

## **Supplementary Data**

### **Electronic Supplementary Information**

#### **Video, Sample 5 sheared at 175 deg.wmv**

The black texture of compound **5** between crossed polarizers is homeotropic, as confirmed by simple shearing experiment, and shown by a short video. As the cover slip is sheared or pressed the texture brightens up and after the shear the brightness decays within a few seconds.

**Keywords:** smectic phase, homeotropic alignment, polarizing optical microscopy, liquid crystalline molecules