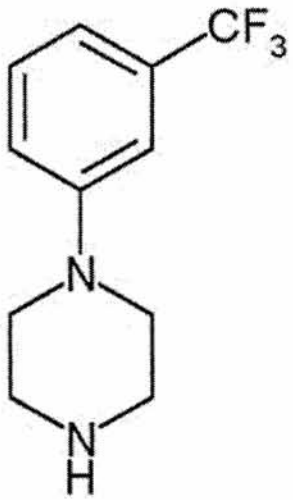
TRIFLUOROMETHYLPHENYLPIPERAZINE (TFMPP)

AN ENTHEOGENIC ENTACTOGEN

by MARKUS BERGER • Translated by CHRISTINE BANDOW

The following article has been adapted from a piece that appeared in the October 2002 issue of Entheogene Blätter*—the German version of* The Entheogen Review. *Although the few psychonautical reports included in this article present predominantly positive accounts of the effects of TFMPP, in the past we presented largely negative reports in a discussion of the piperazine compounds, and a general survey of the web shows mixed opinions. — EDS.*



The fact that nearly every day new psychoactive substances are being synthesized really isn't anything new. So-called "designer drugs" are developed regularly. Phenethylamines and tryptamines have been the primary players in this arena, but for a few years now piperazines (also known as diethylendiamines) have been gaining status. How important are piperazines to the psychonautical scene, and what manner of effects do they have?

Consider the hip new drug trifluoromethylphenylpiperazine (TFMPP). Surprisingly, it has been reported by some to produce effects that are similar to those caused by entactogens such as MDMA. 1-(3-trifluoromethylphenyl)piperazine is also known by the names N-(alpha,alpha,alpha-trifluoro-m-tolyl)piperazine, m-trifluormethylphenylpiperazine, TMFPP, TFMPP, and Molly. Its chemical formula is $C_{11}H_{13}F_3N_2$, and its CAS number is 15532-75-9. For storage purposes, it should be kept in a closed and dark place at a temperature of 15–30°C. Piperazines are hygroscopic (attract water) and heterocyclic (contain other atoms in their cycles of carbon) compounds that have antibiotic effects. They are primarily used in veterinary medicine. Piperazines are given to chicken and pigs to control parasites such as worms (VERORDNUNG 1990).

Pharmacologically, trifluoromethylphenylpiperazine behaves in a similar manner to phenethylamines (MDMA, mescaline, 2C-B, etc.)—it interacts with several serotonin receptors (SCHECHTER 1988; KLODZINSKA et al. 1989; STAAK et al. 2001a; STAAK et al. 2001b; HULSIK 2002; GLENNON n.d.). TFMPP's effects are sometimes described as lying somewhere between emphathogens, such as MDMA, and entheogens, such as LSD. With closed eyes, psychoptic effects in most cases involve partly colored visions and patterns similar to those caused by mescaline. One's emotions may feel exposed, more intense, more understandable, and almost touchable.

What is considered "an active dose" of TFMPP can depend on the kind of effect desired. Slight empathogenic effects can be expected by taking a dose of approximately 25 mg. For a more visionary experience, one needs to take 75–105 mg. Unwanted side effects may include skin reactions, diarrhea or soft stool, hyperthermia (increased temperature of the body), tachycardia (increased number of heart beats), nausea, and vomiting.

The Internet newsgroup alt.drugs.chemistry contains some early psychonautical reports of experiences with this interesting piperazine. There is the 1997 example of TOM KASPER who owned CHEMICAL RESALE OF SANTA BARBARA—a no longer extant company that sold psychoactive "research chemicals." *[KASPER eventually did some time in jail and may still be imprisoned for all we know.—EDS.]* By "accident," KASPER poured about 100 mg of TFMPP hydrochloride onto a piece of chicken that was supposed to be his dinner:

> [...W]hen I bit down on that chicken leg, I tasted the bitter taste, but too late. I had already swallowed...This was Tuesday afternoon at about 5:00 pm, and I was scheduled to go to the Carlos Santana concert at the Santa Barbara County Bowl at 6:30 pm. What to do, what to do? Well, I couldn't disappoint my beautiful date...I decided not to say anything. I stopped wedging on the chicken and left it out on the workbench (a mistake). When my beautiful date arrived, she saw the chicken and decided to have a bite. She too accidentally ingested a little [TFMPP], which must have accidentally spilled on

another piece of chicken. Oh well...We arrived at the S.B.C.B. for the concert feeling no effect from the ingestion at about 6:30 pm. By the time Santana started playing however, we were feeling the effect of the accidental ingestion of chemical TFMPP...In my estimation, it was similar to, but *more* euphoriant than MDMA, which I had accidentally ingested some years back when it was still legal. The toxic symptoms of ingestion included:

1) Increased sociability.
2) Increased desire to touch and love.
3) Enhanced tactile sensations (it felt good to touch things).
4) A feeling of "oneness" with the crowd, and with my date.
5) A desire to be very close and to share love with my date (KASPER 1997).

The effects described in this report are very similar to those of a substance that would be classified as typically entactogen. *[Keep in mind that this largely positive bioassay was reported by someone who at that time earned his living by selling the compound that he was describing effects for, among other similar compounds. — EDS.]* There wasn't any visionary component reported; perhaps the actual dose consumed was too small to produce such effects. Unfortunately, the report isn't crystal clear on exactly what amount of the chemical was consumed. Due to this vagueness, below I have quoted another report of a trip that was posted in the same newsgroup; this time there are precise details about the dose.

I ate 100 mg in a gel-cap. I started to feel trippy effects a little before the one hour point, and effects reached full intensity by around 2.5 hours. The comedown began at the 5 or 6 hour point and I was not completely back to normal until [after] 11 or 12 hours. Quite simply, it was not MDMA. There were some skin sensations that seemed like they could be MDMA-like, but there was none of the incredible emotional release of MDMA. However, there was no question that I was tripping. My thought patterns were trippy, things would breathe slightly if I looked very carefully for it, and music had a trippy edge. A little marijuana seemed to enhance the effects some. My pupils were dilated, my jaw was clenched just a little towards the end of the trip, and I was quite thirsty—at least the physical effects were similar to MDMA (PARADIGM SHIFT 1997).

Referring to risks and dangers, the quote below reports on a problem that arose due to the method of ingestion. The author prepared a sugar lump with about 102 milligrams of TFMPP hydrochloride and let it dissolve under the tongue:

I made the mistake of taking the "sublingual" stance too literally and held the cube in my mouth for a minute or two—for twenty minutes or so afterward my mouth was essentially numb. The substance seems highly caustic and swallowing it in a gel-cap with a glass of water probably would have been a cleverer way of ingestion (ANONYMOUS 1997).

Before I describe my own experiences, I'd like to share a trip report that was written by an anonymous friend, which gives another impression of the effects of TFMPP. The report was written by a 23-year-old male who weighed 120 lbs, who took 60 mg at 3:15 pm. About eight hours later, he wrote down remarks about his experience:

I'm at the level where I could sleep if I wanted to right now. I have to stay awake for "J" to come over and we'll hang out for an hour or so, but I'm sure the part of this experience that would have made sleep impossible is long gone. My pupils are still dilated and I am still feeling little waves of some perceptual shift, but the waves are becoming fewer and further between...also less intense. I think that a mood elevation was definitely one of the more primary effects. It was very [subtle] and mild in terms of visual trippiness or any kind of "trippy headspace." It seemed to soften the trademark "self-conscious" effect that kills the buzz for so many other psychedelics. One note on the visuals: the first and last of the noticeable visuals seem to be a "dimming" of light and of visual clarity. Things get a little dim, like the power is waning or something, and then things get brighter again, but my vision also seems to go in and out of some kind of liquid blurriness.

I am definitely able to pick out the effects of TFMPP, and it is really nothing like BZP [*N*-benzylpiperazine] except for the mood elevation. The CNS stimulation was barely evident... and I think it probably was a side effect of the mood elevation and anticipation. There also is no parallel between the TFMPP and anything anywhere near MDMA. I would place it more like a small but perceivable amount of LSD, without the self conscious feeling and clenching, etc.

It's 11:03 now, and I'm sure the effects are diminished to a slight afterglow. The slow nature of the drug would have me thinking it will continue to decline in effect for another two hours or so until it isn't noticeable any more. I guess I consider this a positive experience, it was very entertaining. Any more would be overboard, the appetite issues and stomach uncertainty would probably increase with dosage. A Ralph Nader type of political protest would really hit the spot.

PERSONAL BIOASSAYS

I took TFMPP three times. My first cautious (perhaps timid) experiment—due to concern about a possible allergic reaction or other trouble—with only 25 mg of this compound was a disappointment, without any effect. I felt only a little weary.

My second experiment was with 80 mg. Within two hours, this dose induced soft empathogenic feelings combined with mild and pleasant optical effects that I know from substances like 2C-B. Some objects appeared lightened with a 3-D picture-like contour in red, green, and yellow. My feelings were agreeable and I was in a very good mood but my mind wasn't satisfied. So I began to smoke a lot of hashish, and after half an hour I took some LSD. TFMPP at a dosage of 80 mg was a nice, short experience, and nothing more.

My third experiment was with 130 mg, which I took at 6:00 pm. At approximately 7:30 pm, I felt the same soft feelings as I had with the previous voyage, but with more visual effects. The skin around my eyes was very tight, my pupils were dilated and shaky (nystagmus), and my thinking was much clearer and very deep, but harder to sort out. At 8:00 pm the trip peaked. By 12:20 am or so, the effects declined slowly, and at 1:00 am I went to bed and slept deeply until the late morning. The chief characteristic of this trip that impressed me was the visual component, which was extra-ordinary. Physically effects included a kind of hyperthermia (I felt a little fevered) and tachycardia, sometimes with more than 140 heartbeats per minute!

TFMPP's primary effect cannot really be compared to other entheogens/empathogens in my opinion. If I were *forced* to do so, I would say it's somewhat like a mixture of 2C-B and MDA. Sometimes I felt as though I was losing control for a while. The experience is hard to describe. At the highest dose, it was visually colorful, yet it acted on a more subconscious level, rather than being a consciously reflective trip. I expect that I will probably have some more experiences with this substance in the future.

AND THEN IT WAS SCHEDULED...

TFMPP began to gain notoriety among the rave community, and in the USA the DEA eventually scheduled the substance on September 20, 2002 (DEA 2002a). As with most cases when one drug is repressed, a new one pops up to take its place. In this case, 1-(3-chlorophenyl)piperazine or 3-CPP, a close relative of TFMPP, has appeared on the market. It is not scheduled by name, although it may be considered illegal under the Controlled Substance Analog laws if it was possessed with an intention to consume. 3-CPP has milder effects, and it is believed that it will soon be available on the European market.

Since American "drug warriors" have scheduled the compound, it is now being synthesized in underground laboratories for the black market. It is offered in powder, liquid, and/or colored pills with symbols on it, and it is either marketed straightforwardly as TFMPP or misrepresented as MDMA (DEA 2001a; DEA 2001b). According to the DEA there has been one death related to consumption of TFMPP: a young woman from Zürich is said to have died from a combination of a piperazine derivative and MDMA (DEA 2002b). However, there is no source cited for this data, so this report is suspect.

TFMPP is still being sold via the Internet, marketed as a substitute for MDMA. It is legally produced in India and can be ordered from all over the world in amounts from 5 to 25 grams. The pure substance is also available in Germany. Mail order sources for this chemical includes SynChem OHG in Kassel, LM Chemical Trade & Consulting GmbH in Prisdorf, Merck KgaA in Darmstadt, and CHESS GmbH in Mannheim, who offers the best price: 80 euros for 25 grams (another business charges 114 euros for 10 grams). Although at the moment TFMPP is legal outside of the USA, it is impossible to say for how long this will continue.

On March 21, 2003 the DEA published the following:

> Safety Advisory Regarding New Club Drug "Molly"
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> Detroit, MI—Special Agents of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) working with the Michigan State Police and local law enforcement agencies have recently discovered the presence of a new club drug that is being sold to high school and college age students at "Rave" parties throughout the Detroit and Ann Arbor areas. This substance is known on the street as "Molly," which is 1-(3-Trifluoromethylphenyl) piperazine (TFMPP). This is an extremely dangerous drug, which is clandestinely manufactured and marketed in "Rave Clubs" as a more intense form of Ecstasy. This drug is an off-white powder generally sold in a gelatin capsule. TFMPP and Benzylpiperazine (BZP) were both given emergency controlled substance scheduling by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in September 2002. TFMPP was given Schedule I status, meaning it has a high

potential for abuse and no accepted medical use. This drug first appeared on the West Coast of the United States and these recent seizures in Michigan are the first indication of its presence in the metropolitan Detroit area. TFMPP also goes by the names "legal E," "legal X" or "A2." TFMPP can cause increased heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature.

"Molly" has properties similar to the stimulant effects of Ecstasy, but taken in larger doses it promotes hallucinogenic reactions. This poses an even greater risk to young adults who have taken Ecstasy previously and accidentally overdose by trying to achieve the hallucinogenic effects. DEA is currently conducting "Operation X-Out," which is a nationwide initiative to increase education and enforcement operations involving club and predatory drugs. Drug distributors have invaded the Internet with misinformation regarding the dangers of club and "date rape" drugs that are marketed toward young people. Effective information campaigns are essential to inform young Americans about club drugs such as GHB, Ecstasy, Ketamine and TFMPP, which are promoted by individuals who disguise their deadly effects.

"This is another example of individuals exploiting our young people with dangerous mixtures of chemicals that have the potential for deadly consequences. The DEA working closely with state and local law enforcement agencies, will do everything in our power to protect our children," said Michael A. Braun, Special Agent in Charge of the DEA Detroit Field Division (DEA 2003).

[This is the first instance we have seen of the term "predatory drugs," and we wonder if this will become a new catch-phrase for Drug War propagandists. — Eds.] Note that there is a mistake in the text above. The synonym "A2" is not a name for TFMPP but for "BZP" (*N*-benzylpiperazine or 1-benzyl-1,4-diazacyclohexane-dihydrochloride). Its formula is $C_{11}H_{16}N_2$. It was synthesized in 1944 for use in veterinary medicine. Some have reported that it causes an effect similar to methamphetamine. The usual dose is between 150 and 500 milligrams, and the effects last for 6 to 10 hours.

PIPERAZINE CANDYFLIPPING

A mixture of TFMPP and BZP called "Combo" or "Exodus" is now being sold on the black market. The BZP is thought to add an MDMA-like acceleration to the trippy effects of TFMPP. The BZP is also said to improve the effects of TFMPP on emotions, but I cannot confirm this. TFMPP alone stimulates the universe of emotions on a large scale. The effect of TFMPP and BZP at a dose of 150–200 mg tends to be similar to the effect of amphetamines. Both substances are currently legal everywhere except in the USA, and as far as I am aware there have been no adverse reactions reported from the combination of the two substances taken together. For more reports on the effects piperazines, see *The Entheogen Review* IX (3): 143–145. Additional reports on TFMPP taken in combination with some other substances can be found on the web at http://leda.lycaeum.org/?ID=416.