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# Should the number be higher?

## THE CHANGING COST OF WAR

A recent [paper](#) written by Binghamton University professor Dr. J. David Hacker argues that the true cost of the Civil War is somewhere between 650,000 and 850,000 lives. This is an increase from the traditional figure of 620,000 put forward by Union veterans William F. Fox and Thomas Leonard Livermore in 1889 after an exhaustive study of the army documents and pension records available at the time.

Dr. Hacker used census records from 1850-1880 to construct a pattern of survival rates throughout the troubled decades. His research revealed that the period of 1860-1870 was approximately 750,000 men and women short of the normal survival pattern in the non-war years.

Applying the tools of modern demographic and statistical analysis is immensely valuable to furthering our understanding of the Civil War--we are always striving to add new threads to the tapestry of our shared historical experience. Dr. Hacker provides important insight into the tragic loss of life from 1860-1870. However, his final estimate is very broad, includes civilian casualties, and is not directly linked to the war years of 1861-1865. The Civil War Trust will continue to use Fox's and Livermore's calculation of 620,000 military deaths in the Civil War. We look forward to continued research from Dr. Hacker and others.

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# 39,000





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