Directed ortho-Lithiation of Benzamides

**Significance:** Snieckus and co-workers reported a regiospecific ortho-lithiation of various  \(N,N\)-diethylbenzamides using sec-BuLi and TMEDA in THF. The formed lithiated species were trapped with a range of electrophiles and the desired products were obtained in moderate to excellent yield.

**Comment:** The authors demonstrated the utility of this methodology for the synthesis of naturally occurring alkaloids. Thus, a formylated product was converted by successive reduction and cyclization into meconine in 90% yield. Subsequent hydrolysis furnished opianic acid in 50% yield.