In late February, SUNY Connect added the HarpWeek Civil War segment to its growing set of electronic resources. Covering the period 1857-1865, this segment is part of HarpWeek's electronic access to Harper's Weekly. This 19th century periodical is a valuable resource for examining nineteenth century America on a cumulative week-to-week basis. The pages have been scanned as facsimile images, preserving the full content of the printed periodical, including editorials, news stories, illustrations, cartoons, and even advertisements. According to Eleanor A. Gossen, Social Sciences Bibliographer at the University at Albany, HarpWeek is "a wonderful product with something of value for all kinds of institutions, from community colleges to university centers, and it should be of interest to sociologists, women's studies people, and others as well as historians."

HarpWeek offers three different primary access paths: you can browse the page images by date, you can search the thesaurus-based indexes, and the entire full-text is searchable. As pointed out by a University of Buffalo history professor, "the search engine in HarpWeek allows one to locate material not indexed in other databases like Poole's or PCI: minor items, illustrations, and advertisements." When she had an "opportunity to test it by searching for terms related to [her] last book [she] found a number of items [she] had not located earlier."

Also at the University of Buffalo, according to Business and Government Documents Librarian Michael Lavin, "several of our librarians are working with some faculty members to design an undergraduate course around this product. They believe it can provide students with a model for using primary historical materials for multidisciplinary study."

In addition to the access paths already mentioned, HarpWeek provides the ability to find people by occupation or role, or to browse literature by genre. For example, you can search for references to pamphlets of several kinds, including medical, political and religious, or for first person narratives--"male or female". Among the many intriguing possibilities in the latter category is "My First and Last Novel," appearing in the July 24, 1858 issue.

For more information on HarpWeek, plus curriculum plans and instructional resources, you can go to the homepage at www.harpweek.com. It includes many free sites developed as
public service features as well as to showcase the database. HarpWeek also offers a "telephone orientation" session to walk you through the database features. For information, contact Susan Severtson at Severt@aol.com.

As for printing, according to HarpWeek, if you want the best possible printing, "don't try to print from the browser - it can't cope". Instead, contact Brian Welch (bwelch@harpweek.com) at HarpWeek to request their Print Application - a free piece of software which makes printing the tabloid-sized pages a snap.

SUNYConnect provides a variety of databases and database types. Nowadays, with increased computer capabilities, students are apt to utilize multi-media in their work. Accunet/AP Multimedia Archive (formerly AP Photo Archive), another SUNYConnect database, provides a 150 year archive. And with HarpWeek we have a multi-faceted look at a major moment in our country's history.