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## Hidden Behind a 53 Foot Trailer: Are Women Truck Drivers at Risk for Sexual Assault?

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# Hidden Behind a 53 Foot Trailer: Are Women Truck Drivers at Risk for Sexual Assault?

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## Purpose

- To compare the characteristics of women truck drivers with the characteristics of women victims of sexual assault
- To describe the prevalence rates, risk factors, and physical and psychological consequences of sexual assault
- To discuss why victims do not report

## Methods

- Literature Review using Search Engines
  - PubMed, CINAHL, PsycInfo, MedLine, Google Scholar
- Keywords
  - Females, homicides, sexual assault, rape, sexual violence, workplace, women truck drivers
- Articles in English between 2011 and 2015
- Inclusion Criteria
  - Females above age 18, prevalence rates, risk factors, physical and psychological consequences, reporting statistics
- Exclusion Criteria
  - Campus sexual assault, males

## Sexual Assault

- Definition: Intentional sexual contact involving vaginal, oral or anal penetration without a person's consent
- Act of aggression related to power and control
- Affects 1 in 3 to 1 in 5 women, worldwide, over lifetime
  - 22 million in the US over lifetime
    - 272,350 annually
    - 715 per day
    - 30 per hour
- 42% of victims expect to be sexually assaulted again
- 50-80% know perpetrators
- 50% are physically injured during assault
- 12% of assaults occur in the workplace

## Truck Drivers

- 3.5 million truck drivers; 200,000 women
- Drive solo or as a team
- Haul cargo through 48 lower states, Canada, and Mexico
  - Value of cargo: Few dollars to thousands of dollars
- Away from home days to months at a time
- Daily mandatory 10 hour breaks
- Rest areas, highway ramps, empty parking lots, truck stops

## Comparison of Characteristics

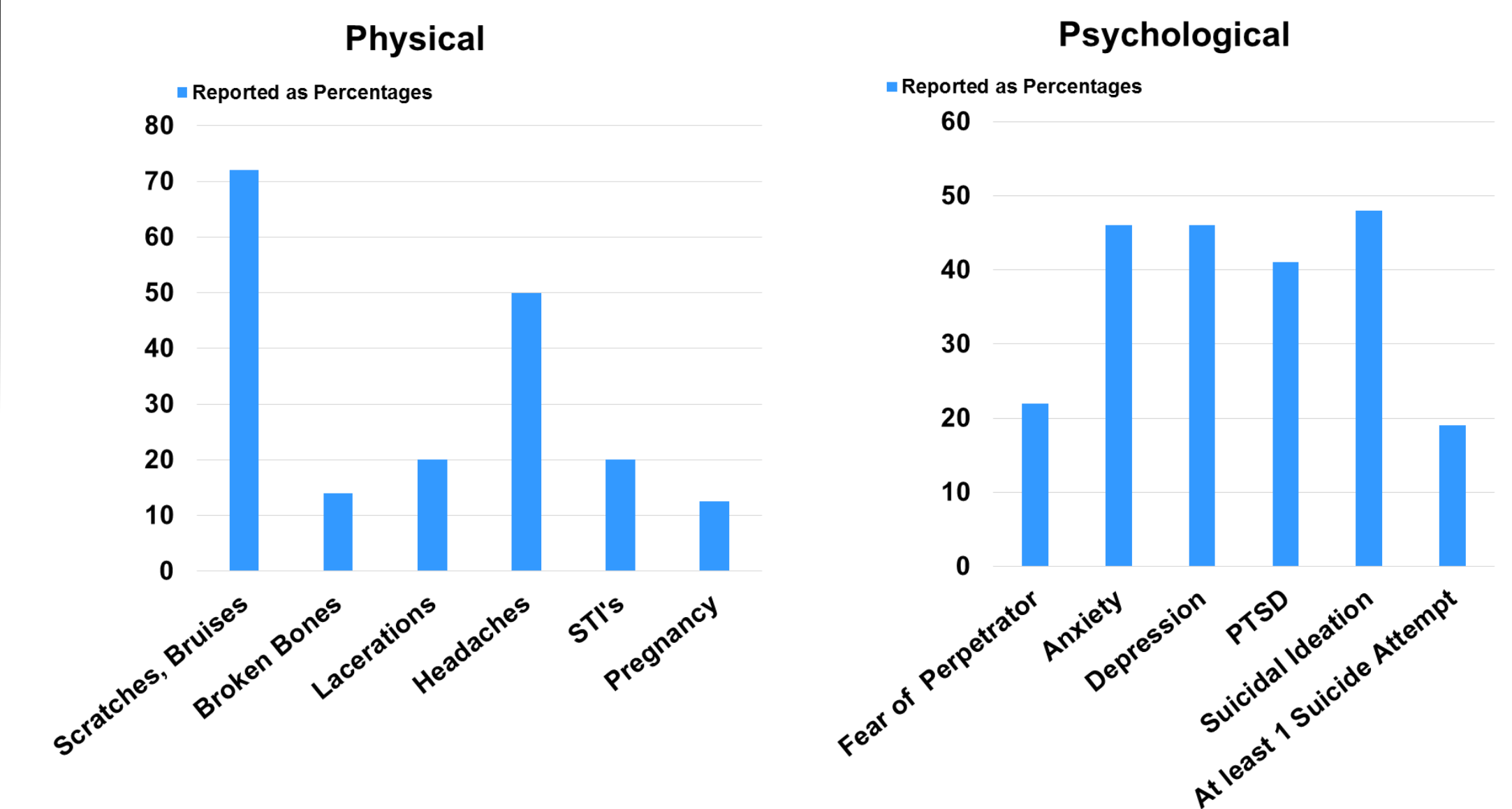
Women Victims of Sexual Assault	Women Truck Drivers
50% Caucasian or African American	75% Caucasian
44% Young to middle aged: 18-39 yrs	68% Middle aged: 30-50 yrs
85% Single	47% Married
55% Lower income levels: less than \$50,000/yr	62% Low to middle incomes: \$30,000 to \$50,000/yr
High school or lower education level	51-77% At least a high school education
65% Occurred late at night or early morning	Drives all hours of day and night based on delivery times
Works alone	75% drive with a partner
Works in isolated areas	Picks up and delivers in urban and rural areas
Interacts with the public	Interacts with shippers and receivers, truck stop personnel, co-workers, and other drivers daily
Mobile workplace	70-92% spend more than 21 days/month away from home



Truck driven by R. & K. Bourne  
 Photo by K. Bourne

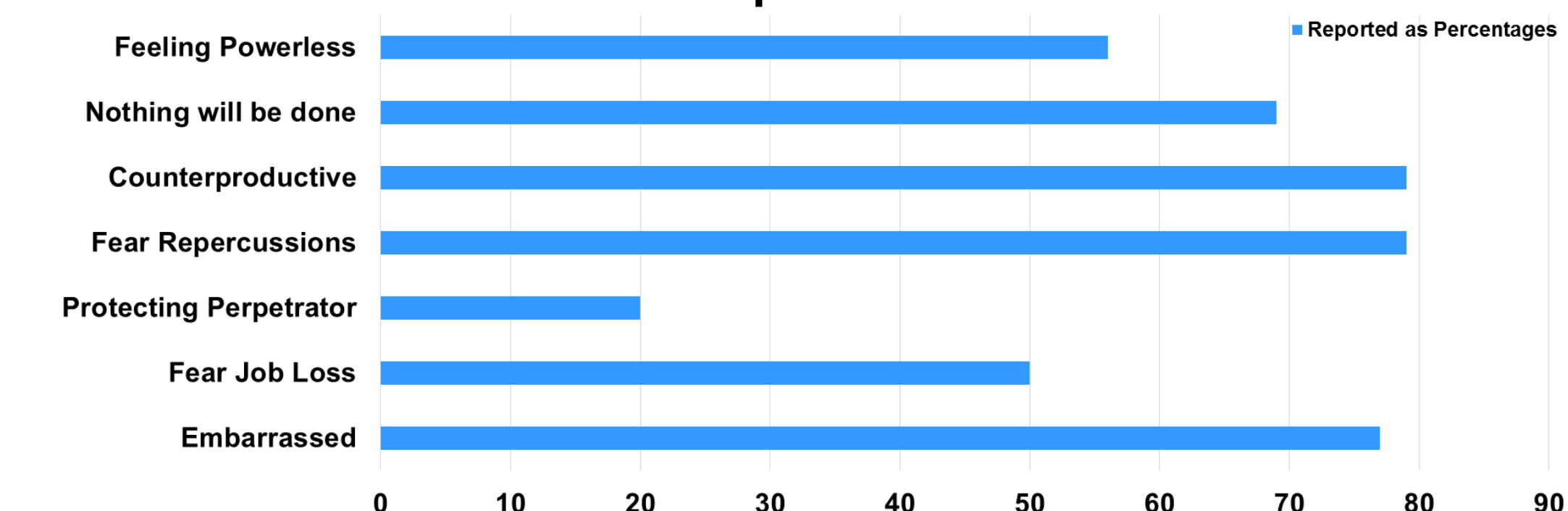
## Consequences

60% of victims have negative health outcomes



## Reporting

73% of assaults are not reported



## Future Studies

- Examine relationship between risk factors and incidence rates in female truck drivers
- Determine prevalence of physical and psychological consequences in female drivers who report being a victim
- Explore reasons for not reporting

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