

EXPLORATION 6.7 **Single-Parent Family**

One of the major learnings my students report from working with real-life data is that people can distort the reader's impression of data both by the way in which the data are given and by not giving certain numbers. Let us work through an interesting example.

1. Consider the following data: In 1980, women were the head of 6,230,000 single-parent families. By 1992, women were the head of 9,028,000 single-parent families. Describe your first interpretations of the data.

2. Now consider the following data: In 1980, men were the head of 690,000 single-parent families. By 1992, men were the head of 1,472,000 single-parent families.
 - a. How does this information change your perception of how single-parent families are changing?

 - b. Write a short article, as if for a daily newspaper, interpreting the changing nature of the single-parent family over this period of time. You need to decide how you want to interpret the change (additively, multiplicatively, or some other way), show and justify any computations you do, and then write the news article.

 - c. Exchange papers with someone in your group and critique your partner's work with respect to accuracy and clarity.