Lydia Burdick ’71 (A&S) not only has written a new book but also has created a new genre. *The Sunshine on My Face: A Read-Aloud Book for Memory-Challenged Adults* is a Two-Lap Book™, the first of its kind, and is designed specifically to be read with someone who has Alzheimer’s disease. Accompanying the pictures of older adults enjoying typical daily experiences is simple text, one sentence to a page, that may be read to or by a patient with moderate to severe Alzheimer’s disease.

The book won a Bronze Award in the 2005 National Mature Media Awards.

The stimulus for Burdick’s book was her desire to interact with her mother, who had Alzheimer’s. “I wanted to give my mother words to say and to give the two of us a happy activity to do together,” Burdick says.

Burdick began writing down simple sentences about adult activities that her mother still enjoyed, such as taking a warm bath or eating apple pie with ice cream. A friend provided illustrations of seniors, and Burdick put together a two-lap picture book. To her delight, her mother said aloud every word of text and answered questions appropriately.

After her mother’s death in 2003, Burdick shared the book with other families and offered it for publication. Although written for a woman, Burdick says the book, the first of a series, is also appropriate for men because the illustrations are of both sexes.

IN 2000 THE VENERABLE HARTFORD COURTANT newspaper publicly apologized for its role in promoting the institution of slavery. Its predecessor, the Connecticut Courant, had published its first “wanted ad” for the return of a runaway slave in 1765. Over the next 58 years, more than 90 advertisements ran for the buying, selling, and retrieving of slaves.

The Courant’s concession was fueled by insurance giant Aetna’s apology in 2000 for having insured slaves in the 19th century and by a groundswell of African Americans calling for financial reparations. The deeper the Courant dug, the more appallingly clear became Connecticut’s involvement in the whole affair.

Now—five years and two continents’ worth of research later—Anne Farrow ’71 (HCW), fellow Hartford Courant staff writer Joel Lang, and Northeast Sunday magazine editor Jenifer Frank have published *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery*. Random House calls the book “startling and superbly researched,…a fascinating and sobering work that actually does what so many books pretend to do: shed light on America’s past.”

“The story [of slavery] is much more nuanced and complicated than we understood,” Farrow comments. She speaks particularly of Connecticut’s “extremely deep relationship with slavery,” noting that the state was the last in New England to abolish the practice.

The book grew out of the Courant’s initial 80-page report, *Complicity: How Connecticut Chained Itself to Slavery*, which appeared in 2002 as a special supplement. It contained the shocking news that during the American Revolution, 5,100 individuals were enslaved in Connecticut. Eventually, approximately half of the state’s ministers, lawyers, and public officials became slave owners. Following the release of the celebrated report, the newspaper was approached by a literary agent about expanding it into a book. The Courant agreed, sending Farrow and Lang, the two lead writers on the supplement, on a special assignment to research and write the book.

Farrow looks back over a year and a half of writing, preceded by a trail of clues that began on these shores and led the author on her own slave voyage to West Africa’s haunting Sierra Leone. “In every way,” she reflects, the project “was more exciting and difficult than I anticipated.”