

Intermolecular Reactions of a Foiled Carbene with Carbonyl Compounds: The Effects of Trishomocyclopropyl Stabilization

Ingrid Malene Apeland,[†] Murray G. Rosenberg,[§] Vladimir B. Arion,[‡] Hanspeter Kählig,[†] and Udo H. Brinker^{*,†,§}

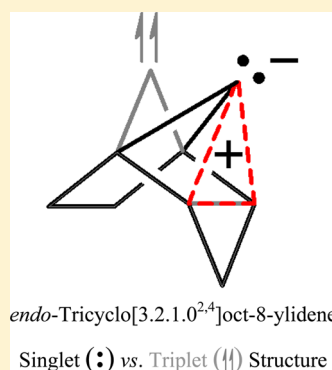
[†]Institute of Organic Chemistry, University of Vienna, Währinger Strasse 38, A-1090 Vienna, Austria

[§]Department of Chemistry, The State University of New York at Binghamton, P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton, New York 13902-6000, United States

[‡]Institute of Inorganic Chemistry, University of Vienna, Währinger Strasse 42, A-1090 Vienna, Austria

S Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: *endo*-Tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylidene is a foiled carbene reaction intermediate. It was generated by thermolyzing Δ^3 -1,3,4-oxadiazoline precursors dissolved in benzaldehyde and acetophenone. The products appear to stem from direct insertion of the carbene's divalent C atom into the α -bonds of the carbonyl compounds; however, this is only superficial. The strict stereochemistry observed is due to the topologies of the reaction intermediates of the proposed two-step mechanism. Bimolecular nucleophilic addition generates bent 1,3-zwitterions. The neutral reaction intermediates undergo pinacolic rearrangements to form the observed adducts. Product ratios reflect the migratory aptitudes of the carbonyl compounds' α -substituents. The carbene reaction was modeled using DFT. The singlet carbene's bicoordinate C atom bends 31° toward the *endo*-fused cyclopropane bond, elongating it to $r = 1.69$ Å. The resulting trishomocyclopropyl HOMO{−1} is a three-center two-electron bond responsible for the electron-deficient carbene's nucleophilicity. Its calculated properties are consistent with this assertion: (1) singlet–triplet (ΔE_{S-T}) energy gap of −25 kcal/mol, (2) gas-phase proton affinity (PA) value of 272 kcal/mol, (3) hard and soft acid and base (HSAB) ΔN value of −0.2 in its initial reaction with the carbonyl compounds, and (4) negative frontier orbital interaction values $\Delta\Delta E(\text{PhC(O)H}) = -4.38$ eV and $\Delta\Delta E(\text{PhC(O)Me}) = -3.97$ eV.



INTRODUCTION

The formation of three-membered rings by cycloaddition of singlet carbenes and multiple bonds can occur through a pericyclic transition state (TS).¹ The Woodward–Hoffmann selection rules² for a thermally allowed $4q$ ($q = 1$) cheletropic reaction^{3,4} require the unsaturated compound to participate suprafacially and the carbene antarafacially (i.e., [$\pi 2_s + \omega 2_a$]), as depicted in Figure 1. A nonlinear p-approach of the carbene in an unsymmetric non-least-motion pathway mitigates steric repulsion between the molecules.⁵ Neutral carbenes feature a divalent C atom.^{6–14} The tetravalency of the C atom,¹⁵ which is the basis of organic chemistry,¹⁶ is restored when the hypovalent C atom obtains a Lewis octet. The electron-deficient carbene achieves this by reacting intra- or intermolec-

ularly. Some carbenes rearrange to stable constitutional isomers or they add to solvent and/or solute molecules. Carbene reaction intermediates usually have short lifetimes, and their irreversible reactions are exothermic due to their high internal energies. Strategies to stabilize these reactive molecules have been pursued and have led to the development of “bottleable” carbenes.¹⁷ Carbenes react according to their ground electronic-state spin multiplicity. Those with open-shell $T_0(n,p)$ states behave as *gem*-biradicals, whereas those with closed-shell $S_0(n,p)$ states often undergo polar reactions. Singlet carbenes are amphoteric and can act as Lewis acids or bases, but the majority of known carbenes behave as electrophiles. This report chronicles a nucleophilic carbene and its reactions with carbonyl compounds.

“Foiled reaction” carbenes were conceived as an approach toward stabilizing the closed-shell $S_1(n,p)$ state of a carbene to the point that it would supersede the $T_0(n,p)$ state, thus becoming the ground electronic state.^{18–20} Computational chemistry is an indispensable method to study short-lived

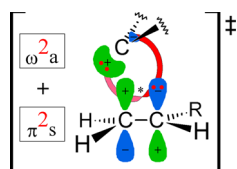


Figure 1. Cheletropic reaction of a singlet carbene and terminal alkene yielding a substituted cyclopropane. The Möbius (*) pericyclic TS has 4 electrons. Thus, it is allowed thermally.

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reaction intermediates.²¹ It has provided insight into the nature of foiled carbenes,^{22–24} such as *endo*-tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylidene (**1**) (Figure 2a)^{25–28} and bicyclo[2.2.1]hept-2-en-7-ylidene (**2**) (Figure 2b).^{29–30}

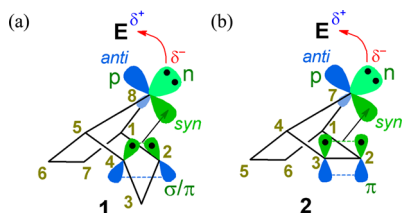
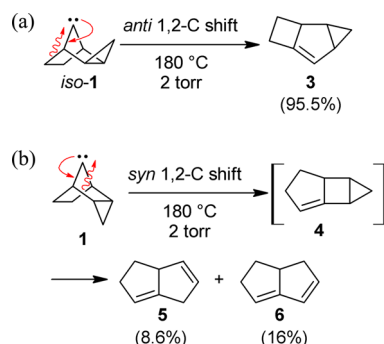


Figure 2. Homoaromaticity within foiled carbenes (a) *endo*-tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylidene (**1**) and (b) bicyclo[2.2.1]hept-2-en-7-ylidene (**2**), which differ only by an extra CH₂ group in **1** (i.e., C3), that is responsible for their bent geometries, singlet ground electronic states, nucleophilicities toward electrophiles E, and diastereoselectivities.

ylidene (**2**) (Figure 2b).^{29,30} Intramolecular carbene cycloaddition is foiled because the product would be greatly strained by its inverted C atom.³¹ Instead, an in-between structure¹⁸ is adopted. The C1–C7–C4 bridge of carbene **2** is predicted to tilt toward the C–C double bond, thus allowing the bicoordinate C atom to interact with it.²³ A delocalized three-center two-electron bond is formed from a triangular array of three basis set p-orbitals. The bishomocyclopropenyl ring stabilizes the hypovalent C atom of **2**, making it homoaromatic.^{32,33} A similar situation exists in carbene **1** (Figure 2a).²⁵ It is a homologue of carbene **2**, wherein the vinylene group of **2** has been replaced by a fused endocyclic cyclopropane (see **1** in Scheme 1b) but not an exocyclic one

Scheme 1. Intramolecular Reactions of Gaseous Tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylidenes^a



^acf. refs 40–42.

(see *iso*-**1** in Scheme 1a). Indeed, the C2–C4 bent σ/π -bond of **1** mimics the C2–C3 π -bond of **2** because a “...cyclopropane ring more closely resembles the C=C bond than [a] cyclobutane ring”³⁴ and a “... cyclopropane ring may replace a π bond in the framework system for a sigmatropic change.”³ Thus, a delocalized three-center two-electron bond is formed in carbene **1** as well. The trishomocyclopropyl ring stabilizes the hypovalent C atom of **1**, making it homoaromatic.^{32,33} The optimal structure of carbene **1** and its key MOs were computed using DFT and are shown in Figure 3.

Intramolecular cycloaddition within **1** is foiled because [3.4.3.5]fenestrane is too strained.³⁵ Even trace amounts of 1,3-CH insertion are observed in **2**^{30,36} but not in **1**. A bridgehead alkene arising from 1,2-H shift within **1** is also precluded^{37–39} due to orbital misalignment. In contrast, fused

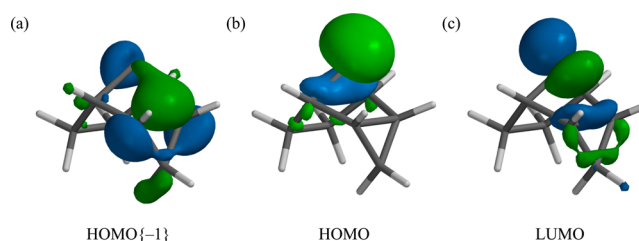
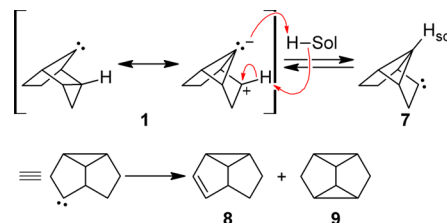


Figure 3. Bent carbene **1** features (a) a three-center two-electron bond (i.e., trishomocyclopropyl MO) derived from a triangular array of three basis p-orbitals (see Figure 2a), (b) a reactive lone pair of electrons (i.e., n-orbital), and (c) a virtual p-orbital (surfaces shown with a 0.07 isovalue computed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)//B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model).

bicyclic alkenes **5** and **6** are reported to stem from gaseous carbene **1**,^{40–42} likely via *syn* 1,2-C shift (Scheme 1b). However, they are not formed in the condensed phase. Rapid bimolecular reactions prevail (e.g., solvolysis and ketazine formation).²⁵ The carbene–carbene rearrangement of **1** to tricyclo[3.3.0.0^{2,8}]oct-4-ylidene (**7**) has been reported (Scheme 2).^{25,43–45} Intermolecular proton transfer within protic solvents

Scheme 2. Isomerization of Carbene **1** to Carbene **7** in Protic Solvent^a



^aSee ref 44.

has been proposed (Scheme 2).⁴⁴ Evidence of carbene **7** comes from its solvolysis products and the formation of isomers **8** and **9**.

The intermolecular reactivities and stereoselectivities of foiled carbenes can be compared with the original predictions.¹⁸ The *anti* face of carbene **2** is more exposed to oncoming reagents as a consequence of its bent geometry (Figure 2b). Thus, for example, the cyclopropanation of 2-methylpropene by **2** was envisioned to be stereoselective due to mutual orientations determined by steric factors.¹⁸ In addition, carbene **2** was expected to initiate a nucleophilic reaction with R–X compounds to yield the *anti*-X configurational isomers.¹⁸ However, a *syn*-Br product was isolated by reacting two *gem*-dibromo precursors with MeLi.^{29,46,47} The results indicate that a carbenoid rather than a free carbene is involved. In a related case, **1** was generated from bicyclo[5.1.0]oct-3-en-8-ylidene via a homologous Skattebøl rearrangement.⁴⁵ Again, carbenoid chemistry is suspected because the product had a *syn*-Br configuration. More definitive studies involving the intermolecular reactions of foiled carbenes with alkenes^{25,48–50} and alcohols^{25,51,52} indicate that they undoubtedly exhibit nucleophilic behavior.⁵³

Carbene nucleophilicity is achieved when an adjacent π -donor atom infuses electron density into the bicoordinate C atom's p-orbital.⁵⁴ An ylide results if the effect is large. For example, stable nucleophilic carbenes are formed by flanking a divalent C atom with two N atoms.^{17,55–63} The reactivity of

such carbenes is quite unlike that of more traditional electrophilic carbenes.⁵³ For example, deprotonation of thiazolium ions^{64,65} with Et₃N generates an ylide that catalyzes acyloin condensations of aldehydes.⁶⁶ In the classic benzoin condensation,⁶⁷ the CN[−] anion is used catalytically to dimerize PhC(O)H.^{68–70} Foiled carbenes **1** and **2** are special because they are stabilized by noncontiguous electron-pair donors: a σ/π -bond and a π -bond, respectively (Figure 2). Each was determined from DFT calculations to be stabilized by ~ 14 kcal/mol.²⁷

The cycloaddition of carbene **1** and PhC(O)R [R = (a) H, (b) Me] via pericyclic TS was considered, but the necessary back-bonding by the O atom was deemed unavailable. Its *n*-orbital is orthogonal to the *p*-orbital of **1**; the almost-degenerate π_3 and π_4 MOs lie beneath the HOMO and are concentrated in the benzene ring and not in the CO bond. Therefore, direct Ad_N2 of PhC(O)R by **1** was examined. The *n*-orbital of a nonylidic nucleophilic carbene should initiate such an elementary step with just the C atom of carbonyl compounds RC(O)R'.^{71–73} Indeed, the nucleophilicity of foiled carbenes is evident in the deprotonation of protic solvents.^{61,74,75} By this manner, carbenes **1**⁴⁴ and **7**^{25,44} formally insert into the O–H bond of MeOH. Even the active-methylene compound (CN)₂CH₂ yields the formal C–H insertion product of a foiled carbene.⁷⁶ The protonation was examined using the B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model.⁷⁶ The initial TS leads to a tight ion-pair that recombines. Of course, foiled carbenes act as electrophiles in the presence of stronger nucleophiles, such as amine bases.²⁵ Such ambiphilicity has been shown in cycloadditions with various alkenes because carbene philicity is substrate-dependent.^{53,77–79}

Intramolecular reactions of a divalent C atom and carbonyl group within an electrophilic carbene are well documented.^{80–90} There are fewer examples of the intermolecular variant.^{91–96} Still, less is known about the reactions of carbonyl compounds with nucleophilic carbenes.^{71–73} Although carbonyl compounds are themselves amphoteric, they should react as electrophiles with nucleophilic carbenes.^{53,54,97} The present study is the first to delve into the intermolecular reactions of a foiled carbene with carbonyl compounds; thus, computational chemistry was used to rationalize the experimental results obtained from carbene **1**.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Δ^3 -1,3,4-Oxadiazolines are popular and versatile sources of free carbenes that can be liberated by either photolysis or thermolysis.^{71–73,98–115} The diastereomeric precursors *r*-**10** and *s*-**10** were used separately herein to generate carbene **1** (Figure 4). They were dissolved in either PhC(O)H or PhC(O)Me and heated to *T* = 165 °C until fully decomposed (Scheme 3).²⁵

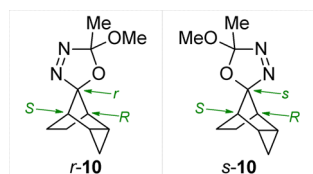
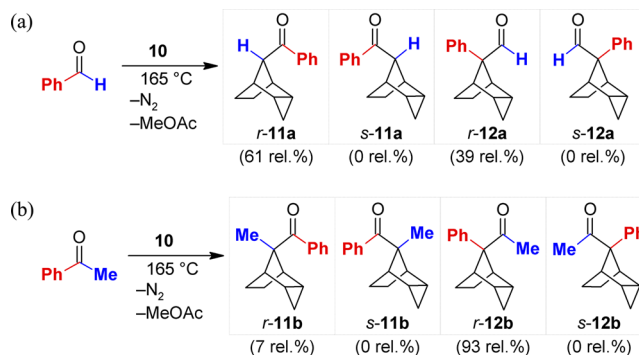


Figure 4. Δ^3 -1,3,4-Oxadiazolines *r*-**10** and *s*-**10** were used as precursors for the thermolytic generation of carbene **1**.

Scheme 3. Intermolecular Addition of Carbene **1** and Carbonyl Compounds PhC(O)R Yields Constitutional Isomers **11** and **12** with Complete Stereocontrol^a

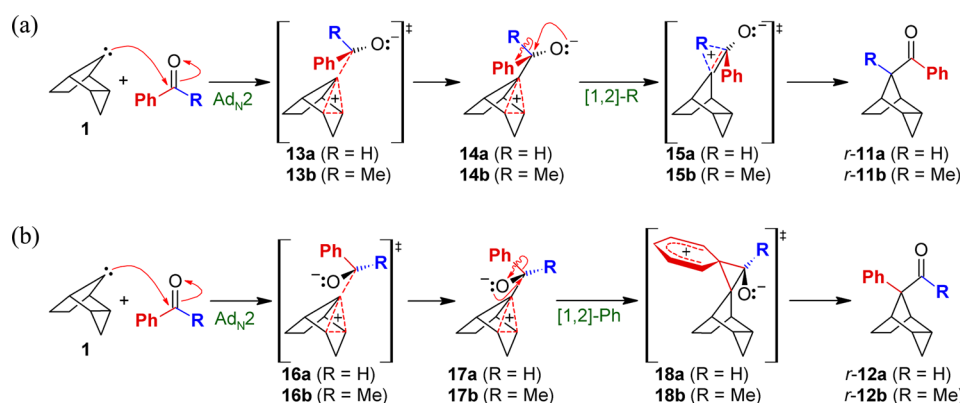


^aR = (a) H or (b) Me.

Phenyl{*rac*-(1*R*,2*R*,4*S*,5*S*,8*r*)-tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl}-methanone (*r*-**11a**; Scheme 3a) was formed after individual thermolyses of the carbene **1** precursors *r*-**10** and *s*-**10** (Figure 4) in neat PhC(O)H. The major product was isolated in 53% yield from *r*-**10** and 43% yield from *s*-**10**. Its structure was determined from 2-D NMR experiments, and the stereochemistry of *r*-**11a** was confirmed by single-crystal X-ray diffraction (see Supporting Information). The GC-MS data of the product mixture revealed a minor compound (39 rel. %), which had the same molar mass as *r*-**11a** (*M*⁺, *m/z* = 212) (see Figure S1). Its identity can be inferred by comparing fragmentation patterns in the mass spectra of the two GC peaks. The major product *r*-**11a** displays a strong base peak at *m/z* = 105, which is indicative of its benzoyl (Bz) group. The minor product wholly lacks this signature signal (see Figure S3). Thus, it cannot be configurational isomer *s*-**11a**. The minor compound decomposed during column chromatography. Either configurational isomer of constitutional isomer **12a** is a good candidate for its identity (Scheme 3a) because **12a** is an aldehyde that is expected to be unstable. Indeed, it is most likely stereoisomer *r*-**12a**, as will be explained.

1-{*rac*-(1*R*,2*R*,4*S*,5*S*,8*r*)-8-Phenyltricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl}-ethan-1-one (*r*-**12b**; Scheme 3b) was formed after individual thermolyses of carbene **1** precursors *r*-**10** and *s*-**10** (Figure 4) in neat PhC(O)Me. The major product was isolated in 78% yield from *r*-**10** and 69% yield from *s*-**10**. Its structure was determined by 2-D NMR experiments, and the stereochemistry of *r*-**12b** was confirmed by single-crystal X-ray diffraction (see Supporting Information). The GC-MS data of the product mixture showed traces of a product (7 rel. %) with the same molar mass as *r*-**12b** (*M*⁺, *m/z* = 226) (see Figure S2). Its identity can be inferred by comparing fragmentation patterns in the mass spectra of the two GC peaks. The minor product displays a strong base peak at *m/z* = 105 (see Figure S3), indicating the presence of a Bz group. Configurational isomer *s*-**12b** lacks this signal. Thus, either configurational isomer of constitutional isomers **11b** is a good candidate for its identity (Scheme 3b) because each has a Bz group.

Scheme 4 outlines a two-step mechanism to explain how carbene **1** and carbonyl compounds PhC(O)R [R = (a) H, (b) Me] react to produce compounds **11** and **12**. Initial Ad_N2 elementary steps generate the bent 1,3-zwitterion rotamers **14** and **17**, respectively. Neutral **14** and **17** undergo pinacolic rearrangement^{116,117} in which the R (Scheme 4a) or Ph (Scheme 4b) group migrates to the vicinal C atom. Thus, a C–

Scheme 4. Addition of Nucleophilic Carbene **1** to Carbonyl Compounds PhC(O)R Followed By Neutral Pinacolic Rearrangement with Complete Diastereofacial Selectivity^a^aR = (a) H, (b) Me.Table 1. Structural Data for Reaction of **1** and PhC(O)H^{a,b}

	tilt angle (°) ^c	$\Delta_{\text{rel}}G_{438.15}$ (kcal/mol)	$\bar{\nu}_{\text{TS}}$ (cm ⁻¹)	$\Delta G_{438.15}^{\ddagger}$ (kcal/mol)	partial charge ^d	μ (D)
1 + PhC(O)H	-30.5 ^e	0			-0.052	<i>f</i>
13a	-36.0	20.3	120i	20.3	-0.009	5.45
14a	-37.3	16.1			0.175	7.58
15a	-22.6	16.8	326i	0.7	0.269	6.77
r-11a	1.8	-52.9			-0.301	2.65
16a	-35.0	21.3	124i	21.3	0.014	5.81
17a	-36.3	16.8			0.200	7.89
18a	-20.1	18.3	170i	1.6	0.316	6.63
r-12a	0.2	-43.6			-0.136	2.46

^aSee Figure 2a for atom numbering. ^bData computed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)//B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model. ^cDihedral angle defined as $1/2[\omega(\text{C2}-\text{C1}-\text{C5}-\text{C8}) - \omega(\text{C6}-\text{C5}-\text{C1}-\text{C8})]$ of the tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl moiety. ^dNatural charge density of the C8 atom of the tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl moiety. ^eTilt angle of singlet-state carbene **1**. ^f $\mu(\text{1}) = 2.74$ D and $\mu(\text{PhC(O)H}) = 3.32$ D.

Table 2. Structural Data for the Reaction of **1** and PhC(O)Me^{a,b}

	tilt angle (°) ^c	$\Delta_{\text{rel}}G_{438.15}$ (kcal/mol)	$\bar{\nu}_{\text{TS}}$ (cm ⁻¹)	$\Delta G_{438.15}^{\ddagger}$ (kcal/mol)	partial charge ^d	μ (D)
1 + PhC(O)Me	-30.5 ^e	0			-0.052	<i>f</i>
13b	-36.2	23.8	139i	23.8	0.010	5.59
14b	-37.7	20.8			0.171	7.48
15b	-19.8	24.5	336i	3.7	0.311	6.35
r-11b	-0.5	-42.9			-0.106	2.56
16b	-35.1	24.7	142i	24.7	0.027	5.87
17b	-34.9	21.1			0.204	7.58
18b	-21.2	21.9	157i	0.8	0.314	6.45
r-12b	-0.1	-43.8			-0.133	2.38

^aSee Figure 2a for atom numbering. ^bData computed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)//B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model. ^cDihedral angle defined as $1/2[\omega(\text{C2}-\text{C1}-\text{C5}-\text{C8}) - \omega(\text{C6}-\text{C5}-\text{C1}-\text{C8})]$ of the tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl moiety. ^dNatural charge density of the C8 atom of the tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl moiety. ^eTilt angle of singlet-state carbene **1**. ^f $\mu(\text{1}) = 2.74$ D and $\mu(\text{PhC(O)Me}) = 3.05$ D.

O double bond is reconstituted. The mechanism does not explain, however, the diastereoselective formation of **r-11** and **r-12** over **s-11** and **s-12**. Thus, computational chemistry was used to assess the feasibility of this two-step mechanism and to understand the stereochemistry. The equilibrium geometries of PhC(O)H, PhC(O)Me, **3****1**, **1****1**, **1**H⁺, and **11**–**18** were computed using the B3LYP/6-31G(d) method. Vibrational analyses were done to ensure that each TS had one and only one imaginary frequency ($\bar{\nu}_{\text{TS}}$). Imaginary normal modes were animated to verify that they corresponded to the expected nuclear motions. Thermodynamic data were computed at the same level of theory as the geometry optimizations, and certain values were scaled according to established recommendations.

The energies of stationary points were computed at the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p) level of theory. Further details are given in the Experimental Section and Supporting Information.

The data in Table 1 are consistent with the mechanism proposed in Scheme 4 (R = H). The C8 atom of carbene **1** donates electron density to PhC(O)H during the Ad_N2 step. Although the activation enthalpy (ΔH^{\ddagger}) for the **1** + PhC(O)H → **14a** elementary step was computed to be negative^{118–124} at -2.8 kcal/mol, the fairly high activation free energy (ΔG^{\ddagger}) of 20.3 kcal/mol is due to the loss of degrees of freedom in TS **13a**, particularly at the elevated reaction temperature of 165 °C. Homoaromatic 1,3-zwitterion **14a** is bent toward the cyclopropane side to an even greater extent than is carbene **1** (vide

Table 3. Computed Geometries of *endo*-Tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylidene Triplet (³1) and Singlet (¹1) and Its Conjugate Acid (1H⁺) Reveal Substantial Bridge Bending^{a,b}

	tilt angle (°) ^c	bridge angle (°) ^d	proton angle (°) ^e	<i>r</i> (C2–C3) (Å) ^f	<i>r</i> (C2–C8) (Å) ^g	<i>r</i> (C2–C4) (Å)	distance ratio ^h	μ (D) ⁱ
³ 1	0.7	98.9		1.51	2.33	1.54	1.52	1.04
¹ 1	–30.5	98.8		1.49	1.96	1.69	1.16	2.74
1H ⁺	–41.4	107.0	4.8	1.50	1.81	1.93	0.94	2.30

^aSee Figure 2a for atom numbering. ^bEquilibrium geometries optimized using the (U)B3LYP/6-31G(d) method. ^cDihedral angle defined as 1/2[ω(C2–C1–C5–C8) – ω(C6–C5–C1–C8)]. ^dAngle defined as θ(C1–C8–C5). ^eDihedral angle defined as ω(C8–C1–C5–H8). ^fDistance equivalent to *r*(C4–C3). ^gDistance equivalent to *r*(C4–C8). ^hTrishomocyclopropyl index defined as *r*(C2–C8)/*r*(C2–C4). ⁱDipole moment computed using the (U)B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)/(U)B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model.

infra). At that point in the two-step mechanism, the formerly divalent C atom of **1** has shed electron density and has become a carbonium ion center. The dipole moment (μ) of 1,3-zwitterion **14a** is 7.58 D. In the [1,2]-sigmatropic rearrangement step of the mechanism proposed in Scheme 4, the tilt angle and μ of TS **15a** decrease. The main bridge in product **r-11a** is tilted slightly away from the cyclopropane side. Its μ is within range of other carbonyl compounds. The divalent C atom of **1** is eventually bonded to the H atom of PhC(O)H to form a polar covalent C–H bond. Ultimately, the Δ*G* of the **1** + PhC(O)H system has been stabilized by 52.9 kcal/mol in the form of **r-11a**. A similar narrative can be made for the pinacolic^{116,125} [1,2]-sigmatropic rearrangement leading to **r-12a** (Scheme 3a). However, the divalent C atom of **1** that is eventually incorporated into **r-12a** has bonded to the C_{ipso} atom of the Ph group of PhC(O)H, and the newly formed C–C covalent bond of **r-12a** is less polar than the corresponding C–H covalent bond of **r-11a** (Table 1). The computed migratory aptitudes of various groups during pinacolic rearrangements have been reported elsewhere.¹²⁵

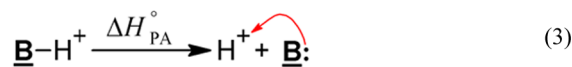
The equilibrium geometries of carbenes ¹1 and ³1 were optimized using the (U)B3LYP/6-31G(d) method(s) (Table 3). The *endo*-tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylum ion (1H⁺) was modeled as well. It is the conjugate acid of carbene **1** and is needed to compute the proton affinity (PA) of **1**. Moreover, it represents the cationic portion of 1,3-zwitterions **14** and **17**. The optimal geometry and other properties of carbene **1** depend on its spin multiplicity, *S*₀ or *T*₁. Contour maps for their frontier MOs indicate that these electronic states are dominated by the closed-shell ¹(n²p⁰) and open-shell ³(n¹p¹) electron configurations, respectively. Table 3 shows that the bicoordinate C atom bridge angles of ¹1 and ³1 are essentially the same. Given that triplet carbenes typically adopt wider bond angles than do their singlet counterparts, it is not surprising that ³1 has more internal energy than that of ¹1. Because the bridge angle θ(C1–C8–C5) of ¹1 is 98.8° (Table 3), the n-orbital is sp^{0.36} hybridized (eq 1) with 73% s-character (eq 2). Thus, filling the low-energy orbital with both nonbonding electrons is stabilizing even though electron–electron repulsion is mitigated in ³1. Trishomocyclopropyl stabilization within ¹1 would be lost if an n-orbital electron (Figure 3b) were to be promoted to the p-

orbital (Figure 3c), which is part of a triangular array of basis set p-orbitals. The net effect to the three-center two-electron bond is antibonding (Figure 3a). Hence, ³1 is destabilized over ¹1. An experimentally corrected singlet–triplet energy gap for carbene **1** (Δ*E*_{S–T}(**1**)_{corr}) was computed using the (U)B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)/(U)B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model and eqs S1–S3. The computed Δ*E*_{S–T}(CH₂) (eq S1) is 12.1 kcal/mol.¹²⁶ This is 2.9 kcal/mol above the experimental value of 9.215 kcal/mol.¹²⁶ Assuming that the *E* values for carbene **1** would also be too positive, subtracting this discrepancy from the initially computed value of –22.4 kcal/mol (eq S2) gives Δ*E*_{S–T}(**1**)_{corr} = –25.2 kcal/mol (eq S3), which is in accordance with previous reports.^{27,28} The large computed Δ*E*_{S–T} clearly shows a pronounced reversal of the usual ordering of the lowest *T* and *S* states of dialkylcarbenes because the value is large and negative as defined herein. For comparison, the corrected Δ*E*_{S–T} of carbene **2** is –27.1 kcal/mol, according to the (U)B3LYP/6-311+G(3df,2p)/(U)B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model.²⁷ The magnitude of Δ*E*_{S–T} is far from the ~65 kcal/mol boundary between carbenes (i.e., 1,1-zwitterions) and ylides (1,2-zwitterions).¹²⁷ However, ¹1 is nucleophilic and expected to participate in polar mechanisms.

$$\text{hybridization of n-orbital} = sp^{-2\left(\frac{\cos\theta}{1+\cos\theta}\right)} \quad (1)$$

$$\text{s-character} = \left(\frac{1 + \cos\theta}{1 - \cos\theta}\right) \times 100\% \quad (2)$$

The parameters listed in Table 3 clearly demonstrate that Lewis structures cannot adequately depict bonding in ¹1 and 1H⁺. For example, the C2–C4 bond of ³1 is of normal length for C–C single bonds (i.e., *r* = 1.54 Å), but that of ¹1 is unusually long at *r* = 1.69 Å (see Table 3). Moreover, the bridge of ³1 is essentially untilted, whereas that of carbene ¹1 is significantly bent toward the cyclopropane despite an increase in strain. The associated bridge in carbocation 1H⁺ is predicted to be tilted toward the C2–C4 σ/π-bond by –41.4° (Table 3). Because electron density is being drawn away from the σ/π-

**Table 4.** Reactivity Data^{a,b}

compound	PA (kcal/mol)	<i>E</i> _{HOMO} (eV)	<i>E</i> _{LUMO} (eV)	–χ (eV)	η (eV)	Δ <i>N</i>	Δ <i>E</i> _(n→π*) (eV)	Δ <i>E</i> _(p←n) (eV)	ΔΔ <i>E</i> (eV)
1	272	–5.22	0.43	–2.39	2.83				
PhC(O)H	204	–7.17	–1.99	–4.58	2.59	–0.20	3.22	7.61	–4.38
PhC(O)Me	210	–6.98	–1.77	–4.37	2.61	–0.19	3.45	7.42	–3.97

^aComputed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)/B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model. ^bMO energy gap defined as Δ*E*_{carbene=PhC(O)R} [R = (a) H, (b) Me].

bonds of **1** and IH^+ toward the electron-deficient C8 atoms, the effect is understandably more pronounced in the cation. The distance ratio for IH^+ is close to unity (i.e., 0.94; Table 3). Trishomocyclopropyl stabilization is optimal in an equilateral triangle (see Figure S16). Finally, $\mu(^3\text{1})$ is unremarkable, whereas that of $^1\text{1}$ is quite large for a hydrocarbon ($\mu = 2.74$ D; Table 3). The carbonyl compounds are only slightly more polar at $\mu(\text{PhC(O)H}) = 3.32$ D and $\mu(\text{PhC(O)Me}) = 3.05$ D.

The Brønsted–Lowry basicity of foiled carbene **1** is informative because nucleophilicity often parallels basicity. The protolysis reaction of carbenium ion IH^+ (eq 3; **B** = **1**) is the reverse of the PA reaction of the carbene conjugate base. The gas-phase PA value for carbene **1** was computed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)//B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model. Although foiled carbene **1** has only a cyclopropane “functional group,”¹²⁸ its PA value of 272 kcal/mol places it among the most Brønsted–Lowry basic carbenes.¹²⁹ It is clear from the PA values in Table 4 that foiled carbene **1** is a better electron-pair donor than are the PhC(O)R compounds because their PA values are lower.

The Lewis basicity of the n-orbitals of **1** and PhC(O)R can be evaluated using the hard and soft acid and base (HSAB)^{130,131} principle. After calculating the hardness (η) (eq 4) and absolute electronegativity (χ) (eq 5) of the acid and base from their frontier orbital energies, the direction and (fractional) number of electrons transferred (ΔN) in the initial Acid (A)/Base (B) interaction (eq 6) (e.g., carbene **1**/ PhC(O)R) can be assessed semiquantitatively.¹³⁰ Note that **1** is considered to be the acid in eq 6. This assumption is reasonable because **1** is electron-deficient and should therefore act as the electron-pair acceptor. However, the negative ΔN values listed in Table 4 indicate that the roles are reversed. The carbonyl compounds are the acids, and carbene **1** is the base. Additionally, the magnitude of ΔN is fairly large compared with other nucleophilic carbenes.⁹⁷ This indicates significant electron flow from the carbene to the carbonyl compounds.

$$\text{hardness}(\eta) = 1/2(E_{\text{LUMO}} - E_{\text{HOMO}}) \quad (4)$$

$$\text{absolute electronegativity}(\chi) = 1/2(E_{\text{LUMO}} + E_{\text{HOMO}}) \quad (5)$$

$$\text{electrons transferred}(\Delta N) = 1/2 \left(\frac{\chi_{\text{A}} - \chi_{\text{B}}}{\eta_{\text{A}} + \eta_{\text{B}}} \right) \quad (6)$$

The difference in energy differentials ($\Delta\Delta E$) between the frontier MOs of carbenes and their reaction partners indicates which HOMO–LUMO interaction is dominant.^{77,78} Thus, the philicity of carbene **1** toward carbonyl compounds can be categorized by the vector quantity defined in eq 7. The calculated negative values $\Delta\Delta E(\text{PhC(O)H}) = -4.38$ eV and $\Delta\Delta E(\text{PhC(O)Me}) = -3.97$ eV (Table 4) further attest to the nucleophilicity of carbene **1**. Recall that carbonyl ylides are formed when the empty p-orbital of an electrophilic carbene interacts with the high-lying n-orbital of the carbonyl group's O atom (i.e., $\text{p} \leftarrow \text{n}$). The frontier MOs of PhC(O)H and PhC(O)Me are presented in Figure 5 and can be compared to those of carbene **1** (Figure 3b and c). This step is reversible because independently formed carbonyl ylides can fragment to afford electrophilic carbenes.^{132–134} However, given the PA, HSAB, and frontier MO interaction $\Delta\Delta E$ results (Table 4), and the body of evidence that carbonyl ylide formation involves

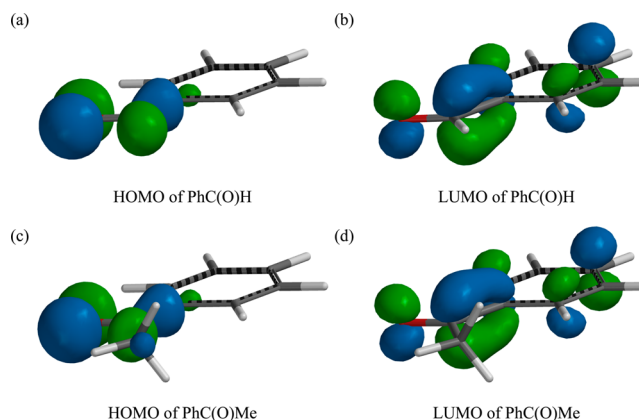


Figure 5. Frontier MOs of benzaldehyde (PhC(O)H) and acetophenone (PhC(O)Me) (surfaces shown with a 0.07 isovalue computed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)//B3LYP/6-31G(d) theoretical model.).

electrophilic carbenes,⁹⁵ a mechanism involving carbonyl ylide reaction intermediates can be ruled out.

$$\Delta\Delta E = \Delta E_{(\text{n} \rightarrow \pi^*)_{\text{nucleophilic}}} - \Delta E_{(\text{p} \leftarrow \text{n})_{\text{electrophilic}}} \quad (7)$$

1,3-Zwitterions are generally thought to be generated when the bicoordinate C atom of a nucleophilic carbene bonds with the C atom of an electrophilic carbonyl group.^{135–137} Thus, the $\text{Ad}_{\text{N}}2$ of carbene **1** and PhC(O)H should yield **14a** and **17a** (Scheme 4). A conformational analysis was performed using a rigid grid calculation at the B3LYP/6-31G(d) level of theory (Figure 6). The dihedral angles for tilting (see Table 1) and for $>\text{C8}^+-\text{CH}(\text{O}^-)\text{Ph}$ bond rotation were varied while maintaining the bond at $r = 1.55$ Å. Pools of stability were found for the **14a** and **17a** rotamers (Figure 6). Indeed, trishomocyclopropyl stabilization is predicted to be influential in the *anti*-O conformation with a tilt angle of approximately -33° . Thus, rotation around the pivotal $>\text{C8}^+-\text{CH}(\text{O}^-)\text{Ph}$ bond is facile. Note that the tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylum subunits of **14a** and **17a** are nonclassical carbocations.^{138–152,160} Their tilt angles of -37.3° and -36.3° (Table 1), respectively, are greater than that of **1** and almost as much as IH^+ (Table 3).

The carbonyl compounds might experience steric hindrance during the addition reactions to the divalent C atom of **1**. If singlet-state carbene **1** were untilted then the π -plane divided accessible space (PDAS)¹⁵³ values of its *anti* and *syn* faces, with respect to the cyclopropane, would be nearly equal. Obstruction from the exocyclic H6 and H7 atoms would be similar to that from the H2 and H4 atoms. Thus, the ratios $r\text{-11:s-11}$ and $r\text{-12:s-12}$ would each be close to unity. Because this is not the case and only $r\text{-11}$ and $r\text{-12}$ were formed (Scheme 3), the complete stereoselectivity that was observed in the reaction of **1** and PhC(O)R must be due to another reason. The PDAS of carbene **1** will clearly be greater on its *anti* face than on its *syn* face because the molecule is significantly tilted toward the cyclopropane side (Figure 3). This phenomenon is predicted to exist in the bent homoaromatic 1,3-zwitterions **14** and **17** (Scheme 4) to an even greater extent according to the DFT model (Tables 1 and 2). The *syn* lobes of the p-orbitals of the C8 atoms of **14** and **17** are engaged with the σ/π -bonds of the nearby cyclopropane edges in a three-center two-electron bond. The inner lobes are shielded from nucleophilic impingement as well. Thus, only the outer lobes of the p-orbitals of the C8 atoms in **14** and **17** can receive electron density from the

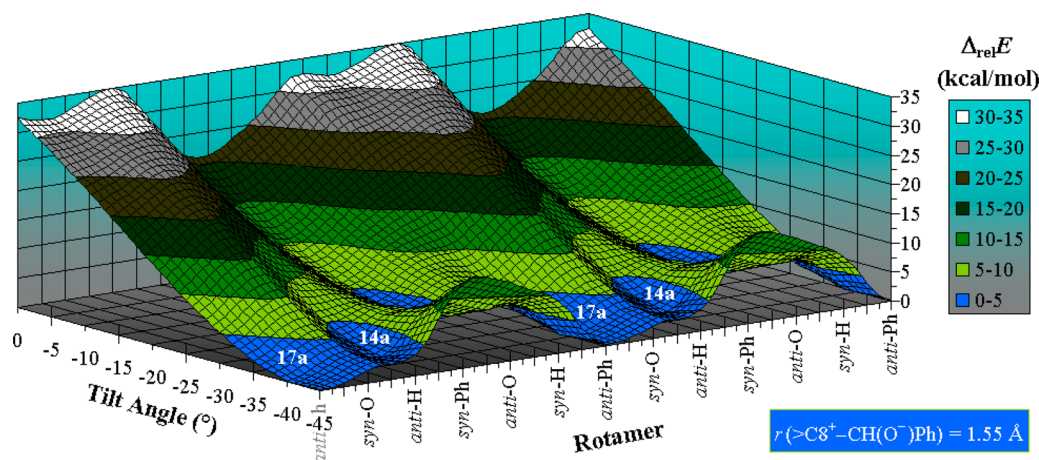


Figure 6. A conformational analysis of 1,3-zwitterions **14a/17a** was performed using rigid grid calculations at the B3LYP/6-31G(d) level of theory. Rotation of 720° around the >C8⁺–CH(O[−])Ph bond is shown for illustrative purposes. The surface exhibits pools of stability (blue) at large tilt angles.

electron-donating groups migrating in the [1,2]-sigmatropic rearrangements (Scheme 4). Because the tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl frameworks of the 1,3-zwitterions are locked into place due to the homoaromatic stabilization, group migrations during the pinacolic rearrangements can proceed only along the *anti* faces of **14** and **17**, giving *r*-**11** and *r*-**12**, respectively. Formation of *s*-**11** and *s*-**12** is difficult but not precluded. Hence, the pinacolic rearrangements are highly stereoselective but not stereospecific. Strict stereoelectronic control of the [1,2]-sigmatropic rearrangements leads to complete diastereofacial selectivity.^{71,154–162} Note that these pinacolic rearrangements proceed under neutral conditions because **14** and **17** are not cations. They are inner salts.

The two-step mechanism accounts for the product mixtures that were revealed by GC-MS. Considerable product formation from a competitive 1,2-Ph migration is expected to occur for the reaction of carbene **1** with PhC(O)H because the Ph group has a relatively high migratory aptitude.^{162–164} This would form aldehyde *r*-**12a** (Scheme 3a). It is akin to ketone *r*-**12b** (Scheme 3b), which also stems from Ph migration. Indeed, the fragmentation pattern in the mass spectrum of provisionally identified *r*-**12a** corresponds to that of ketone *r*-**12b** (see Figure S3). Similarly, the minor product formed by the reaction of carbene **1** with PhC(O)Me should be *r*-**11b** (Scheme 3b). It stems from 1,2-Me migration, which is akin to the 1,2-H migration that yields *r*-**11a** (Scheme 3a). The general fragmentation patterns observed in the mass spectra for *r*-**11a** and *r*-**11b** match well. Each has the Bz group as its base peak. The low yield of compound *r*-**11b** compared with that of *r*-**12b** confirms that the aptitude for the Me group migration is substantially lower than that for Ph groups.¹⁶³ The results herein indicate a relative migratory aptitude of H > Ph ≫ Me. Unlike the H atom, the Me group resists migration because its C atom is less apt to adopt positive charge. The unsaturated Ph group, on the other hand, is more capable because its π -electrons delocalize the positive charge.

CONCLUSIONS

The condensed-phase reactivity of the foiled carbene *endo*-tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-ylidene (**1**) with carbonyl compounds PhC(O)R [R = (a) H, (b) Me] was the main focus of this investigation. Carbene reaction intermediate **1** was generated by thermally decomposing each diastereomer of oxadiazoline

10. Only solvolysis reactions were observed in each liquid (i.e., aldehyde PhC(O)H or ketone PhC(O)Me). The hypothesized primary adducts underwent pinacolic rearrangements that reestablish the carbonyl functional groups. The identities of the major products *r*-**11a** from PhC(O)H and *r*-**12b** from PhC(O)Me were confirmed by 2-D NMR spectroscopy and single-crystal X-ray diffraction. Mainly, a H atom or Ph group had migrated to the originally divalent C atom of **1**. In the case of PhC(O)H, competitive Ph group migration was argued to give a lesser amount of an unisolated constitutional isomer *r*-**12a**. It lacks the Bz group that is expected in the configurational isomer *s*-**11a**. With PhC(O)Me, scant Me group migration gave traces of an unisolated constitutional isomer *r*-**11b** possessing the Bz group. The absence of products formed via *syn*-periplanar migration (e.g., *s*-**11a**) indicates that the pinacolic rearrangements are under strict stereoelectronic control.

Synergy between the divalent C atom and embedded *endo*-fused cyclopropane of **1** greatly influences its structural, electronic, and reactive nature. The p-orbital of the divalent C atom of carbene **1** participates in a three-center two-electron bond making **1** trishomoaromatic. The effect is pronounced because the C1–C8–C5 main bridge of carbene **1** is tilted 31° toward the electron-releasing C2–C4 σ/π -bond, which was computed to be 1.69 Å long. The equilibrium geometry of carbene **1** as well as the contours and energies of its key MOs were computed and presented in order to support this hypothesis. The most noteworthy effect is upon the philicity of carbene **1**. Attenuation of its electron-deficiency is due to the carbene's trishomocyclopropyl HOMO{−1}, which involves the p-orbital that is also prominent in the LUMO. The slightly negative partial charge of the divalent C atom of **1** is consistent with a carbene that is computed to be remarkably Brønsted–Lowry basic. The computed gas-phase PA of **1** is 272 kcal/mol. It is high compared with other carbenes and certainly to the carbonyl compounds (Table 4). The nucleophilicity of **1** is also predicted by comparing its frontier MO energies with those of the carbonyl compounds used in this study (see Table 4). The results indicate a predilection for **1** to react using its HOMO, which is its localized n-orbital. The carbonyl compounds accept the electron pair into their LUMOs, which comprise the C–O π^* -antibonds. This points to a mechanism in which **1** initially impinges upon the C atom of carbonyl compounds PhC(O)R [R = (a) H, (b) Me] in an Ad_N2 elementary step to form highly

bent homoaromatic 1,3-zwitterions **14** and **17**. These unstable reaction intermediates undergo pinacolic [1,2]-sigmatropic rearrangements in the neutral reaction conditions. The remarkable stereocontrol behind the formation of just one stereoisomer of constitutional isomers **11** and **12** (i.e., *r*-**11** and *r*-**12**) was traced back to the special topologies of **14** and **17**. The results affirm that homoconjugation between a properly situated noncontiguous cyclopropane and a divalent C atom produces a nucleophilic foiled carbene.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

Computational Methods. Quantum chemical calculations were performed using the *Spartan'14 Parallel Suite* computer program.¹⁶⁵ Single-determinant HF wave functions were corrected for electron–electron correlation using DFT. Each molecule's equilibrium geometry and single-point energy (*E*) was computed using the B3LYP/6-311G(d,p)//B3LYP/6-311G(d) theoretical model:^{166,167} exchange = 0.20 HF + 0.08 Slater + 0.72 Becke and correlation = 0.81 LYP + 0.19 VWN1-RPA.¹⁶⁸ The *E* values at *T* = 0 K and *p* = 0 atm were converted to enthalpy (*H*) values at *T* = 298.15 or 438.15 K and *p* = 1.00 atm using eq S4 (see Supporting Information) and vibrational frequencies derived from a harmonic approximation of geometry-optimized structures. The temperature-independent zero-point vibrational energy (ZPVE)¹⁶⁹ and thermal vibrational energy ($\Delta_{\text{vib}}H$) values for each gas-phase molecule were scaled by recommended factors *z* and *h* (eq S4), respectively (*T* = 298 K: *z* = 0.9826 and *h* = 1.0004; *T* = 450 K: *z* = 0.9826 and *h* = 0.9895).¹⁷⁰ The increase in kinetic energy, due to translations (3(1/2)RT) and rotations (3(1/2)RT) for each nonlinear molecule was also added to *E*. Finally, RT (i.e., “*pV* work” needed to expand one mole of ideal gas to *V* = 24.4654 L at *T* = 298.15 K or *V* = 35.954 L at *T* = 438.15 K) was added to *E* to obtain *H* (eq S4). The *H* values of **1** and PhC(O)R [*R* = (a) H, (b) Me] were added, and the sum was subtracted from the *H* value of each molecule of interest to obtain ΔH . The thermal vibrational component (S_{vib}) value of total entropy (*S*) was scaled by recommended factor *s* (eq S5) (*T* = 298 K: *s* = 1.0029; *T* = 450 K: *s* = 0.9969).¹⁷⁰ The *S* values of **1** and PhC(O)R [*R* = (a) H, (b) Me] were added, and the sum was subtracted from the *S* value of each molecule of interest to obtain ΔS . Gibbs free energy (ΔG) values of molecules were computed relative to the combined *G* value of the **1** + PhC(O)R reference state at specified temperatures according to eq S5. Note that the ΔH^\ddagger values for the intermolecular addition reactions of carbene **1** with the carbonyl compounds were negative. This is not unusual for carbenes.^{118–124} Although carbene reactions are enthalpically favorable, a specifically oriented TS is sometimes required. This decreases the activation entropy (ΔS^\ddagger) and is not thermodynamically favorable. Additionally, bringing two molecules together to afford one less molecule in the TS also represents a loss in ΔS^\ddagger . Thus, when ΔS^\ddagger and the high reaction temperature are taken into account, the overall ΔG^\ddagger values were always positive.

General Information. Melting points were measured on a melting point microscope and are uncorrected. The FT-NMR spectra were recorded at *T* = 300 K while applying the following radio frequencies: $\nu(^1\text{H})$ = 400.1 MHz and $\nu(^{13}\text{C})$ = 100.6 MHz or $\nu(^1\text{H})$ = 600.1 MHz and $\nu(^{13}\text{C})$ = 150.9 MHz. Proton and carbon-13 chemical shift (δ) values are reported relative to tetramethylsilane (TMS), although the deuterated solvents used were not doped with that internal standard. Instead, the solvent's residual peak was used to calibrate the ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra: $\delta_{\text{H}}(\text{CDCl}_3)$ = 7.26 ppm and $\delta_{\text{C}}(\text{CDCl}_3)$ = 77.16 ppm. Structural assignments were made based on the following gradient-enhanced 2-D NMR experiments: HMQC, HMBC, COSY, and NOESY. The FT-IR spectra were measured using the ATR sampling technique. Results are reported in wavenumbers (cm^{-1}). Accurate masses were obtained using ESI techniques on an HRMS mass spectrometer outfitted with a TOF analyzer. Single-crystal XRD analyses were done using a diffractometer equipped with a CCD detector and a low temperature device (*T* = 90–300 K). Tandem GC-MS analyses were conducted by carrying a split sample with He gas

through a 30-m poly(methylphenylsiloxane) capillary column (95% dimethyl/5% diphenyl, 0.25 mm i.d., and 0.25- μm film-thickness) ending with an EI mass-selective detector (70 eV). Results are reported as *m/z* (% relative intensity). Elemental analyses were performed using standard techniques.

General Settings for GC-MS Analysis. Pressure: 0.416 bar. Flow: 0.7 mL/min. Average velocity: 32 cm/s. Injection volume: 1.0 μL . Split ratio: 25:1. Injection temperature: 270 °C. Starting temperature: 80 °C for 2 min. Ramp: 5 °C/min up to 145 °C. Ramp: 15 °C/min up to 220 °C. Isotherm: 220 °C for 3 min. Ramp: 15 °C/min up to 270 °C. Isotherm: 270 °C for 3 min.

Materials. Oxadiazolines *r*-**10** and *s*-**10** were prepared and identified according to published methods.²⁵ Freshly distilled benzaldehyde (PhC(O)H) and acetophenone (PhC(O)Me) were dried over active 4-Å molecular sieves prior to use. Other commercially available compounds were used without further purification. Analytical thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed on aluminum plates with silica gel 60 F₂₅₄. Spots were visualized using either an I₂ chamber or a UV lamp (λ = 254 nm). Flash chromatography was performed with a silica gel 60 (230–400 mesh) stationary phase and a hexane/EtOAc mobile phase.

Phenyl[*rac*-(1*R*,2*R*,4*S*,5*S*,8*r*)-tricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl]-methanone (*r*-11a**).** From thermolysis of *r*-**10**: **CAUTION!** A solution of oxadiazoline *r*-**10** (0.098 g, 0.471 mmol) in PhC(O)H (4.5 mL) was stirred in a pressure tube for 6 h at *T* = 165 °C, and the product was isolated by column chromatography using hexane/EtOAc (4:1) eluant to yield *r*-**11a** (0.053 g, 53%) as a white solid. From thermolysis of *s*-**10**: **CAUTION!** A solution of oxadiazoline *s*-**10** (0.150 g, 0.720 mmol) in PhC(O)H (5 mL) was stirred in a pressure tube for 4 h at *T* = 165 °C, and the product was isolated by column chromatography using hexane/EtOAc (4:1) eluant to yield *r*-**11a** (0.065 g, 43%) as a white solid. Mp 45–50 °C; δ_{H} (400.1 MHz, CDCl₃) 0.79–0.86 (1 H, m), 1.11–1.15 (1 H, m), 1.23–1.30 (2 H, m), 1.50–1.52 (2 H, m), 1.61–1.69 (2 H, m), 2.66–2.72 (2 H, m), 3.54–3.58 (1 H, m), 7.43–7.48 (2 H, m), 7.51–7.57 (1 H, m), 7.96 (2 H, m); δ_{C} (100.6 MHz, CDCl₃) 17.4 (CH₂), 22.4 (2 \times CH), 27.1 (2 \times CH₂), 40.7 (2 \times CH), 74.5 (CH), 128.3 (2 \times CH), 128.5 (2 \times CH), 132.6 (CH), 137.8 (C), 200.3 (C); $\bar{\nu}$ (solid) 3057 (w), 2964 (m), 2876 (w), 1718 (m), 1673 (s), 1596 (w), 1477 (w), 1446 (m), 1353 (m), 1312 (m), 1297 (m), 1271 (m), 1219 (s), 1122 (m), 1020 (m), 868 (m), 846 (m), 821 (m), 907 (s), 744 (m), 691 (s), 670 (m); *m/z* (EI, 70 eV) 212 (M⁺, 12), 197 (2), 183 (10), 115 (6), 170 (19), 157 (32), 144 (42), 129 (7), 121 (12), 115 (13), 105 (100), 92 (50), 77 (69), 65 (5), 51 (13); HRMS (ESI-TOF) found [*M* + Na]⁺ 235.1093, C₁₅H₁₆ONa requires 235.1099; Anal. Calcd for C₁₅H₁₆O C 84.87, H 7.60; found C 84.46, H 7.58.

1-[*rac*-(1*R*,2*R*,4*S*,5*S*,8*r*)-8-Phenyltricyclo[3.2.1.0^{2,4}]oct-8-yl]-ethan-1-one (*r*-12b**).** From thermolysis of *r*-**10**: **CAUTION!** A solution of oxadiazoline *r*-**10** (0.104 g, 0.499 mmol) in PhC(O)Me (5 mL) was stirred in a pressure tube for 4 h at *T* = 165 °C, and the product was isolated by column chromatography using hexane/EtOAc (4:1) eluant to yield ketone *r*-**12b** (0.088 g, 78%) as a white solid. From thermolysis of *s*-**10**: **CAUTION!** A solution of oxadiazoline *s*-**10** (0.150 g, 0.720 mmol) in PhC(O)Me (7 mL) was stirred in a pressure tube for 4 h at *T* = 165 °C, and the product was isolated by column chromatography using hexane/EtOAc (4:1) eluant to yield ketone *r*-**12b** (0.113 g, 69%) as a white solid. Mp 133–136 °C; δ_{H} (600.1 MHz, CDCl₃) 0.79–0.84 (1 H, m), 1.08–1.13 (2 H, m), 1.18–1.22 (1 H, m), 1.39–1.44 (2 H, m), 1.56–1.60 (2 H, m), 2.17 (3 H, s), 3.02–3.05 (2 H, m), 7.19–7.23 (1 H, m), 7.27–7.31 (2 H, m), 7.33–7.36 (2 H, m); δ_{C} (150.9 MHz, CDCl₃) 16.8 (CH₂), 21.8 (2 \times CH), 24.8 (2 \times CH₂), 27.0 (CH₃), 41.7 (2 \times CH), 90.8 (C), 127.0 (CH), 128.7 (2 \times CH), 128.7 (2 \times CH), 138.9 (C), 209.6 (C); $\bar{\nu}$ (solid) 3046 (w), 2931 (w), 1688 (s), 1597 (w), 1477 (w), 1454 (w), 1356 (m), 1312 (m), 1229 (m), 1124 (m), 1038 (m), 937 (w), 899 (w), 792 (m), 750 (m), 695 (s) cm^{-1} ; *m/z* (EI, 70 eV) 226 (M⁺, 3), 211 (5), 197 (7), 183 (15), 172 (25), 158 (41), 144 (100), 129 (37), 115 (33), 105 (9), 91 (36), 79 (24), 65 (6), 51 (6); HRMS (ESI-TOF) found [*M* + Na]⁺ 249.1254, C₁₆H₁₈ONa requires 249.1255; Anal. Calcd for C₁₆H₁₈O C 84.91, H 8.02; found C 84.71, H 7.77.

■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

■ Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge on the ACS Publications website at DOI: 10.1021/acs.joc.5b01988.

NMR spectra for all new compounds and computational data for PhC(O)H, PhC(O)Me, ¹I, ³I, 1H⁺, and 11–18 (PDF)

CIF files X-ray crystallographic data of *r*-11a and *r*-12b (CIF)

■ AUTHOR INFORMATION

Corresponding Author

*E-mail: udo.brinker@univie.ac.at; ubrinker@binghamton.edu.

Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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