Е F 88 154 200 420 462 1 RAR-a2 1 151 85 197 417 459 95% RAR-β1 90% 88 154 200 1 420 455 95% 90% RAR-B2 147 1 81 193 413 448 95% 90% RAR-β₃ 115 181 227 447 482 1 95% 90% RAR-B4 1 32 98 144 364 399 95% 85% RAR-Y1 90 156 1 202 422 454

5) (domain F) C-terminus (functionally undefined).²⁹

Figure 1. Schematic representation of mouse Retinoic Acid Receptor (RAR) isoforms. The DNA-binding domains (DBD, domain C) and the ligand-binding domains (LBD, domain E) are shown by shaded boxes to denote the highest conserved regions. The percentages within the shaded boxes specify the percent amino acid identity as compared to RAR-α. The numbers below the diagrams indicate domain length as well as the total length of the receptor in terms of amino acid residues.²⁸

193

85%

413 447

95%

147

81

1

RAR-Y2

The N-terminal A/B domain is rich in proline, serine, and threonine (non-acidic amino acid residues) and is important for transcriptional regulation.³⁰ The number and sequence of the amino acid residues within the A/B domain vary in each RAR isoform, and the A/B domain is one of the lowest conserved regions of the receptor (Figure 1).²⁹

Domain C of the RARs is the DNA-binding region, which is responsible for specific recognition of a DNA sequence called the hormone response element [HRE, or for retinoic acid-response element (RARE)].³¹ This domain is comprised of two features called the 'zinc finger'³² and the 'zinc twist' (Figure 2).³³ The P-Box ('zinc finger') is



Figure 2. Schematic representation of the P-Box and D-Box of the RAR DNAbinding domain (DBD). The red-colored circles represent the amino acid residues that are thought to be responsible for specificity of binding to DNA hormone response element RARE.³³

closest to the N-terminus and contains three amino acid residues, which are different in all isoforms of the RARs, and are responsible for the recognition and specificity of binding the RAR to the RARE³⁴ by making contact with DNA through insertion within the major groove of the DNA double helix.³⁵ The 'zinc twist' (D-Box) is responsible for the formation of homo- or heterodimers with other nuclear receptors³⁶ and determines the number of nucleotides which are allowed to separate the two half-sites of RARE.^{31b,37} These fascinating characteristics of the RARs and other DNA-binding receptors are due to the interaction of two zinc ions with eight cysteine residues.^{32,33b} The coordination of each zinc with a separate set of four highly conserved cysteine residues^{32,33b} forms such 'zinc clusters' as illustrated in Figure 2. Domain D has been termed a hinge and contains a nuclear translocation signal.^{29,38}

The E domain is the ligand binding domain (LBD) which contains an overlapping functional domain called the ligand-dependent transactivation function (AF-2).^{21,29} The LBD of the RARs resides at the C-terminus, spans approximately 220 amino acid residues,²⁹ and fulfills multiple functions,³⁹ one of which is to interact with retinoids, such as endogenous ligands *t*-RA (3) or 9-*c*-RA (4). The latter "activates" the receptor (for more information about the interaction of retinoids with the LBD and the resulting activity, see the section on Metabolism and Action of Retinoids).

The human RAR- γ_2 holo-LBD (receptor with ligand bound) crystal structure has been elucidated by Renaud and co-workers (Figure 3).⁴⁰ The LBD of RAR- γ is made up of 220 amino acid residues, which comprise nine α -helical structures in helices 1-12 (H1 to H12), two omega (Ω) loops, and two beta (β) sheets (B1 and B2).⁴⁰ This numbering system was continued from the crystal structure of apo-RXR- α (receptor without ligand bound)⁴¹ which was reported shortly prior to that of RAR- γ . The α -helices were numbered by their resemblance in comparison to RXR- α , but not sequentially. For



Figure 3. The human RAR- γ ligand-binding domain (LBD) crystallographic structure [co-crystallized with *t*-RA (3)].⁴⁰

instance, helices H2, H5, and H11 are omitted from the holo-LBD of the RAR- γ crystal structure because those helices do not exist within the structure after the receptor is bound to a ligand.⁴⁰ The nine α -helices are organized in a three-layer structure with H4, H5, H6, H8, and H9 sandwiched between H1 and H3 on one side and H7, H10, and H11 on

the other.⁴⁰ Two topologically conserved β -strands (B1 and B2) form a β -turn inserted between loop 1-3 (connecting H1 to H3) and H3.⁴⁰

Twenty four amino acid residues of the LBD make up what is referred to as the ligand-binding pocket (LBP).⁴⁰ These residues include Phe201, Thr227, Phe230, Ser231, Leu233, Ala234, Lys236, Cys237, Leu271, Met272, Arg274, Ile275, Arg278, Phe288, Ser289, Gly303, Phe304, Ala394, Arg396, Ala397, Leu400, Met408, Ile412, and Met415.⁴⁰ A sequence alignment of RAR- α , RAR- β , and RAR- γ was also done by Renaud and co-workers⁴⁰ which, interestingly, showed that only three residues in the LBPs were variable. Variations were A234 for RAR- γ (S232 in RAR- α and A225 in RAR- β), M272 in RAR- γ (I270 in RAR- α and I263 in RAR- β), and A397 in RAR- γ (V395 in RAR- α and V388 in RAR- β). These different residues are certainly candidates that could potentially provide receptor isoform selectivity (for more information on receptor selectivity see the section on Toxicity of Retinoids).

The LBD not only contains the essential LBP, but it also contains the functionally important ligand-dependent transactivation function (AF-2, Figure 1) which is located at the C-terminal in α -helix 12 (H12)⁴² of the ligand-binding domain. In addition, the LBD has a structural theme spanned by the amino terminal of H7, the amino terminal of H10, the loop between H9 and H10, and the carboxyl terminal of H9 which provides a dimerization surface for the formation of homo- or heterodimers with other nuclear receptors including the vitamin D₃ receptor, the thyroid hormone receptor, the RXRs, and others.⁴³

Retinoid X Receptors (RXRs). Through further screening assays of orphan receptors, another class of retinoid-responsive transcription factors was discovered, and it

was referred to as retinoid X receptors (RXRs).⁴⁴ The family of RXRs consists of three subtypes, RXR- α , RXR- β , and RXR- γ , as does the RAR group, and the RXRs are approximately 46 kDa in size and display the same structural organization as found in the RARs, that is, the former have a domain comprised of domains A/B-F.⁴⁵ The RXRs even have a 'zinc finger, zinc twist' feature as do the RARs.^{33a} However, a striking observation that came from the cloning of RXR is the apparent dissimilarity of its sequence to that of the RARs.⁴⁴ In fact, RAR is more similar to the thyroid hormone receptor than it is to RXR.^{21b}

As is also true with the RAR family, the RXR proteins are closely related to each other in both their DNA-binding and ligand-binding domains and are encoded by separate genes at distinct chromosomal loci.^{21b,46} The RXR- α , RXR- β , and RXR- γ proteins map on chromosomes 9q34.3, 6p21.3, and 1q22-23, respectively, in the human genome,^{21b,47} and have sequence alignment homologies for DBDs of 92% and 95%, and LBDs of 89% and 86% for RXR- β and RXR- γ , respectively, as compared to RXR- α (Figure 4).^{46,48} In addition, each subtype of the RXR family has two isoforms, namely RXR- α_1 , RXR- α_2 , RXR- β_1 , RXR- β_2 , and RXR- γ_1 and RXR- γ_2 .⁴⁸

Because of the low degree of homology between RARs and RXRs over their entire protein sequences, 61% in the DBDs (the highest similarity) of RAR- α and RXR- α and 27% in their LBDs (Figure 5),⁴⁶ activation of the RXR family of receptors by *t*-RA (3) has not been observed.⁴⁹ However, it was discovered that 9-*c*-RA (4) was a natural ligand for the RXRs⁴⁹ and that 9-*c*-RA (4) could also activate the RARs with potencies comparable to that of *t*-RA (3).⁵⁰ Thus, 9-*c*-RA (4) has been termed a *pan* agonist, because of this ability to bind to more than one type of receptor subtype.⁴⁶



Figure 4. Schematic representation of mouse Retinoic X Receptor (RXR) isoforms. The DNA-binding domains (DBD, domain C) and the ligand-binding domains (LBD, domain E) are shown by shaded boxes to denote the highest conserved regions. The percentages within the shaded boxes specify the percent amino acid identity as compared to RXR-α. The numbers below the diagrams indicate domain length in terms of amino acid residues.⁴⁶



Figure 5. Schematic relationship between the human retinoid receptors RAR- α and RXR- α . The DNA-binding domains (DBD, domain C) and the ligandbinding domains (LBD, domain E) are shown by shaded boxes to denote the highest conserved regions. The percentages within the shaded boxes specify the percent amino acid identity as compared to RAR- α . The numbers below the diagrams indicate domain length in terms of amino acid residues.⁴⁶

The crystallographic structure of the human apo-ligand-binding domain (apo-LBD, no ligand bound) of RXR- α has been reported by Bourget and co-workers^{41a} and is shown in Figure 6. The RXR- α LBD has been described as an antiparallel α -helical sandwich with dimensions of 38 x 74 x 25 Å organized in a three-layered structure.^{41a} Twelve α -helices account for 65 % of the domain, with helices H4-H5, H8, H9, H11, and the N-terminal of H12 sandwiched between H1, H2 and H3 on one side and H6, H7 and H10 on the other.^{40,41a} Two short β -strands (B1 and B2) form a β -hairpin and constitute the only β structure of the domain. The domain of RXR- α also has a dimerization surface comprised of helices H10, H5, and H8, the C-terminal activation function AF-2 sequence (450-FLMEMLE-458), and two proposed ligand binding pocket locations.^{40,41a} More recently, Egea and co-workers^{41b} reported the crystal structure of the human RXR-a ligand-binding domain (holo-LBD) bound to its endogenous ligand 9-c-RA (4). It was reported that 9-c-RA (4) was buried in an essentially hydrophobic pocket formed by residues located on helices H3, H5, H7, H11, and the β -turn (see Figure 6). These residues are conserved in all three RXR subtypes, suggesting difficulty in finding RXR- α , RXR- β , or RXR- γ subtype selective ligands.^{41b}

Retinoid Orphan Receptors. When ligands for receptor-like proteins are initially unknown, the receptors are referred to as "orphan" receptors. Studies of orphan receptors led to the discovery of the two retinoid receptor families RAR and RXR.^{21b} A novel family of steroid hormone nuclear receptor superfamily related to the retinoic acid receptors have been identified by Giguere and co-workers.⁵¹ This family has been termed the ROR- α s. Three isoforms, namely ROR- α_1 , ROR- α_2 , and ROR- α_3 have been



Figure 6. The human RXR-α ligand-binding domain (LBD) crystal structure.^{41a}

reported as sharing common DNA- and putative ligand-binding domains, but are characterized by distinct amino-terminal domains (Figure 7).⁵¹ Distinct DNA-binding properties were observed for each of these isoforms, and these properties were governed by the specific amino-terminal domains.⁵¹ It is believed that the amino-terminal domain and the 'zinc finger' region in the DBD work concurrently to impart high affinity and



Figure 7. Schematic representation of the human Retinoid Orphan Receptor (ROR) isoforms. The DNA-binding domains (DBD, domain C) and the ligand-binding domains (LBD, domain E) are shown by shaded boxes to denote the highest conserved regions. The numbers below the diagrams indicate domain length in terms of amino acid residues.⁵¹

specific DNA-binding characteristics.⁵¹ Both ROR- α_1 and ROR- α_2 activate transcription and bind to DNA as monomers to the ROR hormone response elements (ROREs).⁵¹

Melatonin has been suggested as a natural ligand for the RORs because it is bound to and activates the RORs via concentrations in the low nanomolar range.⁵² Furthermore, melatonin has been shown to exhibit anti-stress and anti-aging properties, and influences various immunological and endocrinological functions.^{52b} The RORs have also been implicated in cholesterol homeostasis⁵³ and bone metabolism.⁵⁴

More recently, another retinoid-related orphan receptor has been reported (ROR- γ), and it has been suggested as being essential for lymphoid organogenesis and controlling apoptosis (programmed cell death) during thymopoiesis.⁵⁵ In addition, a retinoid-related orphan receptor called RZR, whose name was given arbitrarily by its discoverers Carlberg and co-workers,⁵⁶ has been identified. The RZR exhibits a highly restricted brain-specific expression pattern,⁵⁷ and the exact role and function of the RZR has not been determined.⁵⁶ Due to a high expression of RZR in the pineal, thalamus, and hypothalamus glands, it has been suggested that RZR is important for physiological and developmental regulation of the central nervous system and for possible regulation of the circadian rhythm.^{52b} No natural ligand for RZR has yet been identified, but the synthetic thiazolidine diones **11** and **12** have proven to be RZR specific ligands and have shown potent antiarthritic activity.⁵⁸



Distribution of Retinoid Receptors in Organ Tissues

The vast utility of retinoids in biological activities is partially due to the diverse expression of these RAR and RXR genes. The RAR- α isoform is found in most tissues,²¹ but has a major concentration in brain tissue, primarily in the hippocampus and cerebellum, indicating a possible importance in the development and maintenance of the central nervous system.²⁴ RAR- β expression has been found predominantly in the kidney, spinal cord, prostate, pituitary gland, and adrenal gland,^{46,52b} but small concentrations of RAR- β have been detected in the liver, spleen, brain, and genital tract.^{52b} The RAR- γ isoform has been found in high concentration in skin and lung

tissue^{46,59} and in modest concentration in cardiovascular tissue.⁶⁰ As a whole, the RXRs are widely expressed in the adult organism.⁴⁸ RXR- α is abundant in the liver, kidney, spleen, and a variety of visceral tissues.⁴⁸ RXR- β , like RAR- α , is expressed to some extent in nearly all tissues.^{1,25,46} RXR- γ has a more restricted expression, being present most abundantly in muscle and brain tissue.²¹ However, RXR- γ has been found to be co-expressed with RAR- β in the pituitary gland,^{21,46} suggesting a potential role for retinoids in the regulatory cascade associated with hypophyseal differentiation.²¹

Metabolism and Action of Retinoids through Interaction

and Activation of Retinoid Receptors

Vitamin A (Retinol, 1) has no known biological activity, but rather serves as a source substrate for the biosynthesis of functional retinoids.⁶¹ Metabolism of β -carotene (11, Figure 8) or hydrolysis of retinyl esters obtained through dietary sources (both occur in the small intestine)⁶¹ provides endogenous retinol which is then shuffled through the living system by various binding proteins and enzymatic conversions to target cells, where it is ultimately oxidized to retinoic acid and other functional metabolites that are utilized and elicit various useful biological responses.

This metabolic pathway (Figure 8) begins with the central cleavage of β -carotene (occurs in the small intestine) which produces retinaldehyde (12, or simply retinal, Figure 8) that is then bound by cellular retinol-binding protein (CRBP-II) and thus protected from oxidation to retinoic acid [*t*-RA (3)].⁶² However, as Kakkad and Ong have shown,⁶² when bound to CRBP-II, retinal (RCHO) is readily reduced to retinol (ROH) by the



Figure 8. Schematic representation of dietary retinoid metabolism (see text for details).⁶²⁻⁶⁹

mucosal enzyme retinaldehyde reductase (MRR). Both retinol formed from the reduction of retinaldehyde and retinol absorbed as such by the intestinal mucosa is then converted to a retinyl ester [RE, (retinyl palmitate)] for storage in nascent chylomicrons.⁶³ The esterification is accomplished by lecithin:retinol acyltransferase (LRAT), which requires retinol bound to CRBP as a substrate for the esterification reaction.^{63,64} The retinyl esters are then packaged in chylomicrons, along with triacylglycerol and other fat-soluble vitamins, and secreted into the lymphatic system,⁶⁵ where the chylomicrons undergo lipolysis, catalyzed by lipoprotein lipase (LPL).⁶⁶ This lipolysis removes triacylglycerol and gives rise to chylomicron remnants, where the retinyl esters remain to be delivered to the liver.⁶²

In the liver, two different cell types are important for retinoid storage and metabolism, namely the parenchymal cells and the stellate cells.⁶⁷ Parenchymal cells are responsible for the uptake, processing, and secretion of retinoids, while stellate cells store retinoids as retinyl esters (RE).⁶⁷ After arriving at the liver, the chylomicron remnants initially undergo uptake by parenchymal cells, and the retinyl esters are quickly hydrolyzed to retinol by a bile-salt-insensitive retinyl ester hydrolase (REH, this hydrolase may likely provide support in separating the dietary retinoids from the remainder of the dietary lipids being internalized with the chylomicron remnant).⁶⁸ Depending on the dietary needs of the body, some of the dietary retinoid internalized by the parenchymal cells may be secreted directly into the circulation [bound to a retinol-binding protein (RBP), which is produced by parenchymal cells] or transferred to stellate cells for storage.^{62,67} For transport to stellate cells, the retinoid is transferred in the form of retinol and then re-esterfied (by LRAT) to be stored for future use.⁶² Retinol (ROH), produced from retinyl

ester hydrolysis, is bound to a retinol-binding protein (RBP - which protects ROH from oxidation and isomerization) in parenchymal cells, which is the major site for synthesis of RBP.⁶⁹ This RBP-ROH complex is then secreted into the plasma where it further complexes with transthyretin (TTR, a plasma transport protein), thus protecting retinol from degradation in the kidney⁶² and providing delivery support to target cells for utilization.

The exact mechanism of uptake of retinol (1) by a target cell is yet unknown, and is a matter of some controversy.⁷⁰ The published work on this topic can be divided into two opposing views. One view and its supporting data proposes the involvement of a cellsurface receptor for RBP in the cellular internalization of retinol. The other, and more convincing argument, lies in the theory that a cell-surface receptor for RBP does not exist to assist the uptake of retinol (1) by cells (Figure 9).⁷⁰ It is believed that as the TTR-RBP-ROH complex moves in the blood circulation past the plasma membrane of a cell, retinol (1) dissociates from RBP and enters the membrane bilayer (Figure 9).⁷⁰ Thus, this process is considered a "passive transport system". Once inside the bilayer, the retinol rapidly equilibrates between the outer and inner leaflets of the bilaver ("flip-flop"). Apo-CRBP (cellular retinol-binding protein with no bound ligand) may then associate with the retinol in the inner leaflet of the plasma membrane, and, through mass action, may pull additional retinol from the TTR-RBP-ROH complex into the membrane. As retinol is extracted into the cell, it is bound by apo-CRBP (Figure 9), which is specific for retinol (1) and retinal (12) only, and a holo-CRBP-ROH complex is formed.⁷¹ The ratio of holo-CRBP/apo-CRBP controls the conversion of retinol to either retinoic acid or to a cellular retinyl ester via the inhibition of enzyme LRAT by apo-CRBP and the subsequent

Plasma (Bloodstream)



Figure 9. Schematic representation of retinoid metabolism within target cells.⁷⁰⁻⁸⁰

activation of retinyl ester hydrolase (REH).^{72,73} The holo-CRBP also serves as a substrate for microsomal retinol dehydrogenase (RDH) which oxidizes the retinol to retinal (12), that remains bound to CRBP, albeit with less affinity.⁷⁴ It is thought that CRBP also mediates the transfer of retinal from RDH to retinal dehydrogenase (RALDH), which then converts retinal to *trans*-retinoic acid (*t*-RA, **3**).⁷⁵ The newly formed *t*-RA (**3**) is

then bound by cellular apo-retinoic acid-binding protein (apo-CRABP), resulting in holo-CRABP, and the resulting complex has a major role in metabolism of retinoic acid and its delivery to the cell nucleus.⁷⁶ Retinoic acid is metabolized oxidatively through dehydrogenation resulting in the formation of 4-oxo-retinoic acid or 18-hydroxyretinoic acid, which may then undergo further degradation (for more information on retinoic acid metabolites, see the section on Toxicity of Retinoids).⁷⁷

All of the endogenous retinoic acids, *t*-RA (3), 9-*c*-RA (4), 11-*c*-RA (5), and 13-*c*-RA (6), arrive at cell nuclei via a similar route just described (Figures 8 and 9). That is, they originate from their corresponding dietary retinol or from the conversion of all-*trans*-retinyl esters.⁷⁸ Although certain studies have suggested that *t*-RA (3) may be enzymatically isomerized to 9-*c*-RA (4) in certain cells,^{49,79} later studies have illustrated that this likely is not the case.^{38b} Rather it is thought that 9-*c*-RA (4) originates from dietary 9-*cis*-retinol (2) or from the conversion of all-*trans*-retinyl esters, as was just described.⁷⁸

The retinoic acids transported to the nucleus dissociate from CRABP and bind to one of the retinoid receptors [RARs or RXRs – with *t*-RA (**3**), binding is restricted to the RAR isoforms, but with 9-*c*-RA (**4**), a *pan* agonist, binding can occur to RAR and RXR].^{79,80} In RARs and RXRs that have no ligand bound, helix 12 (H12) of the LBD points away from the core of the LBD, thus forming an entry by which the ligand (retinoic acid) may enter the ligand-binding pocket (LBP) of the ligand-binding domain (LBD).^{40,41} It is thought that the carboxylate group of the retinoic acids enter the pocket first, being drawn in via an electrostatic field gradient induced by basic amino acid residues in the LBP.⁴⁰ These residues and the carboxylate end are anchored together by
hydrophobic interactions of the ligand and receptor induced by a bend of H11, creating a continous loop between H10 and H12 and drawing the hydrophobic part of the ligand into the LBP.⁴⁰ Helix H12 then swings in and covers the ligand in the LBP through a "mouse trap" like mechanism, which also involves the formation of a salt bridge (CO₂⁻ •••H-N⁺H₂) between glutamic residues of AF-2 (part of H12) and lysine residues in H4.⁴⁰ The concomitant swinging of H12 unleashes the Ω -loop which flips over underneath H6, carrying along the N-terminal part of H3. In its final position, H12 seals as a 'lid' or 'cap' on the LBP and further stabilizes ligand binding by contributing to the hydrophobic pocket.⁴⁰

After binding the ligand (either retinoic acid or a synthetic retinoid possessing agonistic qualities), the receptors, which exist as tetramers⁸⁰ in the nucleus in the absence of a ligand, dissociate into monomers. Once the tetramers dissociate into monomers due to retinoid binding, the ligand-inependent-transactivation function AF-1 (A/B domain) complexes with transcriptional factors that are specific to the promoter of the target gene.⁸¹ In addition, the dissociation prompts dramatic conformational changes throughout the LBD and directs the receptor toward the formation of homo- or heterodimers via the D-Box (located in the DBD, Figures 1 and 2) and the newly formed dimerization surfaces at the LBD.^{37,40,43,82,83}

The DBDs of the RARs and RXRs not only form homo- or heterodimers between themselves but also with the thyroid hormone receptor (THR) and the vitamin D_3 receptor (VD₃R), which are other nuclear hormone receptors (Figure 10).^{21b} The formation of these various homo- or heterodimers allows for their binding to DNA at

| Response Element | Receptor Dimer |
|------------------|-------------------|
| | (5'-end) (3'-end) |
| DR-1 | RAR RXR |
| DR-1 | RXR RXR |
| DR-2 | RXR RAR |
| DR-3 | RXR VD₃R |
| DR-4 | RXR THR |
| DR-5 | RXR RAR |
| | |

Figure 10. Schematic representation of dimers and their corresponding response element direct repeats (DRs). The arrows below the receptors represent AGGTCA (or related) half-sites.^{21b,31b,46}

specific half-site locations of the promoter region, called hormone response elements (HREs, or this case for retinoic acid, RAREs), thus allowing the mediation of DNA transcription.^{21b,31b} RAREs are nucleotide sequences arranged in direct or inverted repeats spaced by one, two, four, or five nucleotides.^{21b} For instance, a RARE DR-2 designation is assigned to direct polydrome repeats (AGGTCA) spaced by two nucleotides (AA), such as the DNA sequence AGGTC(<u>AA</u>)AGGTCA.⁴⁶ The repeats are well conserved, usually as the sequence AGGTCA or AGTTCA.^{21b} The RAR/RXR heterodimers bind to the direct repeat RAREs in an ordered manner,⁸⁴ such that RXR occupies the 5' (up-stream) half-site and RAR occupies the 3' (down-stream) half-site in DR-2 and DR-5.⁸³ However, the polarity of binding is reversed in the case of the RAR/RXR heterodimer association with DR-1, where the RAR occupies the 5' end and

RXR the 3' end.⁸³ The RXR/RXR homodimer also recognizes DR-1.⁴⁶ The RXR/THR heterodimer recognizes the DR-4,⁸⁵ and the RXR/VD₃R heterodimer recognizes DR-3.⁸⁶

In addition to dimer formation, the agonist-induced conformational change in the transactivation function AF-2 (carboxyl-terminal of the LBD, Figure 1) causes it to bind and form complexes with transcriptional intermediary factors (TIFs), including the estrogen receptor associating protein 160 (ERAP 160),⁸⁷ receptor interacting protein 140 (RIP 140),⁸⁸ TIF 1,^{89,90} unidentified protein profile/thyroid hormone receptor interacting protein 1 (SUG1/TRIP1),⁹¹ and the transcriptional recognition sequence TATA-binding protein (TBP).⁹² As a result of the complex formed between AF-2 and TIFs and the conformational change in the receptor, displacement of transcriptional silencing factors such as nuclear co-repressor (N-Cor), 38b,93 and silencing mediator of retinoic acid and thyroid hormone receptor (SMRT)⁹⁴ in RARs occurs, which, in the absence of an agonist, are bound to the hinge domain (domain D, Figure 1) of the RAR (but not RXR).⁹⁵ The release of the repressors (N-Cor, SMRT) from the hinge region not only depends upon binding of an agonist to the RAR member of a heterodimeric pair but also upon the binding polarity of the heterodimer to the DNA (if the RAR occupies the 3' end, the repressor is released, and if the RAR member of the dimeric pair occupies the 5' end, the repressor remains bound to the RAR).⁹⁶ Retinoic acid receptor homo- or heterodimers are then directed toward DNA to initiate transcription.^{38b,78}

The homo- or heterodimeric pair of receptors binds to the DNA at the corresponding RARE promoter region, where they may help moderate the transcription process.^{93,94} After binding of the dimeric pair to the RARE, the DNA makes a loop and is positioned in such a manner that interaction of the TIFs bound to RAR or RXR, with transcriptional

machinery (elements needed for initiation and specification of transcription) located upand down-stream from the TATA box, is possible (Figure 11).^{93,94}



Figure 11. Schematic representation of the RXR/RAR heterodimer with DNA and its transcriptional machinery.^{44,71} After activation of the receptors by a ligand, the newly formed heterodimer binds to the promoter region (RARE), located upstream from the TATA box, via the DNA-binding domains (DBDs). Due to the loop formation assumed by DNA, the transcriptional intermediary factors (TIFs) bound to the ligand-binding domain (LBD) of the heterodimer are able to 'chemically communicate' with transcriptional machinery proteins, such as TATA binding protein (TBP), etc. The A/B domain, which also recruits TIFs, aids in specificity of DNA binding and 'cross-talk' with enhancers of transcription.^{86,93}

In short, retinoids may effect a cell's homeostasis via this process and may interact

with retinoid receptors as receptor agonists, inverse agonists, pan agonists, antagonists, or

as agents capable of inducing programmed cell death (apoptosis) (for more information on these classifications, see the following section on Classification of Retinoids). Retinoids clearly elicit their biological activities through a very complex pathway consisting of various mechanisms. Some aspects of these mechanisms and pathway are partially understood, but certainly further research is needed to fully comprehend retinoid function and potential medicinal uses.

Classification of Retinoids Based on Their Interaction with Retinoid Receptors

Since the discovery of the retinoid receptors and due to the known therapeutic uses of naturally occurring retinoids,¹⁻¹⁶ and more specifically their anticancer properties,¹³⁻¹⁵ the interest in retiniods has grown astronomically. This interest has spawned the production and study of many new retinoid analogues (synthetic retinoids) to gain further insight into the biological activities manifested by interaction of these compounds with the retinoid receptors.

Synthetic retinoids can be divided into five categories described by their biological activities and interaction with retinoid receptors:

- 1) Agonists,
- 2) Inverse Agonists,
- 3) Pan agonists,
- 4) Antagonists, and
- 5) Agents that induce apoptosis (programmed cell death).

Agonists. Retinoid receptor agonists exhibit their characteristics through interaction and activation of the receptors as is described in the previous section on metabolism and action of retinoids. Synthetic retinoids in this category act in a similar fashion as *t*-RA (3) by interacting with the LBP of the ligand-binding domain (LBD) and thus causing a conformational change of the receptor such that the transcriptional silencing factors^{38b,93,94} are displaced from the hinge region (domain D, Figures 1 and 2) of retinoic acid receptors (RARs).⁹⁵ The displacement of the silencing factors thus allows the receptor to actively *enhance* DNA transcription.^{38b,78,86}

Synthetic retinoid agonists have likely received more scientific attention than any of the other categories thus far, and a large number of them have been synthesized and studied. Three such agents that are currently employed clinically are 13-*cis*-retinoic acid (6),¹ which is also known as "Accutane" and is a prescription commonly issued by dermatologists for the treatment of severe acne, Etretinate (7),⁴ and TTNPB (8).⁵

Inverse Agonists. Another means by which retinoids can influence cell homoestasis is through inverse agonism.⁸⁶ An inverse agonist has been described as a compound which, upon binding to a RAR, causes a shift of receptor activity toward that of an active repressor, as opposed to an active enhancer of transcription when the receptor is activated by an agonist.⁸⁶ Unlike agonists, the conformational change of the receptor that is induced by an inverse agonist *does not* displace the co-repressor from the hinge region (domain D), and, as a result, the RAR is actively involved in the transcriptional *repression* of target genes.^{31b} Examples of retinoids with inverse agonist properties are AGN193109 (**13**), which has been reported to exhibit inverse agonist activity in RAR- γ ,^{97a} and Tazarotene (AGN 190168), a RAR- β /RAR- γ selective synthetic retinoid which has demonstrated anti-inflammatory effects^{97b} and has found use in the treatment of facial acne vulgaris and psoriasis.^{97b,c} Because of the transcriptional repression induced by inverse agonists, these agents may be of value in reducing the propagation of cancerous tissues.



Pan Agonists. A retinoid which possesses agonist qualities is termed a *pan* agonist because of the ability to bind to more than one type of receptor subtype.⁴⁶ A prime example of a *pan* agonist is 9-*c*-RA (4), which can bind to both RARs and RXRs.⁵⁰

It is thought that an unusual conformational adaptation of 9-*c*-RA (4), along with the spatial arrangement of the RAR's binding pocket, allows for RAR binding of 9-*c*-RA (4) (Figure 12).⁴⁰ However, the activation of RAR- γ by 9-*c*-RA (4) was less than the activation of this receptor by *t*-RA (3), whereas with RAR- α and RAR- β , the activation by 9-*c*-RA (4) equaled, or in some instances surpassed, the activation of these two receptors by *t*-RA (3).⁹⁸ From the crystallographic structures of RAR- γ [co-crystallized with *t*-RA (3) and 9-*c*-RA (4)], it was pointed out that a possible reason for the activity difference is that RAR- γ binds 9-*c*-RA (4) less favorably than RAR- α and RAR- β due to the interaction of 9-*c*-RA (4) with amino acid residue M272 (which is in H5, see Figure 12).⁹⁹ Supporting this view is the data reported by Renaud and co-workers,⁴⁰ who performed energy minimization calculations to generate the most likely confirmation of 9-*c*-RA (4) in the LBP of RAR- γ . Renaud also suggested that the lower affinity of 9-*c*-RA (4) for RAR- γ (as compared to RAR- α and RAR- β) could be explained by a steric



Figure 12. Schematic representation of minimum energy conformations of *t*-RA (3) and 9-*c*-RA (4) within the retinoic acid receptor (RAR) ligand-binding pockets (LBPs).⁴⁰

hindrance between the carbon in the 19 position (C19) of 9-*c*-RA (4) and M272 in H5, which corresponds to an isoleucine residue in RAR- α and RAR- β .⁴⁰ The interaction of the C19 of 9-*c*-RA (4) with less bulky residues in RAR- α (I270) and RAR- β (I263)

results in a smaller distortion of the "active" conformation of the LBP.⁹⁹ Interestingly, mutation of the amino acid residue phenylalanine 230 (P230) by glycine (P230 to G230) in RAR- γ resulted in the inactivation of the receptor.^{31b} Therefore, P230 may not be important for selectivity of ligand binding, yet it should be taken into consideration because of its function as a "switch" between activity and inactivity of the receptor and its close proximity to A234 and M272.⁵⁰

In contrast, activation of the RXRs by *t*-RA (**3**) has not been observed.^{46,49} One possible explanation for this is that homologues of the A397 (valines in RAR- α and RAR- β) are leucine residues in all RXRs.⁴⁹ In RXRs, it is thought that these leucine residues interact with the C19 methyl group of 9-*c*-RA (**4**) and, as a result, these bulkier residues impose size restrictions on ligands for the receptor.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, isoleucine 275 (1275) in the LBP of RARs corresponds to the phenylalanine 313 (P313) in RXR, and the orientation of P313 sterically interferes with the binding of the more 'extended' *t*-RA (**3**). This problem may be overcome by 9-*c*-RA (**4**) because it can adopt a low energy "curved" conformation (Figure 12), which will allow it to fit into the LBP.⁵⁰ Moreover, in contrast to RARs, the amino acid sequence alignment of the LBD of RXRs does not reveal any significant differences within the RXR subtypes.¹⁰⁰ This suggests potential difficulties in designing ligands that are RXR subtype selective.

Antagonists. While agonists *enhance* DNA transcription and inverse agonists *repress* transcription, retinoid antagonists may serve to deactivate certain oncogenic proteins such as activation protein-1 [(AP-1), c-fos and c-jun gene products], nuclear factor-kappaB[(NF-κB) activator for c-myc, egr-1, LRF-1 cancer genes], and nuclear factor-

IL6(NF-IL6),⁸² which are all associated with the malignant transformation of cells.¹⁰¹ Deactivation of such cancer genes would thus promote normal cell differentiation.⁸²

The precise mechanism for the binding of an antagonist to the LBP of RARs or RXRs. and the subsequent receptor activity, is not well understood. It has been proposed that an antagonist enters the LBP in the same manner as an agonist.⁹⁹ However, because of structural differences between agonists and antagonists, the AF-2 of the LBD in not able to establish the same salt bridge between H12 and H4. The result is that the receptor undergoes a different conformational change than the one induced by an agonist.^{31b} Induced conformational changes by ligands depend on the structure of the LBP, which in turn suggests that what is perceived as an antagonist in one receptor isoform may be perceived as an agonist in another.^{31b,85} The differences in conformational changes of the receptors' dimeric pair, induced by antagonist binding, may cause the receptors to be incapable of complex formation with RAREs.^{85,86} However, an antagonist-induced conformation of a receptor can bind the AP-1, NF-KB, or NF-IL6.⁸² The binding of a RAR/RXR heterodimer to AP-1, and/or NF-KB, and/or NF-IL6, or binding with transcriptional intermediary factors (TIFs), such as cyclic-AMP-binding protein (CBP), and competitively displacing these oncogenic proteins, protects DNA from such influence and essentially silences the activity of AP-1, NF-KB, or NF-IL6.⁸² Deactivation of oncogenic proteins (such as AP-1 or NF-kB), or reduction in their activity, reverses the action of the transcriptional machinery, and normal cell differentiation takes place.⁸² Examples of retinoid antagonists include LE 135 (14),¹⁰² which has been reported to bind with high affinity to RAR-B and have potent AP-1 activity inhibition, and BMS 614 (15).⁹⁹ which was reported to possess highly specific RAR- α antagonistic effects.



In addition, antagonists are also capable of competitively antagonizing both agonists and inverse agonists,¹⁰³ which may provide the reduction of certain toxic side effects associated with high dosages of certain retinoids.¹⁰⁴ For instance, studies have demonstrated¹⁰⁵ that certain retinoid antagonists were not only able to block topical irritation induced by treatment with TTNPB (8) and *t*-RA (3), but they were also able to inhibit retinoid-induced weight loss.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, certain retinoid agonists have been shown to enhance replication of several viruses, including HIV-1 and human cytomegalovirus.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, the effects of retinoid antagonists may be utilized as a means of suppressing viral replication.

Koch and co-workers¹⁰⁸ have reported the synthesis and activity of a RXR homodimer antagonist **16** called LG100754. The data presented demonstrated that LG100754 (**16**) displayed high binding affinity for the RXRs and was a potent inhibitor of the known RXR agonist Targretin (**17**, LGD1069) at all three RXR subtypes.¹⁰⁸ The structural



attributes of **16** necessary for RXR homodimer antagonist activity included the size for the 3-alkoxy group on the tetrahydronaphthyl moiety (longer groups providing higher antagonist activity) and the nature of the olefin geometry at C6 (cis geometry being essential for RXR antagonist activity).¹⁰⁸ Such an RXR antagonist could certainly function as a versatile tool for deciphering specific components of transcriptional responses.

Apoptosis. Another use of retinoids in the control of cell homeostasis lies in the ability to induce programmed cell death, or apoptosis.¹⁰⁹ Initiation of this process may be accomplished by the binding of an agonist and/or antagonist to a retinoid receptor and the receptor acting through mechanisms as described above for agonists and antagonists (Figure 11 and related descriptions).^{85,93,94,102} Apoptosis is a part of normal cell differentiation,⁸² and cells from multi-cellular organisms self-destruct when they are no longer needed or have become damaged.¹⁰⁹ Ozato and co-workers¹¹⁰ reported that retinoids cause rapid and extensive apoptosis in P19 EC cells. It was indicated that apoptosis is a receptor mediated process and that RAR binding is essential for the cell death to occur.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, RXR selective ligands alone were unable to induce apoptosis but were cooperative when combined with a RAR specific ligand.¹¹⁰ Retinoids have also been shown by Nagy and co-workers¹¹¹ to induce both differentiation and death

of HL-60 cells. In the study, RAR specific compounds were unable to induce apoptosis, but were able to induce normal cell differentiation.¹¹¹ In contrast, receptor *pan* agonists induced differentiation which was followed by apoptosis of many of the differentiated cells.¹¹¹ A study involving breast cancer cells provided evidence that vitamin D derivatives may promote active cell death, but that 9-*c*-RA (4) further enhanced apoptosis induction within this scenario.¹¹² Perhaps this is an indication that the RXR/VD₃R heterodimer is involved in the homeostasis of breast cells.

An example of an agent capable of inducing programmed cell death is the synthetic retinoid N-(4-hydroxyphenyl)retinamide (18, 4-HPR). Wang and Phang^{112a} found that 4-HPR (18) was able to induce apoptosis in breast cancer cells. It was reported that the



addition of 4-HPR (18) to cultures resulted in a concentration- and time-dependent decrease in the mRNA level for Bcl-2, an anti-apoptotic protein.¹¹² In addition, studies have shown that 4-HPR (18) induced programmed cell death in a variety of human tumor cell types, including melanoma,^{113a} head and neck,^{113b} prostate,^{113c} leukemia,^{113d} and ovarian carcinomas.^{113e} In addition, 4-HPR (18) has demonstrated the ability to inhibit cancer cell proliferation in various tissues, including the colon,^{114a} ovary,^{113e,114b} and prostate.^{114c} However, there is some evidence which suggests that 4-HPR (18) acts independent of retinoid receptor activation.¹¹⁵ Guruswamy and co-workers^{113e} reported that at lower concentrations ($\leq 1 \mu$ M) 4-HPR (18) acted like classic retinoids by inducing cell differentiation through a receptor-dependent mechanism. At higher concentrations

($\geq 1 \ \mu$ M, concentrations above those achieved in clinical chemoprevention trials) 4-HPR (**18**) appeared to induce apoptosis through retinoic acid, receptor-independent mechanisms.^{113e} Although, the exact mechanism by which 4-HPR (**18**) exhibits its action is a matter of some controversy,^{112b,113e,115,116} the enhanced anti-cancer properties of 4-HPR (**18**), as compared to *t*-RA (**3**), appear to be due to a single structural modification as certain studies suggest.^{112b,113e,115,116} This modification pertains to the presence of a 4-hydroxyphenylamide functionality on the polar end of molecule **18**, which is not found in *t*-RA (**3**). Therefore, this particular functionality may be worth consideration for incorporation into new agents for potential apoptotic qualities.

Certainly there are many more retinoids that can be classified into the categories listed here. Madler¹¹⁷ and Klucik¹¹⁸ have each catalogued a good number of retinoids along with the corresponding retinoid receptor selectivities, biological activities, and toxic properties. These efforts serve to underscore the potential which retinoids have for therapeutic use in a variety of disorders. In addition, such studies illustrate the need for further examination of retinoids, which may help to elucidate structure-activity relationships, the complex mechanistic pathways initiated by retinoids, and ultimately provide more potent and selective treatments for various types of cancer.

Measurement of Retinoid Biological Activity

Several methods exist for the detection of RAR or RXR ligand-induced activities. One of the most frequently employed methods is the use of reporter assays to measure quantitatively the transcriptional activity of RAR and RXR homo- or heterodimers.¹¹⁹ The reporter plasmid construct (Figure 13) is comprised of a reporter gene, such as β -



Figure 13. Schematic representation of a reporter plasmid for measuring transcriptional activity of a RAR or RXR after activation by a ligand.¹¹⁹ The arrows represent AGGTCA (or related) half-sites and DR represents the direct repeat nucleotide spacing (see text for details).

galactosidase or luciferase, whose product can easily be detected and measured (detection, and the measurement is usually accomplished via methods such as isotopic labeling or fluoresence).¹¹⁹ The reporter gene is driven by a minimal promoter containing a TATA motif and a RARE.¹¹⁹ At the 5' end immediately upstream from the RARE is a "silencer" (SIL) that acts to dampen spurious transcriptional read-through originating from upstream vector sequences.¹¹⁹ In addition, there are several antibiotic selective genes (AB^r), restriction sites (RS), and an origin of replication (OR) to ensure proper functioning and analysis of the RAREs transcriptional influence on the reporter gene.¹¹⁹ Such assays have the advantage of detecting retinoid transcriptional activity directly after it is initiated, thus avoiding any potential measurement errors that could result from cascade events.

Toxicity of Retinoids

Retinoids do exhibit a variety of useful biological responses. However, certain retinoids can produce severe toxic side effects, and some retinoids are reported as having teratogenic properties (causing birth defects).¹²⁰ The toxicity of retinoids is well documented.^{22a,117,120} and it has proven to be a significant problem following chronic administration of retinoids, resulting in a condition referred to as "hypervitaminosis A" (vitamin A toxicity).¹²⁰ The general signs of hypervitaminosis A include reduced food intake, weight loss, weakness, reduced motor activity, bone and skin lesions, and, in extreme scenarios, possibly death.¹²⁰ Both naturally occurring retinoids, such as t-RA (3) and 13-c-RA (6), as well as synthetic retinoids, such as the arotinoids etretinate (7) and TTNPB (8), have demonstrated at least some toxic and/or teratogenic properties.¹²⁰ For instance, birth malformations in babies born to mothers exposed to isotretinoin (13-c-RA, 6) or etretinate (7) during pregnancy have been reported.¹²⁰ The body parts most consistently affected by both drugs are the cranium and face, central nervous system, heart, and thymus.¹²⁰ It is also suspected that 13-c-RA (6) may effect the intellectual performance of children whose mothers took the drug during pregnancy, even when no structural abnormalities were observed in the children.¹²⁰

TTNPB (8), a conformationally restricted aromatic analogue of *t*-RA (3), is a more potent inducer of RAR transcriptional activity than *t*-RA (3) even though 8 has a binding concentration for RARs that is approximately 10 times lower that that of *t*-RA (3).¹²¹ However, TTNPB (8) is approximately 1000 times more toxic than *t*-RA (3).¹²¹ It has been suggested that the higher activity and toxicity of TTNPB (8) is due to an inability to complex with CRABP.¹⁰⁶ CRABP helps regulate the levels of retinoic acid in the cell

and its transport to the nucleus where *t*-RA (3) interacts with RARs.¹²¹ Since TTNPB (8) is not bound by CRABP as effectively as is *t*-RA (3), its concentration is unregulated, and thus its metabolism is slowed. Therefore, TTNPB (8) remains in the cell and nucleus for longer periods of time, allowing more interaction with RARs, which may be a contributing factor to the observed toxicity of TTNPB (8).¹²¹

Another factor attributed to retinoid toxicity (especially endogenous retiniods) is the oxidized metabolites resulting from retinoid degradation.¹²⁰ For instance, some oxidized metabolites of *t*-RA (3), including 19-21, have been isolated, studied, and found to be toxic and/or teratogenic.^{120,122}



Although the retinoids mentioned thus far possess toxic properties, they do exhibit quite useful qualities, especially in the treatment of various types of cancer.¹ Furthermore, current studies on heteroarotinoids (another type of synthetic retinoid)^{50,123,113e} and other synthetic retinoids that may prove to be retinoid receptor subtype specific¹²⁴ may help provide future, selective and less toxic treatments for certain types of cancer.

Heteroarotinoids and Other Reduced Toxicity Retinoids

The teratogenicity¹²⁰ and/or toxic manifestations^{120,124} exhibited by endogenous retinoids, such as t-RA (3) and 9-c-RA (4), as well as synthetic arotinoids, such as the clinically employed Etretinate (7) or TTNPB (8), have limited the use of such compounds. Thus, the study of heteroarotinoids originated as an attempt to mimic the anti-carcinogenic action of retinoids while at the same time reducing unwanted side effects. Heteroarotinoids (such as 22-26) constitute a class of synthetic retinoids that







structurally resemble arotinoids (such as 7 and 8) in that at least one aryl moiety is present within the molecule. However, heteroarotinoids contain an aryl-fused, heterocyclic ring as a modification, and several studies have shown that some heteroarotinoids demonstrate promising inhibition of various cancers as well as reduced toxicity.^{20a,50,123,125,126} For instance, it has been reported that structure **22** (where X = S or O) demonstrated a toxicity approximately **3-fold less** than that of *t*-RA (**3**) and **3000-fold less** than that of TTNPB (**8**).¹²⁵ In addition, sulfur heterarotinoid **24** has been reported to possess excellent anti-cancer properties as well as reduced toxicity.^{113e,123} Compound **24** appeared to possess *pan*-agonist properties and showed powerful anticancer properties against SCC-38 head and neck squamous cell carcinoma lines in nude mice, as compared to *t*-RA (**3**).¹²³ Complete tumor regression was noted in 3 of 5 mice treated with *t*-RA (**3**) and 4 of 5 mice treated with heteroarotinoid **24**.¹²³

Another approach that can be taken for decreasing the toxicological effect of retinoids is the design of agents that are retinoid receptor subtype selective. As is discussed in a previous section on the distribution of retinoid receptors in organ tissues, the retinoid receptors have a diverse expression pattern throughout the tissues of the body, which may explain the vast array of effects exhibited by retinoids.^{21c,124} This diverse expression pattern may also help explain the various side effects attributed to some retinoids, especially those that are not receptor subtype selective.

Some studies^{99,124,127} suggest that the presence of a three-atom 'linker' group (a linker group is a moiety connecting the two aryl rings) within an arotinoid may increase specificity for the RARs. Other studies also demonstrated that a linker with an attached, non-bulky functionality capable of hydrogen bonding via proton donation (such as via an –OH) enhances RAR- γ selectivity.^{99,124,127,128} Klaholz and co-workers¹²⁴ have provided strong evidence that may explain RAR- γ selectivity of an agent possessing a linker group with an attached –OH. Through computer aided crystallopraphic studies, Klaholz and co-workers¹²⁴ have clearly demonstrated that a hydrogen bond may exist between a hydroxyl group attached to the linker of a retinoid and the sulfur atom of M272 on α -helix 5 (H5,

Figure 12 and related text) of RAR- γ . The study was accomplished by separately cocrystallizing RAR- γ -selective agonists, such as BMS184394 (27) and BMS270394 (28) with the human RAR- γ LBD. It was shown that a hydrogen bond may exist between the hydroxyl group of such agents and M272 of RAR- γ . Thus, the amino acid residue M272 should be considered in designing potential RAR- γ -selective agents. Klaholz¹²⁴ also



noted that steric hindrance involving the hydrophobic region of a ligand with S232 of H3 (Figure 12), which corresponds to A234 in RAR- γ and A225 in RAR- β , may also be considered in designing retinoid receptor subtype-selective compounds. Certainly, an agent with these structural characteristics could be useful for the specific treatment of disorders such as melanoma or vulvarian carcinomas, due to a high expression of RAR- γ in both skin⁵⁹ and urogenital tissues.¹²⁹

By combining these two approaches (heteroarotinoids with a three-atom linker that may aid in receptor subtype selectivity), an agent could potentially be produced that has much reduced toxicity and could be utilized for the treatment of select types of cancer. It is conceivable that by constructing an agent possessing a semi-flexible three-atom linker with self-capability of hydrogen bonding through proton donation, higher RAR- γ specificity may be achieved. This could further reduce the undesired side effects of retinoids. In fact, three heteroarotinoids (29-31) possessing a novel urea functionality as



a three-atom linker group were recently produced by this lab and demonstrated potentially useful results.^{113e} The urea group was chosen as a three-atom linker due to its somewhat flexible nature which could accommodate a better fit into the RARs, and therefore enhance activation. Moreover, a urea group provides two –NH- groups capable of hydrogen bonding with the receptor, thus possibly improving RAR- γ selectivity.^{99,124,127,128} All three heteroarotinoids induced apoptosis in both monolayer and organotypic cultures of OVCAR-3, Caov-3, and SK-OV-3 ovarian carcinoma cell lines, with few toxic side effects.^{113e} Moreover, programmed cell death was induced by heteroarotinoids **29-31** at clinically achievable concentrations [$\leq 1 \mu$ M, a trait that *has not* been observed with 4-HPR (**18**) which is employed clinically].^{113e} These results certainly suggest that further investigation of such compounds is warranted and demonstrate promise as effective chemoprevetion agents for ovarian cancer.

CHAPTER II

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Modified Oxygen and Sulfur Heteroarotinoids

The goal of this project was multi-faceted, being directed toward the production of various sulfur- and oxygen-containing heteroarotinoids, which were designed to be potentially RAR- γ selective, RXR subfamily selective, to possess *pan* agonist qualities, or possess the ability to induce programmed cell death (apoptosis). Heteroarotinoids **32**-**47** (shown below), containing various structural features, which may provide these characteristics (for details on intended biological characteristics resulting from these structural features see the Biological Activity section in this chapter), were synthesized and have been classified under three categories based on structural similarities of the 'linker' groups between the aryl rings of the compounds:

- 1) Heteroarotinoids containing a two-atom linker group (32-36),
- 2) Heteroarotinoids containing a three- or four-atom linker group (37-45), and
- Heteroarotinoids containing a 4-hydroxyphenylamide moiety as a 'polar tail' group (46-47).









HN

.CO₂H



















Synthesis of Key Intermediates

Several synthetic intermediates were required for the production of the desired heteroarotinoids **32-47**. Specifically, the target heteroarotinoids were constructed by utilizing four key intermediates **48a,b-50a**, whose synthesis has been described below.



Amines 48a and 48b. It was visualized that the reaction sequence $51 \rightarrow 52 \rightarrow 53 \rightarrow 54a$ and $54b \rightarrow 48a$ and 48b, as illustrated in Scheme 1, would provide the key intermediate

Scheme 1



amines **48a** and **48b**. The 6-isomer **48a** could then be utilized to obtain the desired heteroarotiniods **32**, **33**, **39-41**, and **47** while the 8-isomer **48b** could be used to synthesize compounds **34**, **35**, and **42-44**. Therefore, lactone **51** was prepared by modification of a known method,¹³⁰ and boiling **51** in dry THF with excess methylmagnesium bromide for 4 days led to crude diol **52** as a clear yellow solid. Upon recrystallization (petroleum ether) of the yellow solid, pure **52** was obtained in excellent yield (80%). Dehydration-cyclization of diol **52** using phosphoric acid and phosphorous pentoxide (H₃PO₄/P₂O₅) resulted in the generation of chroman **53** in reasonable yield (68%) after purification by vacuum distillation. Nitration of **53** using a nitric acid/acetic anhydride (HNO₃/Ac₂O) mixture¹³¹ at -5 °C afforded the two nitro compound isomers **54a** (6-isomer) and **54b** (8-isomer) in an overall yield of 69% (43% and 26%, respectively). The two resulting isomers (**54a** and **54b**) were partially separable by flash column chromatography using the unusual solvent combination hexanes:ethyl ether (20:1).

A search for a clean, straightforward reduction procedure to accomplish the conversion of nitro compounds **54a** and **54b** to the corresponding amines **48a** and **48b** was initiated. Reduction of nitroarenes to the corresponding aniline derivatives is a common process and a useful tool for the production of key amines that can be utilized for the generation of a variety of desired products. However, many of the protocols required pressurizing reaction vessels with explosive H_2 gas or employed expensive reagents such as tin/hydrochloric acid or tin (II) chloride/hydrochloric acid.¹³² Furthermore, many of these procedures provided modest yields at best. The reported

procedure for the synthesis of $50a^{123}$ using a solution of titanium (III) chloride in HCl was considered. However, the method required the use of a very large excess of TiCl₃/HCl, which was quite expensive, and the reaction workup was complicated and required the handling of titanium salts.

Finally, an assessment was made of the reduction of nitroarenes published by Owsley and Bloomfield.¹³³ Some modifications of the method were instituted for the conversion of **54a** and **54b** to the desired amines **48a** and **48b** (Scheme 1). The reaction was carried out by boiling a mixture of **54a** or **54b** in absolute EtOH for 12 hours using glacial acetic acid as a proton source and iron powder as the reducing agent. The reaction workup was simple, and the by-products were only H₂O and iron (III) acetate, which were readily soluble in water and easily removed. It was found that the resulting amines **48a** and **48b** could be well separated (substantially better than the precursor nitro compounds) via flash chromatography [hexanes:ethyl ether (1:1)] and thus be obtained in high purity but in somewhat modest yields [6-isomer **48a** (42%) and 8-isomer **48b** (31%)]. Therefore, rather than purifying the nitro compounds **54a** and **54b** individually, immediate reduction of the crude mixture of the two isomers to the corresponding amines **48a** and **48b** was easily accomplished and separation of the latter via chromatography was very facile.

Phenol 49. It was reasoned that the use of known lactone 55^{134} in the conversion $55 \rightarrow 49$ (Scheme 2) would provide phenol 49 that could be used for the synthesis of

Scheme 2



desired heteroarotiniods 36 and 45. Lactone 55^{134} was stirred with excess methylmagnesium bromide in dry THF for 2 days at room temperature. Upon workup of the reaction with saturated, aqueous NH₄Cl, the crude product obtained was then immediately dissolved in glacial acetic acid, and the resulting solution was heated gently with stirring for 2 hours. After aqueous workup, washing with saturated NaHCO₃ solution, and subjecting the crude product to flash chromatography [Et₂O:hexanes (5:1)], pure phenol 49 was obtained (40%).

Amines 50a and 50b. It was envisioned that the reaction sequence $56 \rightarrow 57a$ and 57b, as illustrated in Scheme 3, would provide the 6- and 8-isomeric nitro compounds 57a and



Scheme 3

57b, which could be used in the conversions $57a \rightarrow 50a$ and $57b \rightarrow 50b$ (Scheme 3) and thus provide key intermediate amines 50a and 50b. The 6-isomer 50a could then be utilized to obtain the desired heteroarotinoids 37, 38, and 46, and 50b could be used to synthesize other 8-isomer heteroarotinoids. Although the conversion $56 \rightarrow 57a \rightarrow 50a$ is known,¹²³ different conditions were employed here.

The reaction sequence (Scheme 3) began with the nitration of known thiochroman 56^{126a} using a HNO₃/Ac₂O mixture¹³¹ at -5 °C and stirring the reaction mixture for 1.5 hours. The two resulting isomers [57a (6-isomer) and 57b (8-isomer)] were partially separable by flash column chromatography using hexanes:ethyl acetate (5:1) and provided the nitro compounds 57a and 57b in modest yields (26% and 10%, respectively). However, in this case only 1 equivalent of the nitrating agent was used, as compared to 2 equivalents in the reported procedure,¹²³ with essentially no reduction in the reaction yield of the desired nitro compound 57a (27% being reported previously). The reduced yield of 57a can be partially explained by a competitive side reaction leading to sulfoxide 57c (the sulfoxide structure was suggested by IR and NMR analyses). The sulfoxide 57c was also separated from the crude reaction product mixture as a major component (57%).

Reduction of the nitro groups in 57a and 57b (Scheme 3) was achieved via a modification of the method¹³³ described above (in the conversion 54a and/or 54b \rightarrow 48a and/or 48b). The nitro compound 57a or 57b was placed in absolute EtOH, along with iron powder and glacial AcOH, and the resulting mixture was stirred at reflux for 12 hours. Again it was noted that the resulting amines 50a and 50b could be well separated (substantially better than the precursor nitro compounds, as was the case for 48a and 48b)

via flash chromatography [hexanes:ethyl acetate (2:1)] and thus be obtained pure, albeit in somewhat modest yields [6-isomer 50a (40%) and 8-isomer 50b (30%)]. Therefore, rather than purifying the nitro compounds 57a and 57b, reduction of the crude mixture of these two isomers to the corresponding amines 50a and 50b (as in the production of 48a and 48b discussed above) was performed and separation of the isomeric amines by flash column chromatography was again accomplished easily. Although the previous method¹²³ reported a yield of 50% for amine 50a from the reduction of the nitro group in 57a, our iron/acetic acid approach, provided a low cost and a simple reaction workup and resulted in only a slightly reduced yield.

Synthesis of Heteroarotinoids Possessing Two-Atom Linker Groups

Oxygen Heteroarotinoids with a Linker Group Placed at the 6-Position of a Tetramethylchroman Moiety (32 and 33). Amine 48a was first employed to produce desired heteroarotinoids 32 and 33 via the conversion $48a \rightarrow 32 \rightarrow 33$ as demonstrated in Scheme 4. The conversion of $48a \rightarrow 32$ was completed by simply adding the *mono*-methyl terephthaloyl chloride (58) in one portion to amine 48a which was dissolved in benzene containing a small amount of pyridine. After purification, amide 32 was thus obtained in reasonable yield (70%). Interestingly, acid chloride 58 was first prepared via a modified procedure developed by this lab.¹³⁵ The procedure required the addition of a large excess of thionyl chloride (SOCl₂), containing a few drops of DMF, to *mono*-methyl terephthalate (59) and then stirring the resulting mixture in an ice bath. Continued stirring for an additional 12 hours followed while allowing the reaction mixture to warm slowly to room temperature. However, yields of 58 by this method only





averaged approximately 50%. Therefore, a procedure by Yli-Kauhalouma and coworkers¹³⁶ for synthesizing **58** was employed (Scheme 4) with slight modification. Commercially available *mono*-methyl terephthalate (**59**) was placed in a reaction flask along with an excess of $SOCl_2$ (~7 eq). The mixture was then stirred at reflux for 12 hours, and excess $SOCl_2$ was removed under reduced pressure to give the desired acid chloride **58** (96%). Furthermore, **58** could be characterized by IR and NMR analyses which indicated a high purity product.

Compound 33 was produced via a reported method¹³⁵ that involved saponification of ester groups (as has 32) with 2 N NaOH under mild conditions to avoid cleaving sensitive amide linkages present within the molecule (Scheme 4). Upon acidification of the

reaction mixture (pH~2) using 2 N HCl, acid **33** precipitated and was then filtered and recrystallized [ethyl acetate:hexanes (2:1)] to give the pure product **33** (73%).

Oxygen Heteroarotinoids with a Linker Group Placed at the 8-Position of a Tetramethylchroman Moiety (34 and 35). Heteroarotinoids 34 and 35 were prepared from amine 48b in the conversion $48b \rightarrow 34 \rightarrow 35$ (Scheme 5), following the same reaction conditions applied for $48a \rightarrow 32 \rightarrow 33$ (Scheme 4). Amide 34 was obtained pure in a reasonable yield (60%), and acid 35 was afforded in good yield (79%, Scheme 5).





Oxygen Heteroarotinoid with a Linker Group Placed at the 7-Position of a Trimethylchromen Moiety (36). Target compound 36 was afforded from key intermediate phenol 49 as demonstrated in Scheme 6. Phenol 49 was first treated with sodium hydride in THF at 0 °C, and then acid chloride 58 was added to the resulting reaction mixture while maintaining the reaction temperature at 0 °C during the addition. After workup of the reaction and evaporation of the solvent, a white solid was obtained

Scheme 6



and recrystallized [HCCl₃:pentane (1:1)] to provide the desired di-ester **36** (36%). Possibly, conversion of **49** to the intermediate sodium salt was in low yield, resulting in a moderate yield of **36**.

Synthesis of Heteroarotinoids Possessing Three- or Four-Atom Linker Groups Sulfur Heteroarotinoids with a Linker Group Placed at the 6-Position of a Tetramethylthiochroman Moiety (37 and 38). Amine 50a was used to synthesize the desired sulfur heteroarotinoids 37 and 38 via the conversion illustrated in Scheme 7.

Scheme 7



Compounds 37 and 38 were both prepared in a similar fashion and involved dissolving amine 50a in dry THF and coupling it with the required, commercially available isothiocyanate at room temperature (Scheme 7). Upon evaporation of the solvent, the crude products were recrystallized from an appropriate solvent system to afford the desired heteroarotinoids 37 and 38 with good yields (70% and 75%, respectively).

Oxygen Heteroarotinoids with a Linker Group Placed at the 6-Position of a Tetramethylchroman Moiety (39-41). Key amine 48a was also used to synthesize the desired compounds 39-41 in a similar manner as the conversion of $50a \rightarrow 37$ and 38 (Scheme 7). Amine 48a was dissolved in dry THF and then coupled with the appropriate, commercially available isocyanate or isothiocyanate at room temperature (Scheme 8) to yield the crude urea/thiourea derivatives 39-41. Upon evaporation of the solvent, the crude products were purified by flash column chromatography and/or

Scheme 8



recrystallization from an appropriate solvent system to afford heteroarotinoids **39-41** in good yields as shown. Of course, one conformation is drawn for **39-41**, but others are possible.

Oxygen Heteroarotinoids with a Linker Group Placed at the 8-Position of a Tetramethylchroman Moiety (42-44). As with amine 48a, 48b was further utilized to obtain certain desired heteroarotinoids. Amine 48b (under similar conditions as in the conversions of $48a \rightarrow 39-41$, Scheme 8), dissolved in dry THF, was coupled with the appropriate, commercially available isocyanate or isothiocyanate at room temperature (Scheme 9) to yield the crude compounds 42-44. Upon evaporation of the solvent, the

Scheme 9



products were purified by flash column chromatography and/or recrystallization from an appropriate solvent system to afford heteroarotinoids **42-44** in good yields.

Oxygen Heteroarotinoid with a Linker Group Placed at the 7-Position of a Trimethylchromen Moiety (45). The target carbamate-ester 45 was prepared from key phenol 49 via a reaction of 49 with commercially available 4-ethoxycarbonylphenyl isocyanate in THF (Scheme 10). The reactants were stirred at room temperature for 3

Scheme 10



days in the presence of a catalytic amount of triethylamine (TEA). Upon evaporation of the solvent, the resulting crude material was subjected to flash column chromatography [EtOAc:hexanes (2:1)], and the resulting residue was then recrystallized [Et₂O:pentane (1:1)] to yield pure **45** (50%).

Synthesis of Heteroarotinoids Possessing a 4-Hydroxyphenylamide Moiety

Sulfur Heteroarotinoid 46. Amine 50a was also utilized to produce target heteroarotinoid 46 via the conversion $50a \rightarrow 24 \rightarrow 60 \rightarrow 46$ as illustrated in Scheme 11. The procedure employed in the conversion of $50a \rightarrow 24$ (Scheme 11) was similar to that used in the preparation of 32 from 48a (Scheme 4). Acid chloride 58 was added in one portion to amine 50a (dissolved in benzene containing pyridine). After workup and purification, amide 24^{123} was thus obtained in good yield (70%).

Saponification of the ester group of 24, via the reported method¹³⁵ which employed 2 N NaOH at room temperature (similar conditions as in the conversion $32 \rightarrow 33$), was



performed to afford structure 60. Upon acidification of the reaction mixture (pH~2) using 2 N HCl, crude acid 60^{135} precipitated and was then filtered and recrystallized (EtOAc:hexanes) to yield a pure sample of acid 60 (73%).

As can be noted (Scheme 11), the conversion of 60 to the desired structure 46 essentially involves conversion of a carboxylic acid (60) to an amide functionality (46). Such conversions are quite common in the literature and provide various useful products. However, this particular case proved to be somewhat problematic. Acid 60 contains functional groups such as the sulfur atom in the fused ring and the amide group
connecting the two aryl rings both of which can be vulnerable to degradation under certain conditions. Thus, several approaches were attempted before a procedure was developed that would successfully effect the desired conversion $60 \rightarrow 46$.

The first attempt involved the conversion of acid **60** to the corresponding acid chloride (using SOCl₂) which could then be coupled with commercially available 4aminophenol to produce the desired product **46**. However, the reaction of **60** and SOCl₂ resulted in a complex mixture of products, even at ambient temperatures (this might be expected due to the presence of the amide function connecting the two aryl rings). It has been reported that the conversion of acid groups to the corresponding acid chlorides can be accomplished by the reaction of SOCl₂ with molecules that may be vulnerable to such conditions (such as penicillins) by careful control of the reaction stoichiometry.¹³⁷ However, the procedure¹³⁷ required an addition of precise equivalents of pyridine and then maintaining cold temperatures (-20 °C) over several hours. Therefore, a more straightforward approach was sought to effect the conversion **60**—**46**.

The second approach used in producing **46** from **60** was to form the amide bond of **46** via the reaction of 4-aminophenol with the corresponding acid bromide of **60** (generated *in situ*). Barstow and Hruby¹³⁸ reported the synthesis of various amides from the corresponding amines and acid bromides, generated *in situ* from the actions of Ph₃P and BrCCl₃ on the corresponding carboxylic acid in THF. However, attempts to use this technique resulted in **46** being generated in low yields (<10%), and purification was very difficult by standard procedures.

It was found that isobutyl chloroformate had been employed in a mixed anhydride method to produce amides from the corresponding carboxylic acids containing a variety

of sensitive functional groups.¹³⁹ Acid 60 was placed in dry THF along with triethylamine (TEA), and the resulting mixture was stirred at room temperature for 45 minutes. Isobutyl chloroformate was then added to the reaction mixture at room tempertaure, and the resulting mixture was heated at 59 °C for 1.5 hours. A solution of 4-aminophenol in pyridine was then added to the new reaction mixture, and the resulting mixture was stirred at 59 °C for 4 hours. After reaction workup, purification by flash acetate:hexanes column chromatography [ethyl (2:1)] and recrystallization [methanol: $H_2O(13:8)$] provided pure 46, albeit in modest yield (20%).

The low yield of this reaction may be due, in part, to two factors, the first of which is the modest solubility of the starting acid **60** in the solvent (THF). The second, and perhaps less obvious reason for the low yield of **46**, may be competitive processes leading to several products (Scheme 12). The reaction of isobutyl chloroformate with the acid group of **60** likely produces the mixed anhydride **61**. The latter has two carbonyls that may undergo nucleophilic attack by the nitrogen atom of 4-aminophenol. If the carbonyl closer to the aromatic ring of the anhydride reacts with 4-aminophenol, then the desired compound **46** is formed. However, if the carbonyl further away from the aromatic ring undergoes nucleophilic attack by 4-aminophenol, then the starting acid **60** is reformed along with the production of a carbamate by-product **62**. The carbonyl closer to the aryl ring is apparently somewhat reactive due to the observed formation of the carbamate by-product **62** (structure suggested by NMR analysis), which was separated from the product mixture in a yield of 40%.





Oxygen Heteroarotinoid 47. Once a protocol had been developed which provided **46**, the same method was employed to obtain the oxygen analog **47**. Thus, **47** was synthesized (via a method essentially identical to that in the conversion of $60 \rightarrow 46$) from structure **33** (Scheme 13).





Acid **33** was placed in a reaction vessel with isobutyl chloroformate (using the mixed anhydride method)¹³⁹ and coupled with commercially available 4-aminphenol. After reaction workup and purification via flash column chromatography [EtOAc:hexanes (2:1)] and recrystallization [MeOH/H₂O (13:8)], pure **47** was obtained (30%). The increased yield of **47** (30%), as compared to that **46** (20%, Scheme 11), may be partially due to the increased solubility of acid **33** (the starting material in the production of **47**) in the solvent (THF) as compared to the solubility of acid **60** (the starting material in the production of **46**) in THF.

NMR Analysis of Select 8-isomer Oxygen Heteroarotinoids

Through ¹H NMR analysis of the target products (32-47), an interesting spectral feature was noted in the oxygen-containing heteroarotinoids that have a three-atom linker

attached at the 8-position of the tetramethylchroman group (42-44). More specifically, compounds 42-44 have a urea (42) or thiourea (43 and 44) linker group attached at the 8-position. It was observed that the proton attached to carbon atom 7 (C7) of the tetramethylchroman ring system (Figure 14) in structures 43 and 44 (which both contain a thiourea linker group) demonstrated a broadened peak (see Plates XXXV and XXXVIII – Experimental section), while the same proton in 42 (which contained a urea linker group) showed a very sharp signal (see Plate XXXII – Experimental section). Therefore, further spectral investigation of these compounds was warranted to derive a possible explanation for the observation.

Since both 43 and 44 demonstrated a broadened signal (~ δ 7.6), 44 was chosen as a single model for the investigation. First, peak assignments were established for the hydrogen atoms at the C5, C6, and C7 positions of the aromatic ring within the fused ring system via the use of two dimensional NOESY (2D NOESY) and 2D double-quantum COSY (2D DQCOSY) analysis. The 2D NOESY (Plate XL) spectrum showed a cross peak between the geminal dimethyl protons of C4 (δ 1.36) and a proton at δ 7.22, indicating that the signal at δ 7.22 likely corresponded to the aromatic proton attached to C5. In addition, the 2D NOESY spectrum showed a somewhat strong cross peak between the C5 proton (δ 7.22) and the proton signal at δ 6.96, and the 2D DQCOSY (Plate XLI) showed an intense cross peak between the C5 proton (δ 7.22) and the signal at δ 6.96 likely corresponded to the proton signal at δ 6.96, indicating that the signal at δ 6.96 likely corresponded to the proton attached to C6. Furthermore, the 2D DQCOSY demonstrated a cross peak between the C6 proton (δ 6.96) and the broad signal at δ 7.62. Considering each of these pieces of



Figure 14. ¹H NMR spectra sections (spectral regions ~ δ 7.4-δ 9.0) from spectroscopic experiments conducted on heteroarotinoid 44: (a) D₂O exchange at 22 °C, (b) ¹H NMR at 22 °C, (c) ¹H NMR at 30 °C, (d) ¹H NMR at 40 °C. Spectra were obtained at 400 MHz using DCCl₃ as the solvent and were referenced to TMS.

information, it was concluded that the broad signal at δ 7.62 in the ¹H NMR spectrum of **44** likely arose from the hydrogen (H7) attached to C7 of the tetramethylchroman ring system.

To ensure that the signal at δ 7.62 did not correspond to an –NH- proton, a deuterium exchange NMR experiment was conducted on 44. It was found that two signals (δ 8.30 and δ 8.34) were greatly reduced in height and the broad signal occurring at 7.62 ppm was not affected. This observation provided further support of the hydrogen atom position assignment established from the 2D NMR experiments by suggesting that the signal occurring at δ 7.62 arose from a hydrogen attached to an aromatic carbon (C7) rather than a nitrogen atom of the thiourea linker group.

Finally an explanation for the H7 signal (δ 6.96) broadening was sought. Structure 44 contains a quadrupole nucleus (¹⁴N), and its effect on H7 cannot be eliminated from consideration. The signal broadening may also be due to a dynamic property inherent to the molecular structure of thioureas. Galabov and co-workers¹⁴⁰ demonstrated, through IR and ¹H NMR spectroscopy, that *N*,*N*^{*}-diaryl-substituted thioureas in organic solvents (CCl₄, C₂Cl₄, CHCl₃, CH₂Cl₂) at room temperature exist in a complex equilibrium between several rotational conformations of the –C(S)-NH- group. In fact, it was reported that the substituted thioureas had several rotational isomers of the type *cis-cis*, *cis-trans*, *trans-cis*, and *trans-trans*, depending on the size of the substituents on the nitrogen atoms. Furthermore, Galabov noted that these various conformations apparently had relatively short lifetimes (and low concentrations), resulting in difficult conformational analysis by ¹H NMR at room temperature.¹⁴⁰

Therefore, a temperature variation ¹H NMR experiment was conducted for **44** in an effort to resolve the rotational isomerism issue, and the results are illustrated in Figure 14. Figure 14 is comprised of small sections (spectral regions ranging $\sim \delta 7.4 - \delta 9.0$) of four distinct spectra (a, b, c, and d) of compound **44**. The spectra listed are a) deuterium exchange, b) ¹H NMR at room temperature (22 °C), c) ¹H NMR at 30 °C, and d) ¹H NMR at 40 °C. Interestingly, as the temperature was increased, the broadened signal (δ 7.62) at 22 °C (Figure 14b) split into two distinct peaks at 40 °C (Figure 14d).

Thus, compounds 43 and 44 may exist in solution as a *trans-cis* form (as was drawn earlier and shown below – left) or as one of the others listed above, including possibly a *cis-cis* form (shown below – right). It is not intuitively obvious why H7 is a more



clearly defined doublet at 40 °C as compared to a broad signal at room temperature. Possibly, the ${}^{3}J_{H6-H7}$ coupling to H7 at 40 °C results from an average orientation of H6 and H7 which is more nearly a perfect cisoid arrangement. It is also conceivable that the equilibrium of rotational isomers, coupled with further interaction of H7 with the electron orbitals of the bulkier sulfur atom within the thiourea group [as compared to the oxygen atom of the urea group (**42**)], arising due to the various structural conformations, could ultimately lead to broadening of the signal associated with H7 at room temperature.

Biological Activity

Rationale for the Design of Target Heteroarotinoids. Compound 32 has an amide group as a two-atom linker and is an oxygen analog of sulfur heteroarotinoid 24,¹²³ another compound reported by our lab. As was discussed in Chapter 1 (Heteroarotinoids and Other Reduced Toxicity Retinoids section), structure 24 (Table 1) appeared to possess *pan* agonist properties and showed powerful anticancer properties against head and neck squamous cell carcinoma in nude mice, as compared to *t*-RA (3).¹²³ The sulfur atom in the fused ring of 24 was replaced with an oxygen atom in 32. It was hoped that agent 32 would provide valuable insight into treatment for head and neck carcinomas.

Replacement of the sulfur atom in 24 with the less bulky oxygen atom in compound 32 was initiated because of the reported biological activity of certain oxygen heteroarotinoids.^{20a,123,125} Although heterarotinoids containing oxygen appear, in general, to exhibit slightly lower biological activity than the sulfur- or nitrogen-containing counterparts,^{123,141} the compounds reported here contain a geminal dimethyl group adjacent to the oxygen atom, unlike those reported previously.^{50,123,125,141} It was conceived that the compact size of oxygen may allow its lone pairs to be somewhat "screened" by the flanking geminal dimethyl group, thus increasing the hydrophobic character of one end of the molecules. Hence, these agents may have improved hydrophobic interaction with the interior of the retinoid receptors,¹¹⁸ thereby increasing receptor activation and ultimately leading to enhanced anti-cancer activity. Studies of compounds with such structural features as these may certainly provide vital information

| Compound | % Inhibition of Seven Cancerous Cell Types ^b | | | | sb | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Compound | SCC2 | UMSC2 | UMSC38 | SKOV3 | CAOV3 | SW954 | SW962 |
| 4 [9-c-RA] CO ₂ H | 13 | 100 | 100 | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S | 64 | 492° | 370 ^c | 21 | 24 | NA | 48 |
| | NA | NA | NA | 85 | 98 | NA | NA |
| $ \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\$ | NA | NA | NA | 92 | 95 | NA | NA |
| | NA | NA | NA | 94 | 97 | NA | NA |
| CO ₂ Me | 15 | 115 ^c | -70 ^c | NA | NA | 83 | 84 |
| H O 32 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| $ \begin{array}{c} & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & \\ & & $ | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Table 1. Growth Inhibition Against VariousCancerous Cell Types by Heteroarotinoids^a

| Compound % Inhibition of Seven Cancerous C | | | | | ell Type | /pes ^b | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|--------|-------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| | SCC2 | UMSC2 | UMSC38 | SKOV3 | CAOV3 | SW954 | SW962 |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| $\begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\$ | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| $ \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \end{array} $ | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| $ \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} $ | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| $ \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}$ | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Table 1. (Continued)^a

| Compound | Compound % Inhibition of Seven Cancerous Cell | | | | | Cell Type | Гуреs⁵ | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-----------|--------|--|
| Compound | SCC2 | UMSC2 | UMSC38 | SKOV3 | CAOV3 | SW954 | SW962 | |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | |
| HN H 43 S CO ₂ Et | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | |
| H S 46 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | |
| | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | |

Table 1. (Continued)^a

^a The results presented are from biological assays performed by Dr. Doris Benbrook's group (Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma). ^b The seven cell types listed are head and neck (SCC2, UMSC2, UMSC38), ovarian (SKOV3, CAOV3), and vulvar (SW954, SW962). ^c Values listed are compared to 9-c-RA (4, 100%). NA = Not Available at this time.

about the tolerated bulk size within the hydrophobic region of the ligand-binding pocket (LBP) of the retinoid receptors.

Heteroarotinoid **33**, an oxygen analog of known acid **60**,¹³⁵ is similar to **32** but the former contains a carboxylic acid functionality as a polar tail instead of an ester as in **32**. Historically, most retinoids found in the literature contain a carboxylic acid group as a polar tail [such as *t*-RA (**3**) or TTNPB (**8**)]. It is assumed that there are various esterase enzymes within the body that could cleave the ester group, and thus, within living systems, both the acid and ester may be converted to the carboxylate anion. It has been reported that the carboxylate anion (CO₂⁻) is required for receptor binding due to a "salt bridge" formation between the carboxylate group and glutamic and lysine amino acid residues of the retinoid receptors.^{40,50,142} Therefore, the carboxylic acid group was incorporated into **33** as a comparison with **32** to determine potency differences, or in the event one of these two polar end groups produced better retinoid receptor activation. In addition, the study of various tail groups, such as those that are non-ionizable, or groups that can or cannot hydrogen bond, may provide valuable insight into structural attributes necessary for reasonable bioavailability.¹⁴³

Due to the large number of pharmaceuticals that are produced and screened today, concern is rising about drugs' bioavailability through intestinal uptake, resulting from oral administration (drugs may be administered via different routes, the oral route generally being the preferred for reasons of ease and compliance by the patient).¹⁴³ It has been noted that factors to be considered in the design of drugs for oral absorption include lipophilicity, molecular size (molecular weights <500 generally having better absorption), and hydrogen-bonding (H-bonding) capability.¹⁴³ Therefore, the study of

heteroarotinoids having tail groups differing in functionality (such as **32** and **33**) may ultimately lead to anticancer agents which could be administered orally.

Compounds 34 and 35, respectively, are similar to 32 and 33 and have an amide linker and polar end groups. However, the linker is attached to the aryl ring at the C8 position in 34 and 35 rather than at the C6 position as in 32 and 33. Since 24 had *pan* agonist qualities (was bound by both RARs and RXRs), and 32 may have similar properties, it was conceived that moving the linker moiety from the C6 position to the C8 position may enhance binding affinity for the RXRs over that for the RARs. Movement of the linker from the C6 position to the C8 position could allow the structures to adopt a somewhat "curved" conformation, similar to 9-*c*-RA (4),^{40,118} which, in turn, might provide better interaction with the RXRs as compared to the RARs.

Heteroarotinoid **36** has a double bond incorporated into the fused ring. This addition to the heterocyclic ring certainly changes the hydrophobic portion of the ligands as compared to those just described, and therefore the interaction of these compounds with the hydrophobic region in the LBP of the receptors may be altered. It is uncertain what effect the unsaturation will actually produce, but a computer-aided study conducted by Klucik¹¹⁸ also indicated that the presence of such a group may have favorable interaction with the LBP of RAR- γ . Compound **36** contains an ester linker group (two-atom linker) placed in the C7 position of the aryl ring. This placement between the C6 and C8 positions, coupled with the somewhat flexible nature of the linker [which could allow the structure to assume either an 'elongated' conformation similar to that of *t*-RA (**3**) or a 'curved' conformation similar to that of 9-*c*-RA (**4**)],⁴⁰ may promote interaction with both RARs and RXRs, thus conveying **36** with *pan* agonist qualities, as has 9-*c*-RA (**4**).⁴⁶ Sulfur heteroarotinoids **37** and **38** are a continuation of the study of compounds **29-31** (Chapter 1 - Heteroarotinoids and Other Reduced Toxicity Retinoids section) which were also produced from earlier work in this lab.^{113e} Like **29**, structure **37** possesses a thiourea (three-atom) linker group. However, **37** has a methoxy group attached to the aryl ring containing the polar nitro end group. Such a modification has not been done previously and may help to "map" more accurately the area of the LBP within the receptor that provides H-bonding with the ligand. Compound **38** actually possesses a 4-atom linker rather than a 3-atom linker. The linker was extended one carbon atom by essentially inserting a carbonyl group between the thiourea linker and the second aryl ring. Some molecular modeling studies by Klucik¹¹⁸ have suggested that a 4-atom linker may be slightly too long for receptor activation as agonists, but such agents could be useful as antagonists.

Heteroarotinoids **39-41** are oxygen analogs of compounds **29-31**, which, as was discussed in the previous chapter, showed some profound anticancer characteristics (see Chapter 1, Heteroarotinoids and Other Reduced Toxicity Retinoids section).^{113e} Compounds **39-41** possess a urea functionality as a three-atom 'linker' group (as do the reported structures **29-31**). The urea and/or thiourea functionality was selected as a three-atom linker due to its somewhat enhanced flexible nature (compared to a pure amide), which could result in a better fit into the LBP of RARs, and therefore enhance activation. Moreover, a urea function provides two –NH- groups capable of hydrogen bonding with the receptors, which may improve RAR- γ selectivity, possibly via the formation of a hydrogen bond with the sulfur atom of the amino acid residue methionine 272 (M272) in RAR- γ .^{99,124,127,128} Due to the promising activity of heteroarotinoids **29-31**, the study of

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the urea group as a three-atom linker has been extended to the oxygen analogs **39-41**, whose synthesis is described within this thesis.

The presence of a sulfur atom within the linker group (thiourea, 40), as opposed to an oxygen atom (urea, 39), may provide insight on the influence of size and electronegativity of the carbonyl or thiocarbonyl function within the linker group in terms of influence on receptor activation and/or selectivity. In addition, modulation of the polar "tails" of the compounds [as in the exchange of an ester functionality (40) for a nitro group (41)] was done to further explore the more polar region of the LBP of the retinoid receptors responsible for H-bonding^{21b,21c,22,23} and to determine potency differences in the event one of these two polar tail groups produced better retinoid receptor activation. It is expected that studies on agents with a urea or thiourea linker, such as 39-41, may ultimately lead to the production of compounds that are highly RAR- γ selective.

Heteroarotinoids 42-44 are 8-isomer analogs of 39-41 (as 34 and 35 are 8-isomer analogs of 32 and 33). This alignment of the linker group (attached in the 8 position of the tetramethylchroman group as in 34 and 35) with respect to the aryl moieties is expected to suppress the binding affinity for the RARs. Again, movement of the linker from the C6 position to the C8 position could allow the structures to adopt a somewhat "curved" conformation, similar to 9-*c*-RA (4),^{40,118} and thus compounds 42-44 may be RXR family selective.

Heteroarotinoid 45 (like 36) has a double bond incorporated into the fused ring system. Unlike 36, however, 45 possesses a carbamate function as a three-atom linker group. Like the urea group (as in 39-41 or 29-31), the carbamate linker (as in 45) also possesses a -NH- group that may provide hydrogen bonding with amino acid residues

within the interior of the retinoid receptors. Furthermore, the carbamate linker group of 45 (like 36) was placed in the C7 position of the aryl ring, which may promote interaction with both RARs and RXRs, thus endowing 45 with *pan* agonist qualities, as has 9-c-RA (4).⁴⁶

The unusual heteroarotinoid **46** was produced with the intent of mimicking the apoptotic properties of 4-HPR (**18**). The synthesis of **46** was also spurred by the impressive anticancer properties of compound **24**,¹²³ which is a synthetic precursor of **46** (see Scheme 11). As was discussed in Chapter 1 (Classification of Retinoids – Apoptosis), clinically employed 4-HPR (**18**) is well known for the ability to induce programmed cell death (apoptosis) in a variety of tissues.¹¹³ This quality may be due to the 4-hydroxyphenylamide functionality on the polar end of the molecule's structure, as certain studies suggest.^{112b,113e,115,116} It was originally assumed that a study of heteroarotinoids possessing a 4-hydroxyphenylamide group would have already been performed, but none was found in the literature. Therefore, heteroarotinoid **46**, which possesses a 4-hydroxyphenylamide group, was synthesized for exploration of the therapeutic potential of heteroarotinoids possessing this functionality.

Structure 47 is the oxygen analog of sulfur heteroarotinoid 46. The replacement of the sulfur atom in 46 by oxygen may aid to elucidate the pathways by which compounds structurally similar to 4-HPR (18) could mimic its action and exhibit apoptotic properties. As was discussed in Chapter 1 (Classification of Retinoids – Apoptosis), the exact mechanism by which 4-HPR (18) produces its apoptotic effects is a matter of some controversy.^{112b,113e,115,116} Certain studies suggest that 4-HPR (18) acts via retinoid receptor-dependent pathway,¹¹⁶ while other studies state that the action of 4-HPR (18)

results from retinoid receptor-independent mechanisms.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the study of sulfur and oxygen analogs **46** and **47** could provide valuable information regarding this matter, in the event that one of these compounds (**46** or **47**) demonstrated better apoptotic characteristics than does 4-HPR (**18**).

As can be noted in Table 1, compounds 24, 29-31, and 63 produced from earlier work by our lab^{113e,123} demonstrated promising inhibition properties against various cancerous cell lines, including ovarian, vulvar, and head and neck carcinomas. Although the compounds reported in this thesis have not yet been tested for anticancer activity, several of the agents structurally resemble heteroarotinoids 24, 29-31, and 63. Thus it is anticipated that a study of such agents reported herein will provide valuable insight on structural characteristics required for optimum anticancer activity in these select types of cancer. Heteroarotinoids 32 and 33 resemble 24, compounds 39-41 are oxygen analogs of 29-31, and 36 is slightly similar to 63 (Table 1).

Anti-tuberculin Activity of Heteroarotinoids. *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (*M. tuberculosis*, or Mtb) is a human pathogen causing tuberculosis (TB), is responsible for the death of millions of people each year, and continues to claim more lives than any other single infectious agent.¹⁴⁴ Its pathogenicity arises from the ability to survive in host cells by colonizing macrophages and remaining quiescent for long periods of time, only to become active decades later.¹⁴⁵ About one-third of the world's population is infected with Mtb, 10% of which will develop the disease at some point in their lives.¹⁴⁶ The current treatment for active TB is a four-drug regimen comprised of isoniazid, rifampin, pyrazinamide, and ethambutol for a period of at least six months.¹⁴⁷ The failure of patients to complete the therapy has led to the emergence of multi-drug-resistant (MDR)

tuberculosis. The growing number of cases of MDR tuberculosis has become such a public health threat that the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared TB a global public health emergency.¹⁴⁸ Thus, greater efforts are needed in investigating the molecular basis of TB pathogenicity and in developing high efficacy drugs as key targets for Mtb treatment.

One approach that has been taken in the fight against TB is the development of drugs that will successfully inhibit the actions of the enzyme Dihydrofolate Reductase (DHFR). DHFR is essential for folate metabolism in both eukaryotic and prokaryotic cells.¹⁴⁹ The enzyme catalyzes the NADPH-dependent reduction of dihydrofolate to tetrahydrofolate which is involved in a variety of biochemical functions involving single-carbon transfers. The reduced form of folate is a precursor of cofactors necessary for the synthesis of thymidylate, purine nucleotides, methionine, serine, and glycine required for DNA, RNA, and protein synthesis. Selective DHFR inhibitors are playing an important role in the treatment of bacterial, protozoal, and fungal infections.¹⁵⁰ In addition, DHFR inhibitors have been shown to be useful in the treatment of patients infected both by HIV and Mtb.¹⁵¹

Because rapidly dividing cells have a great demand for DNA and protein synthesis and DHFR promotes such activity, inhibition of this enzyme by methotrexate (MTX, **64**), an anti-inflammatory and immunosuppressive agent, has been exploited in cancer chemotherapy.¹⁵² Trimethoprim (TMP, **65**) is a potent inhibitor of bacterial DHFR, but only a weak inhibitor of mammalian DHFRs.¹⁴⁵ Agent Br-WR99210 (**66**), a bromine analog of Triazine (WR99210), has been instigated in the inhibition of malarial DHFR.¹⁴⁵



A structural comparison study of human and tuberculosis DHFRs performed by Hol and co-workers¹⁴⁵ provided some useful observations in the search for new TB drug treatments. Through a sequence alignment of the amino acids in human and Mtb DHFRs, Hol noted only a ~26% sequence identity and indicated key differences that might be considered in the future development of selective Mtb DHFR inhibitors.

Isoxyl (67), a powerful inhibitor of bacterial DHFRs, has demonstrated potent activity against various Mycobacterium strains, including *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb).¹⁵³



As can be noted, 67 contains a thiourea group connecting two aryl rings and is somewhat similar in structure to several compounds (such as 39-44) reported in this thesis. This

striking structural resemblance thus prompted the screening of several heteroarotiniods produced by our lab for use as anti-bacterial agents.

The fifteen heteroarotinoids listed in Table 2 were tested for anti-bacterial activity against Mycobacterium bovis (BCG) and compared to that of Isoxyl (67). As can be noted in Table 2, the results are listed as MIC values (note the results in Table 2 are listed in order of decreasing activity - read from left to right, top to bottom). The MIC value has been defined as the lowest concentration (in µg/mL) of Isoxyl (67), or other standard agent, resulting in 99% reduction in the number of bacterial colonies on that plate compared to those on a plate free of the drug at the same suspension of the bacterial culture dilution (for assay details see Determination of MICs, Experimental section -Chapter III).¹⁵³ Isoxyl (67) demonstrated a MIC value of 0.5 against BCG (Table 2), indicating potent anti-bacterial activity. Most of the heteroarotinoids in the study demonstrated somewhat weak anti-bacterial activity with MIC values >20.0. However, compounds 41 and 69 exhibited reasonable activity, each having MIC values of 20.0, while 40 and 68 each displayed somewhat promising activity with MIC values of 10.0. Interestingly, heteroarotinoid 36, which appears less structurally similar to 67 than other heteroarotinoids tested, such as 31 or 40, demonstrated the best activity (as compared to the other heteroarotinoids) against BCG with a MIC value of 2.0.

A computer aided crystallographic study conducted by Hol and co-workers¹⁴⁵ may help establish an explanation for the observed potent anti-bacterial activity of **36**. Three crystal structures of *M. tuberculosis* DHFR, an enzyme quite structurally similar to BCG DHFR,¹⁵³ bound to different inhibitors was reported.¹⁴⁵ The three inhibitors of Mtb

| Compound | MIC [°] (µg/mL) | Compound | MIC ^c (µg/mL) |
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| | >20.0 | $ \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array}\\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \begin{array}{c} \end{array} \\ \end{array} $ } \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} } \\ \end{array} \\ } \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ } \\ \end{array} \\ \end{array} \\ } \\ \end{array} \\ } \\ } \\ \end{array} \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ } \\ | >20.0 |
| John H H CO ₂ Et | >20.0 | | >20.0 |
| | >20.0 | | >20.0 |
| N CH ₃ TO CO ₂ Et | >20.0 | N CH ₃ H | >20.0 |

Table 2. Anti-Bacterial Activity of Heteroarotinoids Against M. bovis^{a,b}

| Compound | MIC [°] (μg/mL) | Compound | MIC ^c (µg/mL) |
|----------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| | >20.0 | | >20.0 |

Table 2. (Continued)^{a,b}

^a Results are from *Mycobacterium bovis* (BCG) being treated with the agents listed. ^b Results listed are from biological assays performed by Dr. Patrick Brennan's group (Department of Microbiology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado). ^c MIC is the lowest concentration of the agent (in μ g/mL) resulting in 99% reduction in the number of colonies on that plate as compared to those on a plate free of the drug at the same suspension of the culture dilution.

DHFR studied were methotrextate (MTX, 64), trimethoprim (TMP, 65), and Br-WR99210 (66), and Hol noted various structural modifications of the inhibitors which might be exploited to increase affinity and/or selectivity for the bacterial DHFR enzyme. Furthermore, Hol indicated various amino acid residues which appeared to be of some importance for interaction with inhibitors within the binding site of the enzyme. It was observed that all three inhibitors (64-66) were involved in hydrogen bond interactions with an aspartate residue (Asp27) and an ordered and conserved water molecule, both within the interior of the enzyme, via the nitrogen 1 (N1) atom of their respective ring systems.¹⁴⁵ In addition, the nitrogen-containing rings of each inhibitor appeared to be situated within a mainly hydrophobic pocket and made Van der Waals contacts with various residues of the pocket, including Ile5, Ile94, Ala6, and Gln28.¹⁴⁵ The aromatic ring of each inhibitor, along with the 1,3-dioxypropyl linking group of Br-WR99210 (66), were observed to engage in hydrophobic interactions with several residues, such as Phe31, Leu50, Thr46, Ile54, and Ile57, which are slightly closer to the protein's surface than the amino acid residues listed above.¹⁴⁵ Finally, it was noted that the α -carboxyl

group of MTX (64) engaged in strong "salt bridge" involving $-CO_2^-$ and two positively charged $-^+NH_3$ groups of Arg32 and Arg60, which are near the protein's surface.¹⁴⁵

With these pieces of information, it is conceivable that a reasonable interaction between heteroarotinoid **36** and the bacterial DHFR enzyme could exist. The oxygen atom of the fused heterocyclic ring may engage in hydrogen bonding interactions with Asp27 and/or the conserved water molecule, both of which are toward the interior of the enzyme.¹⁴⁵ In addition, the double bond within the fused aromatic ring system of **36** could allow a unique interaction with Phe31 or one of the other amino acid residues noted to interact with the nitrogen-containing ring systems of **64-66**.¹⁴⁵ The aromatic ring of **36** may also be involved in hydrophobic interactions with the various residues somewhat closer to the protein's surface, as did **64-66**.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, if the ester group of **36** is indeed converted to the carboxylate anion within living systems as certain studies suggest,^{40,50,142} then the resulting carboxyl group could certainly be involved in "salt bridge" interactions with Arg32 and Arg60, as was the carboxyl group of MTX (**64**).¹⁴⁵

It was also observed by Hol and co-workers¹⁴⁵ that the three inhibitors (64-66) studied all adopted similar, curved, conformations, with the nitrogen-containing ring system oriented toward the interior of the enzyme binding site, and the aromatic ring closer to the surface. As can also be noted, **36** may have a slightly shorter "molecular length" than MTX (64) or Br-WR99210 (66). Therefore, it is conceivable that **36** may adopt a somewhat more linear conformation between the interior, hydrophobic amino acid residues and the more exterior Arg32 and Arg60 residues of the ligand binding site within the enzyme. Perhaps such a conformation would endow **36** with the observed antibacterial qualities. In any case, further research certainly needs to be conducted to delineate the role of retinoids in the anti-bacterial venue. However, these observations may provide a new avenue for exploration of the therapeutic application of retinoids.

Summary

Sixteen heteroarotinoids (32-47),which include oxygen-containing new heteroarotinoids 32-36, 39-45, and 47 as well as sulfur-containing heteroarotinoids 37, 38, and 46, have been synthesized. Oxygen and sulfur were chosen as heteroatoms incorporated into the fused ring systems due to the promising anticancer activity of a few reported heteroarotinoids possessing these two heteroatoms.^{20a,113e,123,125} Compounds **32**-47 were designed with various structural characteristics, including two-, three-, or fouratom linker groups between the aryl rings, strategic placement of the linker groups relative to the aryl moieties, and varying polar 'tails', which may endow the agents with specific biological qualities, such as potential RAR- γ selectivity, RXR subfamily selectivity, pan agonist qualities, or the ability to induce programmed cell death (apoptosis).

The structures have not yet been tested for their anticancer activities, but it is expected that biological studies of these agents could certainly provide valuable information for the invention of potentially effective anticancer agents possessing high activity and relatively low toxicity. However, several of the heteroarotinoids reported here were tested for antibacterial activity due to their structural resemblance to the potent antibacterial agent Isoxyl (67). It was discovered that two heteroarotinoids (40 and 68) possessed reasonable antibacterial activities against *Mycobacterium bovis* and that compound 36 possessed promising activity against the same bacteria (Table 2). Of course, more research needs to

be conducted to establish the exact role of retinoids as antibacterial agents, but these observations may ultimately lead to a new therapeutic application of retinoids.

Finally, a new and improved synthetic route to known amine $50a^{123}$ from thiochroman 56^{126a} was developed. The new method was more straightforward, efficient, and cost-effective than the reported procedure¹²³ for the production of 50a.

Suggestions for Future Work

Structures 74-77 are suggested as target heteroarotinoids for future synthesis and study as potential anticancer agents. The compound series 74 is similar to 39-41, whose synthesis is described in this thesis, while the series 75 resembles structures 29-31 which







have demonstrated powerful anticancer properties,^{113e} as discussed in Chapter I. Unlike **39-41** and **29-31**, **74** and **75** each contain two methyl groups placed at the C5 and C7 positions of the chroman ring systems. The production of such compounds is encouraged due to the reported success of compounds **63**,¹²³ which contain two methyl groups positioned in the same manner, and the fact that very few compounds of this type are even reported. The study of agents with these characteristics may provide valuable information about the best tolerated bulk within the hydrophobic portion of the LBP of the retinoid receptors. Furthermore, because **39-41** and **29-31** may likely be RAR subtype selective, introducing two methyl groups in the C5 and C7 positions could serve to help "fine tune" the structural features needed for selectivity between the three isoforms (RAR- α , RAR- β , and RAR- γ) of the RAR subtype.

Structure(s) 76 are modified continuations of compounds 46 and 47 (which are reported in this thesis). Addition of the two methyl groups at the C5 and C7 positions may further aid in the delineation of the mechanism by which retinoids that are structurally similar to 4-HPR (18) induce apoptosis. The presence of the two methyl groups could help establish how or why compounds similar to 4-HPR (18) induce programmed cell death through retinoid receptor-dependent and/or receptor-independent pathways.

Compounds 77 and 78 are methylbutyrate derivatives of acids 33 and 60, respectively. Structures 77 and 78 are suggested for future study for multiple reasons, including the reported success of compound 24, which would be a synthetic precursor of 78. In addition, the incorporation of the methylbutyrate moiety within the heteroarotinoid backbone may endow structures 77 and 78 with enhanced anticancer activity via prodrug properties, which could arise from the coupled anticancer actions of 33 and/or 60 and butyric acid (BA).¹⁵⁴

Compound BA has been reported as an effective inhibitor of cell proliferation and inducer of cytodifferentiation.¹⁵⁵ In addition, BA is known to inhibit specifically the enzyme histone deacetylase (HDAC), and thus many of its biological effects may be attributed to this activity.¹⁵⁶ Recent studies may have established a link between oncogene-mediated suppression of transcription and recruitment of HDAC into a nuclear complex.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, it has been suggested that resistance to t-RA (3) by human acute promyelocytic leukemia (APL) cell lines could be overcome by addition of HDAC inhibitors.¹⁵⁸ The inhibition of HDAC leads to histones hyperacetylation and relaxation of the chromatin structure. The chromatin conformational change allows the access of transcription factors and upregulation of gene expression.¹⁵⁹ Therefore, the combination of BA with a retinoid, such as t-RA (3), could possibly provide enhanced anticancer activity. However, BA displays low potency in vivo due to rapid metabolism.¹⁶⁰ Thus, Nudelman and Raphaeli¹⁵⁴ combined of BA and t-RA (3) in the form of a prodrug by producing an acyloxyalkyl ester of retinoic acid, all-trans-retinoyloxymethyl butyrate (79), in hopes of coupling the therapeutic potential of each. Compound 79 was tested for differentiation induction activity in the human myeloid leukemic cell line HL-60.¹⁵⁴ It was observed that the effective dose (ED₅₀) of 79 was 0.031 μ M, which was 40-fold

79

lower than that of *t*-RA (**3**) and over 9000-fold lower than that of BA.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, by combining the therapeutic potential of BA and heteroarotinoids through incorporation of BA into the heteroarotiniod backbone in the form of a acyloxyalkyl ester (as in 76 or 77), an agent possessing a very low ED_{50} may be produced, thus providing further reduction of unwanted side effects associated with retinoid treatment.

The preparation of compound(s) 74 involves the synthesis of key amine 86a (Scheme 14). The procedure could start with commercially available 3,5-dimethylphenol (80) and follow the steps as shown in Scheme 14 (and described by Dawson and co-workers¹³⁰ in the synthesis of lactone 51) for the production of intermediate lactone 82. Once lactone 82 was obtained, the steps illustrated should be similar to those employed in the production of amine 48a to yield the key amine 86a. As shown in Scheme 14, an isomeric mixture of nitro compounds 85a and 85b is expected [as was the case for 54a and 54b (Scheme 1)] from the nitration of chroman 84. The resulting 8-isomer amine 86b could also be utilized for the production of various heteroarotinoids. Amine 86a could be converted to the desired compound(s) 74 (Scheme 14) in a similar fashion as described for the synthesis of 39-41 from amine 48a (Scheme 8 and related description).

Amine 92a is needed as a starting material to acquire heteroarotinoid(s) 75. The reaction sequence could begin with commercially available 3,5-dimethylthiophenol (87) and follow the steps outlined in Scheme 15 (the reaction sequence is similar to that reported^{126a} in the synthesis of thiochroman 56) for the production of unknown thiochroman 90. Amine 92a could then be produced from 91a via a procedure similar to that described for the synthesis of 50a from 56 (Scheme 3 and related text). Generation



of the corresponding 8-isomer amine 92b could also be expected (as was the case with 50a and 50b).

Once amines 86a and 92a have been afforded, each may be utilized to obtain heteroarotinoid(s) 76 via a synthetic method as outlined in Scheme 16. The procedure





should be essentially the same as that employed in the production of compounds **46** and **47**, described above (see Schemes 11 and 13 and related text). As can be noted in Scheme 16, the production of structure(s) **76** would also provide intermediates **93** and **94**,





which are a similar in structure to heteroarotinoids 24 and 32 and 33 and 60, respectively. Hence, 93 and 94 could also be utilized for study as possible anticancer agents, and may provide further insight into structural characteristics required for optimum retinoid receptor interaction.

A possible synthetic route to 77 and 78 is illustrated in Scheme 17. Acids 33 and 60 may be utilized, respectively, for the production of 77 and 78 via a procedure similar to that reported herein and by Nudelman and Raphaeli.¹⁵⁴ The process would involve the





coupling of acid **33** or **60** with commercially available chloromethyl butyrate in the presence of triethylamine (TEA), using DMF as the solvent.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

General Information

When performing the synthesis of each of the intermediates and final compounds, various conditions of synthesis and techniques of purification and analysis were used in their production. Each reaction was done using magnetic stirring for thorough mixing of reagents, and each was carried out under N₂ unless otherwise stated. Commercial reagents and solvents were used as received unless otherwise noted, and anhydrous THF was obtained by distillation from a purple solution of sodium and benzophenone. All of the isocyanates and isothiocyanates used were commercially available and were obtained from Carbolabs, Inc., Bethany, CT 06524-3065, Sigma-Aldrich Corporation, Milwaukee, WI 53233, or Transworld Chemicals, Inc., Rockville, MD 20850.

Evaporation of solvents was accomplished *in vacuo* via the use of a BUCHI Rotovapor[®] R-3000 and water aspirator unless otherwise specified. For those intermediates that were liquids and required distillation for purification, vacuum distillation was employed using a Welch[®] ChemstarTM 1402N vacuum pump with a Thomas[®] Welch vacuum gauge. For those intermediates and compounds that were solids and required purification, in addition to recrystallization, flash column chromatography was used. The chromatography was performed using J. T. Baker flash chromatography silica gel packing, 40 µm mesh.

In addition to the synthesis and purification techniques, each product was analyzed for structure and purity using IR spectroscopy, ¹H NMR spectroscopy, ¹³C NMR

spectroscopy, and TLC. Melting points of all solids were measured using a Thomas-Hoover melting point apparatus and were uncorrected. IR spectra were obtained using a Perkin Elmer 2000 Ft-IR spectrometer as films or KBr pellets, and some ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were obtained using a ^{UNITY}INOVA 400 BB NMR spectrometer operating at 399.99 MHz and 100.01 MHz, respectively. In addition, some ¹H and ¹³C spectra were recorded using a broadband Gemini 2000 High-Resolution NMR (300 MHz) spectrometer operating at 300.09 MHz and 75.46 MHz, respectively. All NMR signals were referenced to TMS. Furthermore, DCCl₃ was used as the solvent for all NMR spectra unless otherwise stated. Elemental analyses were performed by Atlantic Microlab, Inc., Norcross, GA 30091.

Methyl 4-{[(2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-3,4-dihydro-2H-chromen-6-yl)amino]carbonyl}benzoate (32). Amine 48a (0.350 g, 1.70 mmol), dissolved in dry benzene (20 mL), was placed in a 50-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an N₂ inlet. To this solution was added dry pyridine (1.75 g, 1.79 mL, 22.16 mmol, 13 eq), and the resulting mixture was stirred at RT (10 min). *Mono*-methyl terephthaloyl chloride (58) (0.381 g, 1.82 mmol, 1.07 eq) was then rinsed into the reaction mixture in one portion with dry benzene (14 mL). The resulting reaction mixture was then allowed to stir at RT (12 h), during which time pyridinium hydrochloride precipitated as a flaky white solid. The reaction mixture was then poured into H₂O (85 mL), and the precipitate immediately redissolved in the water layer. The resulting mixture was extracted with EtOAc (4×35 mL), H₂O (3×35 mL), Na₂CO₃ (40%, 35 mL), saturated, aqueous NaHCO₃ (35 mL), H₂O (35 mL), and brine (35 mL). The organic layer was then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give the crude amide-ester **32** as a viscous orange oil. The oil was subjected to flash chromatography [hexanes:EtOAc (3:1)], and, after the solvent was evaporated (rotovap), the pure amide-ester **32** (0.440 g, 70%) was afforded as a bright white solid: mp 148-150 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3308 [NH], 1727 [C=O], 1650 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.34 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.35 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.83 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.94 [s, 3 H, OCH₃], 6.77 [d, *J* = 7.92 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.29 [dd, *J* = 7.91, 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.63 [d, *J* = 1.99 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.89 [d, *J* = 8.02 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 8.07 [d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 8.12 [s, 1 H, N-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.38 [C(CH₃)₂], 118.19-149.75 [Ar-C], 164.73 [HNC=O], 166.25 [CO₂Me]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₂H₂₅NO₄: C, 71.91; H, 6.86; N, 3.81. Found: C, 71.73; H, 6.92; N, 3.76.

4-{[(2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-3,4-dihydro-2H-chromen-6-yl)amino]carbonyl}benzoic

Acid (33). Amide-ester 32 (0.270 g, 0.73 mmol), along with 95% EtOH (13 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser. The resulting mixture was stirred vigorously for 10 min, but a small amount of 32 remained undissolved. To the reaction mixture was added, dropwise, 2 N NaOH (3.67 mL, 7.35 mmol, 10 eq) at RT, and the resulting mixture was allowed to stir at RT (4 h). After approximately 30 min, the reaction mixture turned from slightly cloudy to completely clear. After stirring 4 h, the reaction mixture was filtered, and the filtrate was chilled to 0 °C (ice bath) and acidified (pH ~ 2) with HCl (2 N). At pH ~ 2 a white precipitate formed, which was filtered, washed with cold H₂O (30 mL), dried under
reduced pressure (12 h, 0.75 mm Hg, 80 °C), and recrystallized [EtOAc:hexanes (2:1)] to provide amide-acid **33** (0.190 g, 73%) as a bright white solid: mp 183-185 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3450 [CO₂H], 3303 [NH], 1701 [C=O], 1686 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DMSO d_6) δ 1.30 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.31 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.82 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.36 [bs, 1 H, O-H], 6.71 [d, J = 8.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.50 [dd, J = 7.99, 2.03 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.73 [d, J = 1.99 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.06 [s, 4 H, Ar-H], 10.23 [s, 1 H, N-H]; ¹³C NMR (DMSO- d_6) ppm 28.10 [C(CH₃)₂)], 30.62 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.65 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.24 [CH₂], 74.05 [OC(CH₃)₂], 117.23-148.49 [Ar-C], 164.21 [HNC=O], 166.78 [CO₂H]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₂₃NO₄: C, 71.37; H, 6.56; N, 3.96. Found: C, 71.73; H, 6.70; N, 3.89.

Methyl 4-{[(2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-3,4-dihydro-2H-chromen-8-yl)amino]carbonyl}-

benzoate (34). The amine **48b** (0.770 g, 3.75 mmol) was dissolved in dry benzene (44 mL) and placed in a 100-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an N₂ inlet. To this solution was added dry pyridine (3.86 g, 3.95 mL, 48.76 mmol, 13 eq), and the resulting mixture was stirred at RT (10 min). *Mono*-methyl terephthaloyl chloride (**58**) (0.840 g, 4.01 mmol, 1.07 eq) was then rinsed into the reaction mixture in one portion with dry benzene (30 mL). The resulting reaction mixture was then allowed to stir at RT (12 h), during which time pyridinium hydrochloride precipitated as a flaky white solid. The reaction mixture was then poured into H₂O (187 mL), and the precipitate immediately dissolved in the water layer. The resulting mixture was extracted with EtOAc (4 x 77 mL), and the combined organic layers were washed successively with HCl (2 *N*, 4 x 77 mL), H₂O (3 x 77 mL), Na₂CO₃ (40%, 77 mL), saturated, aqueous NaHCO₃ (77 mL), H₂O (77 mL), and brine (77 mL). The organic layer was then dried

(Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give the crude amide-ester **34** as pink, clumpy solid. The solid was purified by flash chromatography [hexanes:EtOAc (3:1)], and the white solid obtained thereby was recrystallized (hexane) to give the **34** (0.800 g, 60%) as a white solid: mp 124-125 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3366 [NH], 1713 [C=O], 1668 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.36 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.41 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.89 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.96 [s, 3 H, OCH₃], 6.97 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.07 [dd, 8.0, 1.99 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.94 [d, 7.98 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.17 [d, 8.0 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.35 [dd, 8.01, 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.70 [s, 1 H, N-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.66 [C(CH₃)₂], 117.05-141.07 [Ar-C], 163.99 [HNC=O], 166.22 [CO₂Me]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₂H₂₅NO₄: C, 71.91; H, 6.86; N, 3.81. Found: C, 72.13; H, 6.95; N, 3.84.

4-{[(2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-3,4-dihydro-2H-chromen-8-yl)amino]carbonyl}benzoic

Acid (35). The amide-ester 34 (0.38 g, 1.03 mmol), along with 95% EtOH (17 mL), was placed in a 50-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser. The resulting mixture was stirred vigorously (10 min), but a small amount of 34 remained undissolved. To the reaction mixture was added, dropwise, 2 N NaOH (5.17 mL, 10.34 mmol, 10 eq) at RT, and the resulting mixture was allowed to stir at RT (4 h). After approximately 30 min, the reaction mixture turned from slightly cloudy to completely clear. After stirring 4 h, the reaction mixture was filtered, and the filtrate was chilled to 0 °C (ice bath) and acidified (pH ~ 2) with HCl (2 N). At pH ~ 2 a white precipitate formed and was filtered, washed with cold H₂O (40 mL), dried under reduced pressure (12 h, 0.75 mm Hg, 80 °C). Thus, amide-acid 35 (0.190 g, 73%) was obtained pure as a white

solid: mp 225-227 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3415 [NH], 3352 [CO₂H], 1701 [C=O], 1672 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆) δ 1.32 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.34 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.85 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.38 [bs, 1 H, O-*H*], 6.92 [m, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.20 [dd, 7.96, 1.91 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.75 [dd, 7.99, 2.0 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 8.02 [d, 7.96 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 8.10 [d, 7.99 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 9.33 [s, 1 H, N-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DMSO-*d*₆) ppm 27.98 [C(CH₃)₂)], 30.67 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.49 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.30 [CH₂], 75.22 [OC(CH₃)₂], 119.80-143.70 [Ar-*C*], 164.25 [HN*C*=O], 166.71 [CO₂H]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₂₃NO₄: C, 71.13; H, 6.56; N, 3.96. Found: C, 70.76; H, 6.58; N, 3.93.

2,2,4-Trimetyl-2*H*-chromen-7-yl 4-(methoxycarbonyl)benzoate (36). In a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask, equipped with two addition funnels and a N₂ inlet, was placed NaH (0.054 g, 2.14 mmol, 1.02 eq) and dry THF (1 mL). The resulting suspension was chilled to 0 °C (ice bath), and then the phenol 49 (0.400 g, 2.10 mmol), in THF (3 mL), was added dropwise (5 min). After the addition was complete, the resulting mixture was allowed to stir (5 min), and then acid chloride 58 (0.464 g, 2.33 mmol, 1.1 eq) in THF (2 mL) was added dropwise. The resulting mixture was allowed to warm to RT slowly and was then stirred for an additional 12 h. The final mixture was then poured into H₂O (15 mL) containing 3 drops of glacial acetic acid. Two layers were then separated, and the aqueous layer was extracted with EtOAc (4 x 15 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with 10% NaOH (2 x 15 mL), H₂O (15 mL), and brine (15 mL) and then were dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a white solid that was recrystallized [HCCl₃:pentane (1:1)] to afford di-ester **36** (0.270 g, 36%) as a shiny white solid: mp 94-95 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 1740 [C=O], 1731 [C=O] cm⁻

¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.41 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 2.01 [d, J = 1.89 Hz, 3 H, HC=C(CH₃)], 3.96 [s, 3 H, OCH₃], 5.41 [m, 1 H, HC=C(CH₃)], 6.68 [d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.74 [dd, J = 7.97, 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.17 [d, 7.98 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.16 [d, 8.01 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.24 [d, 8.02 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 17.94 [OCH₃], 28.15 [OC(CH₃)₂)], 52.46 [HC=(CH₃)], 76.48 [OC(CH₃)₂], 109.76 [HC=C(CH₃)], 113.25 [HC=C(CH₃)], 121.08-153.94 [Ar-C], 164.17 [C=O], 166.14 [C=O]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₂₀O₅: C, 71.58; H, 5.72. Found: C, 71.61; H, 5.79.

[(2-Methoxy-4-nitrophenyl)amino][(2,2,4,4-tetramethylthiochroman-6-yl)amino]methane-1-thione (37). Amine 50a (0.110 g, 0.50 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an N₂ inlet and addition funnel. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 2methoxy-4-nitrophenyl isothiocyanate (0.108 g, 0.52 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (5 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred for 24 h. The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a yellow solid which was recrystallized [HCCl₃:pentane (1:3)] to give 37 (0.150 g, 70%) as a light yellow solid: mp 155-157 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3330 [NH], 3190 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.40 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.45 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 1.99 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.82 [s, 3 H, OCH₃], 7.03 [d, *J* = 7.69 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.22 [d, *J* = 7.97 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.35 [s, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.69 [s, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.89 [d, *J* = 8.38 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 8.46 [s, 1 H, N-*H*], 8.49 [s, 1 H, N-*H*], 9.09 [d, *J* = 8.79 Hz, 1H, Ar-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 31.49 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.48 [SC(CH₃)₂], 35.83 [C(CH₃)₂], 42.45 [SC(CH₃)₂], 53.88 [CH₂], 56.43 [OCH₃], 105.25-148.66 [Ar-C], 179.81 [C=S]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₂₅N₃O₃S₂: C, 58.44; H, 5.84; N, 9.74; S, 14.86. Found: C, 58.20; H, 5.94; N, 9.61; S, 14.99.

[(4-Nitrobenzoyl)amino][(2,2,4,4-tetramethylthiochroman-6-yl)amino]methane-1-

thione (38). Amine 50a (0.110 g, 0.50 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a N₂ inlet and an addition funnel. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-nitrobenzoyl isothiocyanate (0.107 g, 0.52 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (5 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred for 24 h. The solvent was removed in vacuo to give a dark orange solid which was recrystallized [HCCl3:pentane (1:1)] to give 38 (0.160 g, 75%) as a bright orange solid: mp 215-217 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3289 [NH], 1677 [C=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DMSO- d_6) δ 1.36 [s, 6 H, C(CH_3)_2], 1.39 [s, 6 H, SC(CH_3)_2], 1.94 [s, 2 H, CH_2], 7.11 [d, J = 8.51 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.23 [d, J = 8.43 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.86 [s, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.15 [d, J = 8.65 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.34 [d, J = 8.34 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 11.89 [s, 1 H, N-H], 12.18 [s, 1 H, N-H]; ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆) ppm 31.20 [C(CH₃)₂)], 32.25 [SC(CH₃)₂], 35.30 [C(CH₃)₂], 42.05 [SC(CH₃)₂], 53.27 [CH₂], 121.12-149.80 [Ar-C], 166.58 [C=O], 178.19 [C=S]. Anal. Calcd for $C_{21}H_{23}N_3O_3S_2$: C, 58.72; H, 5.40; N, 9.78; S, 14.93. Found: C, 58.50; H, 5.34; N, 9.66; S, 14.70.

Ethyl 4-{[N-(2,2,4,4-Tetramethylchroman-6-yl)carbamoyl]amino}benzoate (39). Amine 48a (0.150 g, 0.73 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a N₂ inlet and an addition funnel. The reaction mixture was cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-ethoxycarbonylphenyl isocyanate (0.145 g, 0.76 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (4 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred for 24 h. The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a clumpy white solid which was recrystallized (EtOAc) to give **39** (0.190 g, 65%) as a bright-white cotton-like solid: mp 234-235 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3346 [NH], 3195 [NH], 1713 [C=O], 1655 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆) δ 1.28 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.30 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.31 [t, 3 H, OCH₂CH₃], 1.80 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 4.29 [q, *J* = 7.09 Hz, 2 H, OCH₂CH₃], 6.65 [d, *J* = 7.99 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.09 [dd, *J* = 7.97, 1.98 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.44 [d, *J* = 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.58 [d, *J* = 8.08 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 7.88 [d, *J* = 8.06 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 8.52 [s, 1 H, N-*H*], 8.99 [s, 1 H, N-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DMSO-*d*₆) ppm 14.23 [OCH₂CH₃], 28.10 [C(CH₃)₂], 117.10-147.48 [Ar-C], 152.33 [C=O], 165.43 [C=O]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₈N₂O₄: C, 69.67; H, 7.12; N, 7.07. Found: C, 69.48; H, 7.11; N, 7.05.

Ethyl 4-{[N-(2,2,4,4-Tetramethylchroman-6-yl)thiocarbamoyl]amino}benzoate (40). Amine 48a (0.150 g, 0.73 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a N₂ inlet and an addition funnel. The reaction mixture was cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-ethoxycarbonylphenyl isothiocyanate (0.157 g, 0.799 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (4 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred (24 h). The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a tan, viscous oil. The oil was subjected to flash chromatography [Et₂O:hexanes (1:1)], and, after the solvent was removed *in vacuo*, **40** (0.210 g, 69%) was afforded as a flaky white solid: mp 102-104 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3351 [NH], 3289 [NH], 1714 [C=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.34 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.36 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.38 [t, 3 H, OCH₂CH₃], 1.85 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 4.35 [q, J = 7.16 Hz, 3 H, OCH₂CH₃], 6.85 [d, J = 8.07 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.04 [dd, J = 7.98, 2.07 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.24 [d, J = 2.04 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.57 [d, J = 8.12 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 7.81 [s, 1 H, N-H], 8.01 [d, J = 8.05 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.09 [s, 1 H, N-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 14.28 [OCH₂CH₃], 28.45 [C(CH₃)₂], 31.06 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.70 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.47 [CH₂], 60.96 [OCH₂CH₃], 75.09 [OC(CH₃)₂], 119.39-152.35 [Ar-C], 165.85 [C=O], 179.47 [C=S]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₈N₂O₃S: C, 66.96; H, 6.84; N, 6.79; S, 7.77. Found: C, 67.24; H, 6.98; N, 6.88; S, 7.73.

[(4-Nitrophenyl)amino][(2,2,4,4-tetramethylchroman-6-yl)amino]methane-1-

thione (41). Amine 48a (0.150 g, 0.73 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an N₂ inlet and addition funnel. The reaction mixture was cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-nitrophenyl isothiocyanate (0.137 g, 0.76 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (4 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred for 24 h. The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a dark yellow, clumpy solid. The solid was subjected to flash chromatography [Et₂O:hexanes (2:1)], and, after the solvent was evaporated *in vacuo*, **41** (0.240 g, 85%) was obtained as a fluffy, bright-yellow solid: mp 166-168 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3346 [NH], 3215 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.35 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.38 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.86 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 6.87 [d, *J* = 8.06 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.04 [dd, *J* = 8.01, 2.06 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.23 [d, *J* = 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.74 [d, J = 8.03 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 7.87 [s, 1 H, N-*H*], 8.18 [d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 8.35 [s, 1 H, N-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.45 [C(*C*H₃)₂)], 31.09 [*C*(CH₃)₂], 32.72 [OC(*C*H₃)₂], 48.38 [*C*H₂], 75.21 [O*C*(CH₃)₂], 119.66-152.71 [Ar-*C*], 179.15 [*C*=S]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₀H₂₃N₃O₃S: C, 62.32; H, 6.01; N, 10.90; S, 8.32. Found: C, 62.50; H, 6.07; N, 10.63; S, 8.16.

Ethyl 4-{[N-(2,2,4,4-Tetramethylchroman-8-yl)carbamoyl]amino}benzoate (42). Amine 48b (0.130 g, 0.63 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an N₂ inlet and addition funnel. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-ethoxycarbonylphenyl isocyanate (0.26 g, 0.66 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (3 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred (24 h). The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a clumpy white solid which was subjected to flash chromatography [Et₂O:hexanes (8:1)], and, after the solvent was evaporated (rotovap), 42 (0.210 g, 84%) was obtained as a fluffy white, cotton-like solid: mp 174-176 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3348 [NH], 3201 [NH], 1715 [C=O], 1675 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.27 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.31 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.36 [t, 3 H, OCH_2CH_3], 1.78 [s, 2 H, CH_2], 4.34 [q, J = 7.21 Hz, 2 H, OCH_2CH_3], 6.87 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.97 [dd, J = 8.03, 1.98 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.44 [d, J = 8.07 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 7.74 [s, 1 H, N-H], 7.91 [d, J = 7.98 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 7.95 [d, J = 1.99 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.03 [s, 1 H, N-H]: ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 14.28 [OCH₂CH₃], 28.41 [C(CH₃)₂)], 30.97 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.53 [OC(CH₃)₂], 49.02 [CH₂], 60.282 [OCH₂CH₃], 75.45 [OC(CH₃)₂], 117.31-143.39 [Ar-C], 152.80 [C=O], 166.66 [C=O]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₈N₂O₄: C, 69.67; H, 7.12; N, 7.07. Found: C, 69.81; H, 7.18; N, 7.01.

Ethyl 4-{[N-(2,2,4,4-Tetramethylchroman-8-vl)thiocarbamovl]amino}benzoate (43). Amine 48b (0.130 g, 0.63 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a N₂ inlet and an addition funnel. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-ethoxycarbonylphenyl isothiocyanate (0.136 g, 0.66 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (3 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred for 24 h. The solvent was removed in vacuo to give a tan, viscous oil. The oil was subjected to flash chromatography [Et₂O:hexanes (1:1)], and, after the solvent was removed in vacuo, 43 (0.230 g, 88%) was afforded as a fluffy, white solid: mp 56-58 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3325 [NH], 3199 [NH], 1715 [C=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.29 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.34 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.39 [t, 3 H, OCH₂CH₃], 1.83 [s, 2 H, CH_2], 4.38 [q, J = 7.12 Hz, 3 H, OCH_2CH_3], 6.94 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.15 [dd, J =7.91, 1.98 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.51 [d, J = 7.99 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 7.98 [bs, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.07 [d, J = 8.02 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.30 [s, 1 H, N-H], 8.40 [s, 1 H, N-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 14.26 [OCH₂CH₃], 28.47 [C(CH₃)₂)], 31.02 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.57 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.71 [CH₂], 61.02 [OCH₂CH₃], 75.98 [OC(CH₃)₂], 120.14-143.91 [Ar-C], 165.73 [C=O], 177.83 [C=S]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₈N₂O₃S: C, 66.96; H, 6.84; N, 6.79; S, 7.77. Found: C, 67.34; H, 7.02; N, 6.60; S, 7.50.

[(4-Nitrophenyl)amino][(2,2,4,4-tetramethylchroman-8-yl)amino]methane-1-

thione (44). Amine 48b (0.130 g, 0.63 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (3 mL), was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an N₂ inlet and addition funnel. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 0 °C (ice bath), and 4-nitrophenyl isothiocyanate (0.120 g, 0.66 mmol, 1.04 eq) in dry THF (3 mL) was then added dropwise (5 min). After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to RT and was then stirred (24 h). The THF was then removed *in vacuo* to give a dark yellow. thick oil. The oil was subjected to flash chromatography [Et_2O :hexanes (2:1)], and, after the solvent was evaporated in vacuo, 44 (0.200 g, 82%) was obtained as a fluffy, brightyellow solid: mp 160-161 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3327 [NH], 3232 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR $(DCCl_3) \delta 1.35 [s, 6 H, C(CH_3)_2], 1.36 [s, 6 H, OC(CH_3)_2], 1.87 [s, 2 H, CH_2], 6.96 [m, 1]$ H, Ar-H], 7.22 [dd, J = 8.02, 2.04 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.62 [bs, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.68 [d, J = 8.07 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.21 [d, J = 8.07 Hz, 2 H, Ar-H], 8.30 [s, 1 H, N-H], 8.34 [s, 1 H, N-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.51 [C(CH₃)₂)], 31.09 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.61 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.67 [CH2], 76.26 [OC(CH3)2], 120.48-144.80 [Ar-C], 178.21 [C=S]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₀H₂₃N₃O₃S: C, 62.32; H, 6.01; N, 10.90; S, 8.32. Found: C, 62.40; H, 5.92; N, 10.84; S, 8.11.

Ethyl 4-[(2,2,4-Trimethyl-2*H*-chromen-7-yloxy)carbonylamino]benzoate (45). Phenol 49 (0.600 g, 3.15 mmol, 1.05 eq), 4-ethoxycarbonylphenyl isocyante (0.570 g, 3.00 mmol), and 5 mL of dry THF were placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round bottomed flask equipped with a N_2 inlet. To this stirred solution was added 4 drops of triethylamine (TEA), and the resulting mixture was stirred (3 days) at RT. The solvent

was then evaporated (rotovap) to give a white, clumpy solid. This solid was subjected to flash column chromatography [EtOAc:hexanes (2:1)]. Upon evaporation of the solvent *in vacuo*, a white solid was obtained which was recrystallized [Et₂O:pentane (1:1)] to afford carbamate-ester **45** (0.560 g, 50%) as a white solid: mp 138.5-140 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3314 [NH], 1756 [EtOC=O], 1694 [HNC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.39 [s, 3 H, OCH₂CH₃], 1.40 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.98 [d, J = 1.97 Hz, 3 H, HC=C(CH₃)], 4.36 [q, J = 7.23 Hz, 2 H, OCH₂CH₃], 5.39 [m, 1 H, HC=C(CH₃)], 6.63 [d, J = 1.97 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 6.69 [dd, J = 7.98, 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.12 [d, J = 8.02 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.31 [bs, 1 H, N-*H*], 7.51 [d, J = 8.03 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*], 8.01 [d, J = 8.04 Hz, 2 H, Ar-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 14.19 [OCH₂CH₃], 17.81 [HC=(CH₃)], 28.06 [OC(CH₃)₂], 60.81 [OCH₂CH₃], 76.50 [OC(CH₃)₂], 109.80 [HC=C(CH₃)], 113.38 [HC=C(CH₃)], 117.81-151.27 [Ar-C], 154.02 [HNC=O], 166.31 [CO₂Et]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₂H₂₃NO₅: C, 69.28; H, 6.08; N, 3.67. Found: C, 69.31; H, 6.06; N, 3.72.

{4-[N-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)carbamoyl]phenyl}-N-(2,2,4,4-tetramethyl(3H-benzo[3,4e]thian-6-yl))carboxamide (46). Acid 60¹³⁵ (0.710 g, 1.92 mmol), along with dry THF (8 mL), was placed in a 100-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser, N₂ inlet, and an addition funnel. To this stirred cloudy, yellow solution was added triethylamine (0.222 g, 2.19 mmol, ~1.14 eq) dropwise, using a pipette for the addition through a sidearm of the flask. The resulting, almost clear mixture was stirred at RT (45 min), and isobutyl chloroformate (0.300 g, 0.28 mL, 2.20 mmol, ~1.14 eq) was added at RT to the reaction mixture through a septum in a sidearm of the flask via a syringe. The resulting yellow, cloudy mixture was then heated to 59 °C via hand control

of the variac, stirred for 1.5 h, and 4-aminophenol (0.356 g, ~1.7 eq) in pyridine (3.5 mL) was added dropwise to the reaction mixture via the addition funnel. During the addition of the aminophenol, the reaction mixture turned to a yellow-orange color, and this resulting solution was stirred (4 h) at 59 °C. The resulting yellowish, cloudy mixture was allowed to cool to RT, and H₂O (65 mL) was added. The resulting cloudy mixture was placed in a separatory funnel and extracted (EtOAc, 4 x 50 mL). The combined organic layers were successively washed with 2 N HCl ($2 \times 40 \text{ mL}$), H₂O ($2 \times 50 \text{ mL}$), and brine (40 mL). The organic solution was then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a tan foam. This foam was subjected to flash chromatography [EtOAc:hexanes (2:1)], and, upon removal of the solvent, a yellow solid was obtained, which was then recrystallized [MeOH:H₂O (13:8)] to give 46 (0.177 g, 20%) as a light yellow solid: mp 280-282 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3405 [OH], 3324 [NH], 1642 [C=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DMSO- d_6) δ 1.37 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.38 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 1.93 [CH₂], 6.76 [d, 2 H, J = 7.98 Hz, Ar-H], 7.05 [d, 1 H, J = 7.93 Hz, Ar-H], 7.56 [d, 2 H, J = 8.0 Hz, Ar-H], 7.63 [dd, 1 H, J = 8.03, 1.98 Hz, Ar-H], 7.91 [d, 1 H, J = 2.02 Hz, Ar-H], 8.09 [s, 4 H, Ar-H], 9.32 [s, 1 H, OH], 10.20 [s, 1 H, NH], 10.32 [s, 1 H, NH]; ¹³C NMR $(DMSO-d_6)$ ppm 31.10 $[C(CH_3)_2]$, 32.25 $[SC(CH_3)_2]$, 35.21 $[C(CH_3)_2]$, 41.83 [SC(CH₃)₂], 53.45 [CH₂], 114.92-153.77 [Ar-C], 164.08, 164.47 [C=O]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₇H₂₈N₂O₃S: C, 69.70; H, 6.13; N, 6.08; S, 6.96. Found: C, 69.37; H, 6.19; N, 5.91; S, 6.72.

{4-[N-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)carbamoyl]phenyl}-N-(2,2,4,4-tetramethylchroman-6-

yl)carboxamide (47). Acid 33 (0.400 g, 1.13 mmol), along with dry THF (5 mL), was

placed in a 50-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser, N₂ inlet, and an addition funnel. To this stirred, cloudy yellow solution was added triethylamine (0.131 g, 1.29 mmol, ~1.14 eq) dropwise, using a pipette for the addition through a sidearm. The resulting, almost clear mixture was stirred at RT (45 min), and isobutyl chloroformate (0.177 g, 0.17 mL, 1.29 mmol, ~1.14 eq) was added at RT to the reaction mixture through a septum in a sidearm of the flask, using a syringe. The resulting cloudy, yellow mixture was then heated to 59 °C via hand control of the variac and was stirred for 1.5 h. 4-Aminophenol (0.210 g, ~1.7 eq) in pyridine (2 mL) was added dropwise to the reaction mixture via the addition funnel. During the addition of the aminophenol, the reaction mixture turned to a yellow-orange color, and this resulting solution was stirred (4 h) at 59 °C. The resulting cloudy, yellowish mixture was allowed to cool to RT, and H_2O (39 mL) was added. The resulting cloudy mixture was placed in a separatory funnel and extracted (EtOAc, 4 x 30 mL). The combined organic layers were successively washed with 2 N HCl (2 x 25 mL), H₂O (2 x 30 mL), and brine (25 mL). The organic solution was then dried (Na_2SO_4 , 12 h), and the solvent was removed in vacuo to give a yellow foam. This foam was subjected to flash chromatography [EtOAc:hexanes (2:1)], and, upon removal of the solvent, a pink solid was isolated and recrystallized [MeOH:H₂O (13:8)] to give 47 (0.150 g, 30%) as a white solid: mp 232-234 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3431 [OH], 3352 [NH], 1663 [C=O], 1647 [C=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆) § 1.30 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.32 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.82 [CH₂], 6.71 [d, 1 H, J = 7.96 Hz, Ar-H], 6.76 [d, 2 H, J = 8.0 Hz, Ar-H], 7.50 [dd, 1 H, J = 7.99, 2.01 Hz, Ar-*H*], 7.55 [d, 2 H, J = 8.01 Hz, Ar-*H*], 7.74 [d, 1 H, J = 2.0 Hz, Ar-*H*], 8.07 [s, 4 H, Ar-*H*], 9.31 [s, 1 H, OH], 10.18 [s, 1 H, NH], 10.20 [s, 1 H, NH]; ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆) ppm 28.12 [C(CH₃)₂], 30.64 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.62 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.24 [CH₂], 74.05 [OC(CH₃)₂], 115.02-153.87 [Ar-C], 164.22, 164.26 [C=O]. Anal. Calcd for C₂₇H₂₈N₂O₄: C, 72.85; H, 6.35; N, 6.30. Found: C, 72.50; H, 6.38; N, 6.29.

2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-6-aminochroman (48a). A mixture of nitro compound 54a (1.0 g, 4.2 mmol), iron powder (0.850 g, 15.2 mmol, 3.6 eq, Sigma-Aldrich Chemical Co.), glacial acetic acid (1.80 g, 30 mmol, 7 eq), and absolute EtOH (11 mL) was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser and N2 inlet and was stirred at reflux (12 h). Within approximately 15 min, the reaction mixture turned from clear yellow to a dark maroon color. The reaction was allowed to cool to RT and was poured into H_2O (45 mL). The resulting brown emulsion was extracted with Et_2O (2 x 40 mL) and HCCl₃ (3 x 40 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with H_2O (3 x 40 mL), dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and concentrated *in vacuo* to give a dark oil. This crude mixture was then dissolved in E_{t_2O} (30 mL), and the resulting solution was extracted with 2 N HCl (2 x 30 mL). The acid solution was neutralized with 40% Na₂CO₃ (pH \sim 8), and the resulting cloudy solution was extracted (Et₂O, 2 x 30 mL). The combined organic layers were dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed in *vacuo* to afford amine **48a** as a very light tan oil which solidified upon standing overnight in the freezer. Amine 48a (0.370 g, 42%) was thus obtained as an off-white solid: mp 40-42 °C. However, it should be noted that it was discovered that a crude mixture of the isomeric nitro-compounds 54a and 54b, resulting from the conversion of 53-54a and 54b, could be co-reduced by this method. The final mixture of amines 48a and 48b was more easily separated by flash column chromatography [hexanes: $Et_2O(1:1)$] than the corresponding mixture of nitro compounds (fractions 4-10 yielded **48b** and fractions 17-25 yielded **48a**). Data for **48a**: IR (neat) 3433 [NH], 3357 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.30 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.31 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.78 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.29 [bs, 2 H, NH₂], 6.46 [dd, J = 8.03, 1.99 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.61 [d, J = 1.80 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.63 [d, J= 7.89 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.35 [C(CH₃)₂)], 30.96 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.57 [OC(CH₃)₂], 49.32 [CH₂], 73.81 [OC(CH₃)₂], 113.41-145.35 [Ar-C]. Data for **48b**: IR (neat) 3455 [NH], 3360 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.32 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.36 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.83 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.54 [bs, 2 H, NH₂], 6.54 [dd, J = 7.94, 2.02 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.70 [m, 2 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.63 [C(CH₃)₂)], 30.96 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.58 [OC(CH₃)₂], 49.34 [CH₂], 74.48 [OC(CH₃)₂], 112.37-140.07 [Ar-C]. Amines **48a** and **48b** were used immediately without further purification.

2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-8-aminochroman (48b). A mixture of nitro compound 54b (1.60 g, 6.8 mmol), iron powder (1.36 g, 24.3 mmol, 3.6 eq, Sigma-Aldrich Chemical Co.), glacial acetic acid (2.86 g, 47.6 mmol, 7 eq), and absolute EtOH (17 mL) was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser and N₂ inlet and was stirred at reflux (12 h). Within approximately 15 min, the reaction mixture turned from clear yellow to a dark maroon color. The reaction was allowed to cool to RT and was poured into H₂O (68 mL). The resulting brown emulsion was extracted with Et₂O (2 x 40 mL) and HCCl₃ (3 x 40 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with H₂O (3 x 65 mL), dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and concentrated *in vacuo* to give a dark oil. This crude mixture was then dissolved in Et₂O (45 mL), and the resulting solution was neutralized with 2 *N* HCl (2 x 55 mL). The acid solution was neutralized with

40% Na₂CO₃ (pH ~ 8), and the resulting cloudy solution was extracted (Et₂O, 2 x 55 mL). The combined organic layers were dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed *in vacuo* to afford amine **48b** as a light pink oil which crystallized upon standing at RT. Amine **48b** (0.430 g, 31%) was thus obtained as a pink solid: mp 40-42 °C. However, it should be noted that it was discovered that a crude mixture of the isomeric nitro compounds **54a** and **54b**, resulting from the conversion of **53**→**54a** and **54b**, could be co-reduced by this method. The final mixture of amines **48a** and **48b** was more easily separated by flash column chromatography [hexanes:Et₂O (1:1)] than the corresponding mixture of nitro compounds (fractions 4-10 yielded **48b** and fractions 17-25 yielded **48a**). Spectral data for **48b** was the same as stated above (in the description of **48a**). Amines **48a** and **48b** were used immediately without further purification.

2,2,4-Trimethyl-2*H*-1-benzopyran-7-ol (49). A solution of 3.0 *M* methylmagnesium bromide in diethyl ether (30 mL, 90.8 mmol, 4 eq), along with dry THF (60 mL), was placed in a 250-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser, N₂ inlet, and an addition funnel. Known lactone 55^{134} (4.00 g, 22.7 mmol), dissolved in dry THF (25 mL), was added dropwise, with stirring, to the reaction flask at RT. During the addition, some heat evolved, and a yellow precipitate formed. After the addition was complete, the resulting yellow mixture was stirred (2 days) at RT and the reaction was quenched with saturated NH₄Cl (250 mL). The resulting mixture was placed in a separatory funnel, and the two layers were separated. The aqueous layer was extracted with Et₂O (5 x 50 mL), and the combined organic layers were then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was evaporated (rotovap) to give a dark orange oil which was immediately dissolved in glacial acetic acid (20 mL) and placed in a 50 mL, singlenecked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser and N₂ inlet. The resulting solution was stirred and heated gently (2 h-slightly below the boiling point of acetic acid, or at approximately 110 °C). The reaction mixture was allowed to cool to RT and poured into H_2O (100 mL). The resulting dark emulsion was extracted with Et₂O (5 x 50 mL), and the combined organic layers were washed with saturated, aqueous NaHCO₃ (3 x 50 mL) and brine (2 x 50 mL) and were then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was removed in vacuo to give a dark brown, viscous oil. The oil was subjected to flash column chromatography [Et_2O :hexanes (5:1)], and, upon evaporation of the solvent (rotovap), pure phenol 49 (1.51 g, 40%) was obtained as a white solid: mp 128-130 °C; IR (KBr pellet) 3330 [OH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.38 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.96 [d, J = 2.09 Hz, 3 H, HC=C(CH₃)], 5.17 [bs, 1 H, O-H], 5.28 [m, 1 H, HC=C(CH₃)], 6.32 [d, J = 2.01 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.35 [dd, J = 8.01, 2.0 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.99 [d, J = 8.03 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ${}^{13}C$ NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 17.92 [HC=(CH₃)], 28.03 [OC(CH₃)₂)], 76.38 [OC(CH₃)₂], 103.67 [HC=C(CH₃)], 107.42 [HC=C(CH₃)], 116.62-156.34 [Ar-C]. Anal. Calcd for C₁₂H₁₄O₂: C, 75.60; H, 7.42; N. Found: C, 75.30; H, 7.32.

2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-6-aminothiochroman (50a). A mixture of nitro compound 57a (1.0 g, 3.97 mmol), iron powder (0.803 g, 14.4 mmol, 3.6 eq, Sigma-Aldrich Chemical Co.), glacial acetic acid (1.67 g, 27.8 mmol, 7 eq), and absolute EtOH (10 mL) was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser and N₂ inlet and was stirred at reflux (12 h). Within approximately 15 min, the reaction mixture turned from clear yellow to a dark maroon color. The reaction was allowed to

cool to RT and was poured into H₂O (42 mL). The resulting brown emulsion was extracted with Et₂O (2 x 37 mL) and HCCl₃ (3 x 37 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with H₂O (3 x 37 mL), dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and concentrated in vacuo to give a dark oil. This crude mixture was then dissolved in Et₂O (28 mL), and the resulting solution was extracted with 2 N HCl (2 x 28 mL). The acid solution was neutralized with 40% Na₂CO₃ (pH \sim 8), and the resulting cloudy solution was extracted (Et₂O, 2 x 28) mL). The combined organic layers were dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed in vacuo to afford amine 50a as a tan oil which solidified upon standing at RT. Amine 50a (0.352 g, 40%) was obtained as an off-white solid: mp 63-65 °C (lit¹²³ mp 57-59 °C). However, it should be noted that it was discovered that a crude mixture of the isomeric nitro-compounds 57a and 57b, resulting from the conversion of $56 \rightarrow 57a$ and 57b, could be co-reduced by this method. The final mixture of amines 50a and 50b was more easily separated by flash column chromatography [hexanes:EtOAc (2:1)] than the corresponding mixture of nitro compounds (fractions 11-15 yielded 50b and fractions 21-28 yielded 50a). Data for 50a: IR (KBr) 3450 [NH], 3360 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.35 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.38 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 1.89 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.57 [bs, 2 H, NH₂], 6.45 [dd, J = 8.01, 1.97 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.75 [d, J = 1.85 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.92 [d, J =7.93 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 31.57 [C(CH₃)₂)], 32.25 [SC(CH₃)₂], 35.73 [C(CH₃)₂], 41.90 [OC(CH₃)₂], 54.73 [CH₂], 113.41-144.18 [Ar-C]. Spectral data has been reported for **50a**¹²³ IR (KBr) 3450, 3360 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.36 [s, 6 H. (CH₃)₂], 1.39 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 1.90 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 3.50 [bs, 2 H, NH₂], 6.44 [d, H, Ar-H], 6.75 [s, 1 H, Ar-H], 9.92 [d, 1 H, Ar-H]. Data for 50b: IR (neat) 3416 [NH], 3358 [NH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.38 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.41 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 1.91 [s, 2

H, CH₂], 3.64 [bs, 2 H, NH₂], 6.54 [dd, J = 6.18, 1.37 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.85 [dd, J = 6.45, 1.37 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.92 [m, 3 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 31.95 [C(CH₃)₂)], 32.04 [SC(CH₃)₂], 36.11 [C(CH₃)₂], 42.36 [SC(CH₃)₂], 54.46 [CH₂], 112.32-144.35 [Ar-C]. Amine **50a** was used immediately without further purification.

2.2.4.4-Tetramethyl-8-aminothiochroman (50b). A mixture of nitro compound 57b (1.0 g, 3.97 mmol), iron powder (0.803 g, 14.4 mmol, 3.6 eq, Sigma-Aldrich Chemical Co.), glacial acetic acid (1.67 g, 27.8 mmol, 7 eq), and absolute EtOH (10 mL) was placed in a 25-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser and N₂ inlet and was stirred at reflux (12 h). Within approximately 15 min, the reaction mixture turned from clear yellow to a dark maroon color. The reaction was allowed to cool to RT and was poured into H₂O (42 mL). The resulting brown emulsion was extracted with Et₂O (2 x 37 mL) and HCCl₃ (3 x 37 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with H₂O (3 x 37 mL), dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and concentrated in vacuo to give a dark oil. This crude mixture was then dissolved in Et₂O (28 mL), and the resulting solution was extracted with 2 N HCl (2 x 28 mL). The acid solution was neutralized with 40% Na₂CO₃ (pH \sim 8), and the resulting cloudy solution was extracted (Et₂O, 2 x 28) mL). The combined organic layers were dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h), and the solvent was removed *in vacuo* to afford amine **50b** as a light tan oil which crystallized upon standing overnight in the freezer. Amine 50b (0.264 g, 30%) was obtained as a cream-colored solid: mp 58.5-60 °C. However, it should be noted that it was discovered that a crude mixture of the isomeric nitro compounds 57a and 57b, resulting from the conversion of $56 \rightarrow 57a$ and 57b, could be co-reduced by this method. The final mixture of amines 50a and **50b** was more easily separated by flash column chromatography [hexanes:EtOAc (2:1)] than the corresponding mixture of nitro compounds (fractions 11-15 yielded **50b** and fractions 21-28 yielded **50a**). Spectral data for **50b** was the same as stated above (in the description of **50a**). Amine **50b** was used immediately without further purification.

A solution of 3.0 M4-(2-Hydroxyphenyl)-2,4-dimethyl-2-pentanol (52). methylmagnesium bromide in diethyl ether (121 mL, 363.20 mmol, 4 eq), along with dry THF (240 mL), was placed in a 1-L three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser, N₂ inlet, and an addition funnel. Lactone 51¹³⁰ (16.00 g, 90.80 mmol), in dry THF (10 mL), was added dropwise to the reaction flask at RT. The resulting mixture was then stirred at reflux (4 days). The reaction mixture was allowed to cool to RT and was then cooled to 0 °C (ice bath). Saturated NH₄Cl solution (820 mL) was then added to the reaction mixture dropwise, via the addition funnel. The resulting mixture was poured into a separatory funnel, and the two layers were separated. The aqueous layer was extracted with Et₂O (4 x 150 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with H₂O (150 mL) and brine (150 mL) and then were dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a pale yellow oil, which, on standing at RT for ~ 5 min, crystallized. The resulting yellow solid was recystallized (petroleum ether) to give diol 52 (16.00 g, 84%) as clear, needle-like crystals: mp 88-90 °C (lit¹⁶¹ mp 91 °C); IR (KBr pellet) 3406 [OH], 1731 [OH] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.17 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.41 [s, 6 H, OC(CH_{3})₂], 2.24 [s, 2 H, CH_{2}], 6.58 [dd, J = 7.21, 1.56 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.87 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.04 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.35 [dd, J = 7.18, 1.59 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 30.89 [C(CH₃)₂], 30.94 [OC(CH₃)₂)], 37.50 [C(CH₃)₂], 52.31 [CH₂], 73.43

 $[OC(CH_3)_2]$, 117.15-155.04 [Ar-C]. The only other information given on 52 was an elemental analysis.¹⁶¹

2.2.4.4-Tetramethylchroman (53). A mixture of diol 52 (45.02 g, 0.22 mol), 85 % H₃PO₄ (21.21 mL, 0.18 mol), and benzene (225 mL) was placed in a 1-L, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser and N2 inlet, and was heated (80 °C). After ~5 min, the first of 3 portions of P_2O_5 (25.42 g, 0.54 mol, 2.5 eq of diol 31) was added, all at once via the side arm of the flask with the aid of a funnel. The other 2 portions of P_2O_5 were added at ~7 h intervals for a total of 76.26 g (3 x 25.42 g). From just after the first portion of P_2O_5 was added, the reaction mixture was allowed to stir at reflux for 24 h. The reaction mixture was then allowed to cool to RT and the benzene solution was decanted from a dark, purple residue in the bottom of the flask. The residue was rinsed in the flask with Et_2O (3 x 150 mL), and the ether layers were combined with the benzene solution. The combined organic layers were then washed with 5% NaHCO₃ (3 x 100 mL) and brine (3 x 100 mL), and were then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was removed in vacuo to give a pale yellow oil, which was subsequently vacuum distilled to afford chroman 53 (21.5 g, 54%) as a colorless oil: bp 69-71 °C/1.5 mm Hg, (lit¹⁶¹ bp 102-104 °C, n^{21.5} 1.5152). ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.34 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.35 [s, 6 H, $OC(CH_3)_2$], 1.84 [s, 2 H, CH_2], 6.79 [dd, J = 7.68, 1.79 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 6.85 [m, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.08 [m, 1 H, Ar-*H*], 7.31 [dd, J = 7.76, 1.83 Hz, 1 H, Ar-*H*]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.45 [C(CH₃)₂], 30.74 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.70 [OC(CH₃)₂], 49.20 [CH₂], 74.30 [OC(CH₃)₂], 117.97-152.62 [Ar-C]. The only other information given on 53 was an elemental analysis.161

2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-6-nitrochroman (54a)2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-8-nitroand chroman (54b). A mixture of Ac_2O (4.78 g, 46.8 mmol, 1.6 eq of HNO₃) and HNO₃ (1.89 mL, 30 mmol, 1.1 eq of chroman) was first prepared by chilling Ac₂O to 0 $^{\circ}$ C (ice bath) and adding HNO₃ to it, dropwise using a pipette. Chroman 53 (5.0 g, 26.3 mmol), dissolved in freshly distilled Ac₂O (5 mL), was then placed in a 50-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an addition funnel and N₂ inlet. The reaction flask was then chilled to -5 °C (ice/salt bath). The HNO₃/Ac₂O mixture was then added dropwise (5 min), via the addition funnel, and the resulting dark blue reaction mixture was allowed to stir at -5 °C (90 min). The reaction mixture was then poured into saturated, aqueous NaHCO₃ (50 mL), and the resulting dark brown emulsion was extracted with H₂CCl₂ (3 x 30 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with H₂O (45 mL) and brine (45 mL) and were then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was removed in vacuo to give a dark brown liquid, which was subjected to flash chromatography [hexanes: $Et_2O(20:1)$] to provide the two isomers 54a and 54b (6-isomer 54a was collected in fractions 5-12, and 8-isomer 54b was collected in fractions 15-20). The 6-isomer 54a (2.67 g, 43%) was thus isolated as a pale yellow solid: mp 56-58 °C; spectral data for 54a: IR (KBr) 1581, 1341 [NO₂] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.39 [s, 6 H. $C(CH_{3})_{2}$, 1.41 [s, 6 H, $OC(CH_{3})_{2}$], 1.89 [s, 2 H, CH_{2}], 6.85 [d, J = 7.93 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.98 [dd, J = 7.01, 1.98 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.22 [d, J = 1.97 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.48 [C(CH₃)₂)], 31.12 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.69 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.07 [CH₂], 76.39 [OC(CH₃)₂], 118.45-158.46 [Ar-C]. The 8-isomer 54b (1.61 g, 26%) was thus isolated as a creamy white solid: mp 52-54 °C; spectral data for 54b: IR (KBr) 1582, 1341 [NO₂] cm^{-1} ; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.37 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.39 [s, 6 H, OC(CH₃)₂], 1.91 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 6.94 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.48 [dd, J = 7.63, 1.87 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.57 [dd, J = 7.59, 1.83 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 28.35 [C(CH₃)₂)], 31.30 [C(CH₃)₂], 32.55 [OC(CH₃)₂], 48.33 [CH₂], 76.86 [OC(CH₃)₂], 118.45-146.89 [Ar-C]. A melting point of a mixture of the two isomers **54a** and **54b** was measured, and the result was mp 46-48 °C.

2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-6-nitrothiochroman (57a) and 2,2,4,4-Tetramethyl-8-nitrothiochroman (57b). A mixture of Ac₂O (13.20 g, 0.129 mol, 1.6 eq of HNO₃) and HNO₃ (5.21 mL, 82.9 mmol, 1.1 eq of chroman) was first prepared by chilling Ac₂O to 0 °C (ice bath) and adding HNO₃ to it, dropwise using a pipette. Known thiochroman 56^{126a} (15.00 g, 72.7 mmol), dissolved in freshly distilled Ac₂O (14 mL), was then placed in a 100-mL, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with an addition funnel and N₂ inlet. The reaction flask was then chilled to -5 °C (ice/salt bath). The HNO₃/Ac₂O mixture was then added dropwise (5 min), via the addition funnel, and the resulting dark blue reaction mixture was allowed to stir at -5 °C (90 min). The reaction mixture was then poured into saturated, aqueous NaHCO₃ (140 mL), and the resulting dark brown emulsion was extracted with H₂CCl₂ (3 x 83 mL). The combined organic lavers were washed with H₂O (125 mL) and brine (125 mL) and were then dried (Na₂SO₄, 12 h). The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to give a dark brown liquid, which was subjected to flash chromatography [hexanes: EtOAc (5:1)] to provide isomers 57a and 57b (6-isomer 57a was collected in fractions 8-15, and 8-isomer 57b was collected in fractions 18-21). The 6-isomer 57a (4.75 g, 26%) was isolated as a pale yellow solid: mp 64-66 °C (lit¹²³ mp 103-107 °C). The apparent discrepancy between the reported¹²³ mp and the mp measured here is likely because the data reported¹²³ for **50a** corresponded to another compound. As

can be seen below, the spectral data for 50a reported here clearly matches what would be expected, while the data reported¹²³ before does not. Spectral data for 57a: IR (KBr) 1519, 1345 [NO₂] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.45 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.46 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 2.00 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 7.21 [d, J = 8.65 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.88 [dd, J = 6.32, 2.33 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.26 [d, J = 2.33 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 31.64 [C(CH₃)₂)], 32.43 [SC(CH₃)₂], 35.85 [C(CH₃)₂], 43.04 [SC(CH₃)₂], 53.24 [CH₂], 120.90-143.07 [Ar-C]. Spectral data has been reported for $57a^{123}$ ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.10 [s, 3 H, (CH₃)₂], 1.37 [s, 3 H, (CH₃)₂], 1.52 [s, SC(CH₃)₂], 1.56 [s, SC(CH₃)₂], 2.03 [m, 3 H, CH₂], 8.01 [d, 1 H, Ar-H], 8.24 [d, 2 H, Ar-H]. No further information was provided for 57a. Previously unknown 8-isomer 57b (1.83 g, 10%) was isolated as a creamy white solid: mp 105-108 °C; spectral data for 57b: IR (KBr) 1516, 1338 [NO₂] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 1.37 [s, 6 H, C(CH₃)₂], 1.44 [s, 6 H, SC(CH₃)₂], 2.05 [s, 2 H, CH₂], 7.19 [m, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.62 [dd, J = 6.89, 1.37 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H], 7.87 [dd, J = 6.59, 1.51 Hz, 1 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 30.64 [C(CH₃)₂)], 33.30 [SC(CH₃)₂], 35.91 [C(CH₃)₂], 40.87 [SC(CH₃)₂], 53.89 [CH₂], 123.37-146.20 [Ar-C].

Mono-methyl Terephthaloyl Chloride (58). Commercially available *mono*-methyl terephthalate (59, 1.0 g, 5.5 mmol, Sigma-Aldrich Chemical Co.), along with SOCl₂ (4.89 g, 41.1 mmol, 7 eq), was placed in a 25-mL, single-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a spiral condenser. The resulting mixture was stirred at reflux (12 h). After approximately 2 h, the white solid dissolved. The resulting solution was allowed to cool to RT, and excess SOCl₂ was removed *in vacuo* to give a white solid which was placed under high vacuum (3 h, RT/0.75 mm Hg) to remove any residual SOCl₂. Acid

chloride **58** (1.06 g, 96%) was obtained as a white solid: mp 53-55 °C (mp 53-55 °C, Acros Organics); IR (KBr pellet) 1773 [ClC=O], 1770 [MeOC=O] cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (DCCl₃) δ 3.98 [s, 3 H, OCH₃], 8.17 [m, 4 H, Ar-H]; ¹³C NMR (DCCl₃) ppm 52.69 [OCH₃], 129.95-136.59 [Ar-C], 165.56 [C=O], 167.87 [C=O]. ¹H NMR data has been recorded for **58**:¹³⁶ ¹H NMR (300 MHz, DCCl₃) δ 3.98 [s, 3 H], 8.03-8.24 [m, 4 H]. No further data was reported on this compound.

Determination of MICs. The MICs of the agents on solid medium were determined by the microdrop agar proportion test by the method of McClatchy¹⁶² as modified by Phetsuksiri and co-workers.¹⁵³ Briefly, a series of 10-fold dilutions of culture of *Mycobacterium bovis* (BCG) were prepared by using phosphate-buffered saline as a diluent. An aliquot (5 μ L) of each dilution was spotted on plates of 7H11 agar (Difco) containing oleic acid-albumin-dextrose-citric acid (OADC) as a supplement and 0.1, 0.5, 1.0, 2.0, 2.5, 5.0, 10.0, and 20.0 μ g of each tested drug per mL. The plates were incubated at 37 °C for 14 days, and the number of viable bacteria was scored by counting colonies.



Plate I

120





¹H NMR Spectrum of **32**





IR Spectrum of 33



¹H NMR Spectrum of 33







IR Spectrum of 34



¹H NMR Spectrum of **34**





¹³C NMR Spectrum of 34







¹H NMR Spectrum of 35












Plate XIV







IR Spectrum of 37





Plate XVIII

















IR Spectrum of 39

Plate XXIII











Plate XXVI













Plate XXIX



¹H NMR Spectrum of **41**

Plate XXX



¹³C NMR Spectrum of 41





IR Spectrum of 42





¹H NMR Spectrum of 42



Plate XXXIII



Plate XXXV



Plate XXXVI





Plate XXXVII

Plate XXXVIII

2.5



¹H NMR Spectrum of 44

Plate XXXIX









Plate XLI





¹H NMR Spectrum of 45



13C OBSERVE



¹³C NMR Spectrum of 45



Plate XLV









т


Plate XLVIII





¹H NMR Spectrum of 47



¹³C NMR Spectrum of 47





STANDARD IN OBSERVE



¹H NMR Spectrum of 48a





¹³C NMR Spectrum of 48a





¹H NMR Spectrum of **48b**





¹³C NMR Spectrum of 48b



IR Spectrum of 49



¹H NMR Spectrum of 49









Plate LXII













¹³C NMR Spectrum of 50b









¹H NMR Spectrum of **52**











Plate LXXI





Plate LXXII

Plate LXXIII



¹H NMR Spectrum of 54a





Plate LXXVI



¹H NMR Spectrum of 54b



Plate LXXVIII



Plate LXXIX



Plate LXXX





Plate LXXXI

Plate LXXXII



Plate LXXXIII










¹H NMR Spectrum of 58



¹³C NMR Spectrum of 58

205

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VITA

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