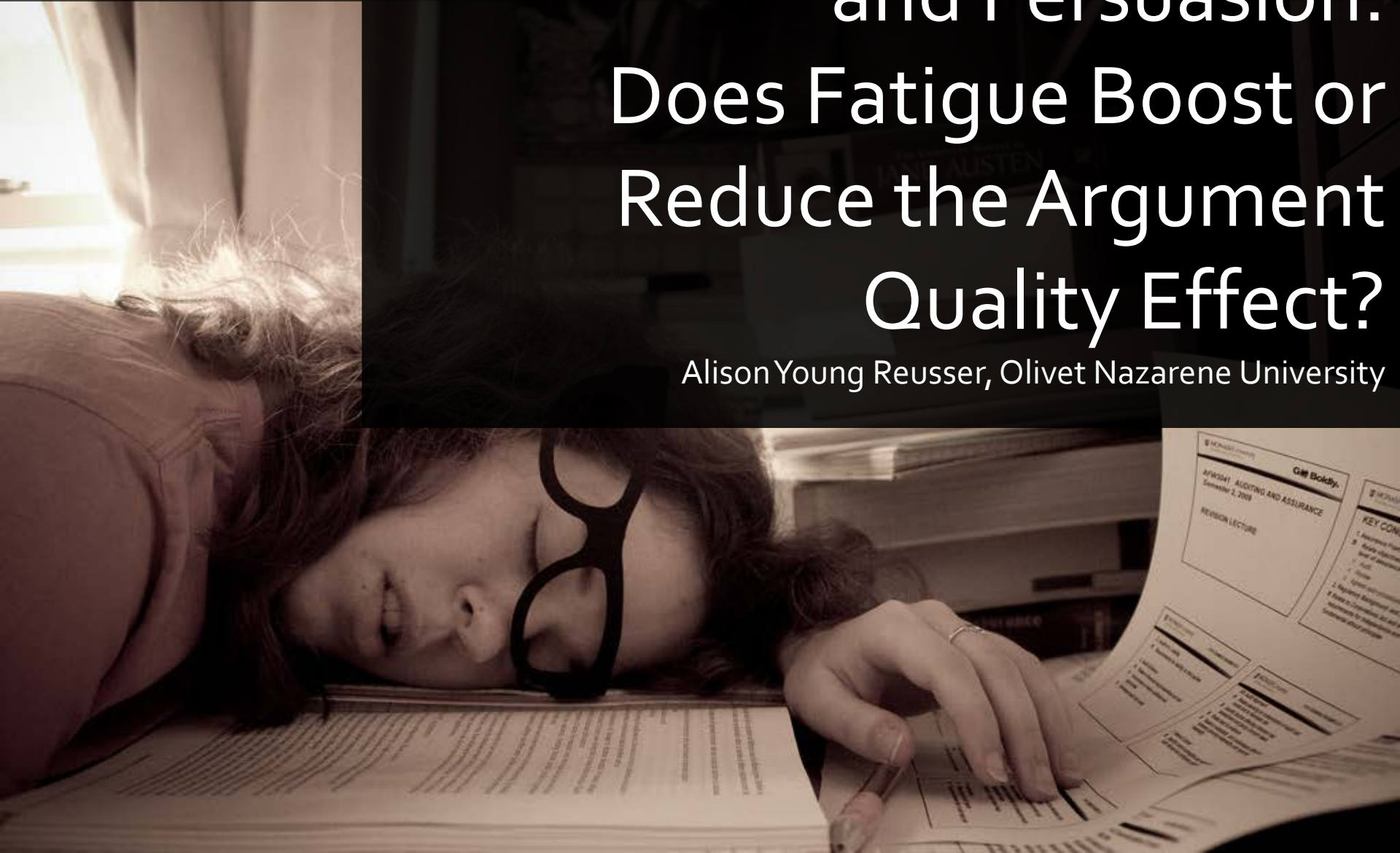



The Hot-Cold Empathy Gap and Persuasion: Does Fatigue Boost or Reduce the Argument Quality Effect?

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Hot-Cold Empathy Gap



I was late
because I
was tired.

- Being in the same visceral state as someone increases empathy
 - Cold torture (Nordgren et al., 2011)
 - Impulsive eating (Nordgren et al., 2007)
- What if that person is trying to persuade you?

Argument Quality Effects

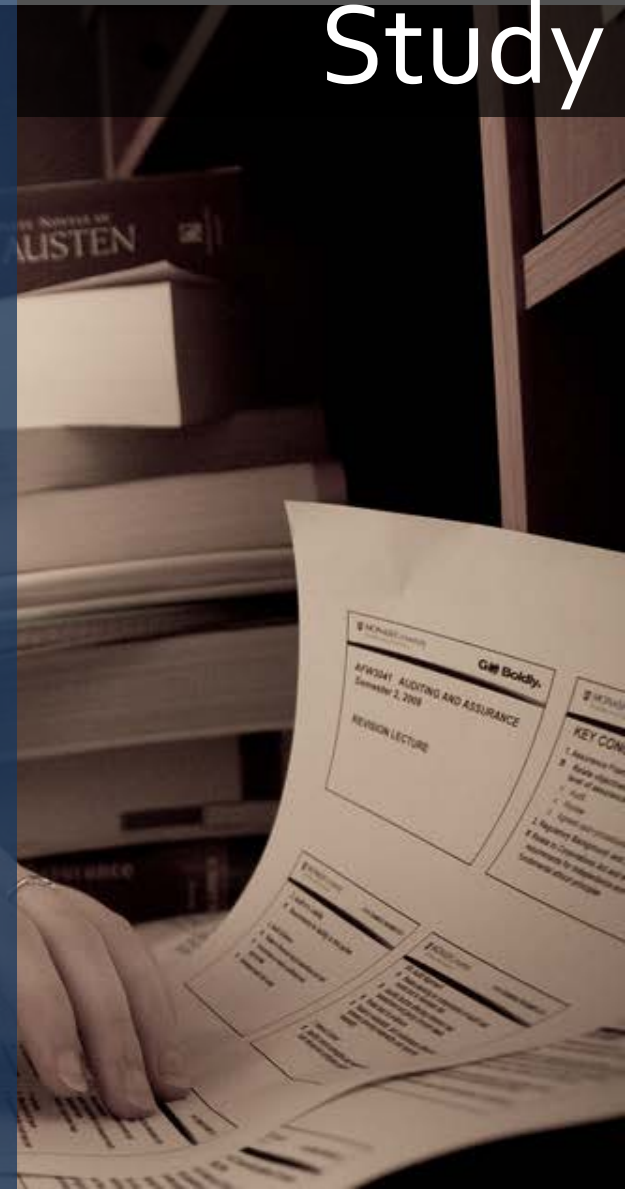
- Difference in persuasion between strong vs. weak arguments
- Stronger if:
 - Relevant (Petty et al., 1981)
 - Thinking a lot (Need for Cognition; Cacioppo et al., 1984)
- Weaker if:
 - Distracted (Petty, Wells & Brock, 1976)

Current Research

- If someone is in a relevant visceral state (fatigue):
 - Will persuasion increase regardless of argument quality?
 - Will argument quality effects:
 - DECREASE due to distraction?
 - INCREASE due to relevance?
 - Will NFC moderate any effects?

Current Study

- 310 MTurk participants (151 women)
- Argument quality condition: strong vs. weak
- Instructions:
 - George, online contractor
 - Has not had enough sleep (3-4 hours per night)
 - Missed project deadline
 - Email to his boss



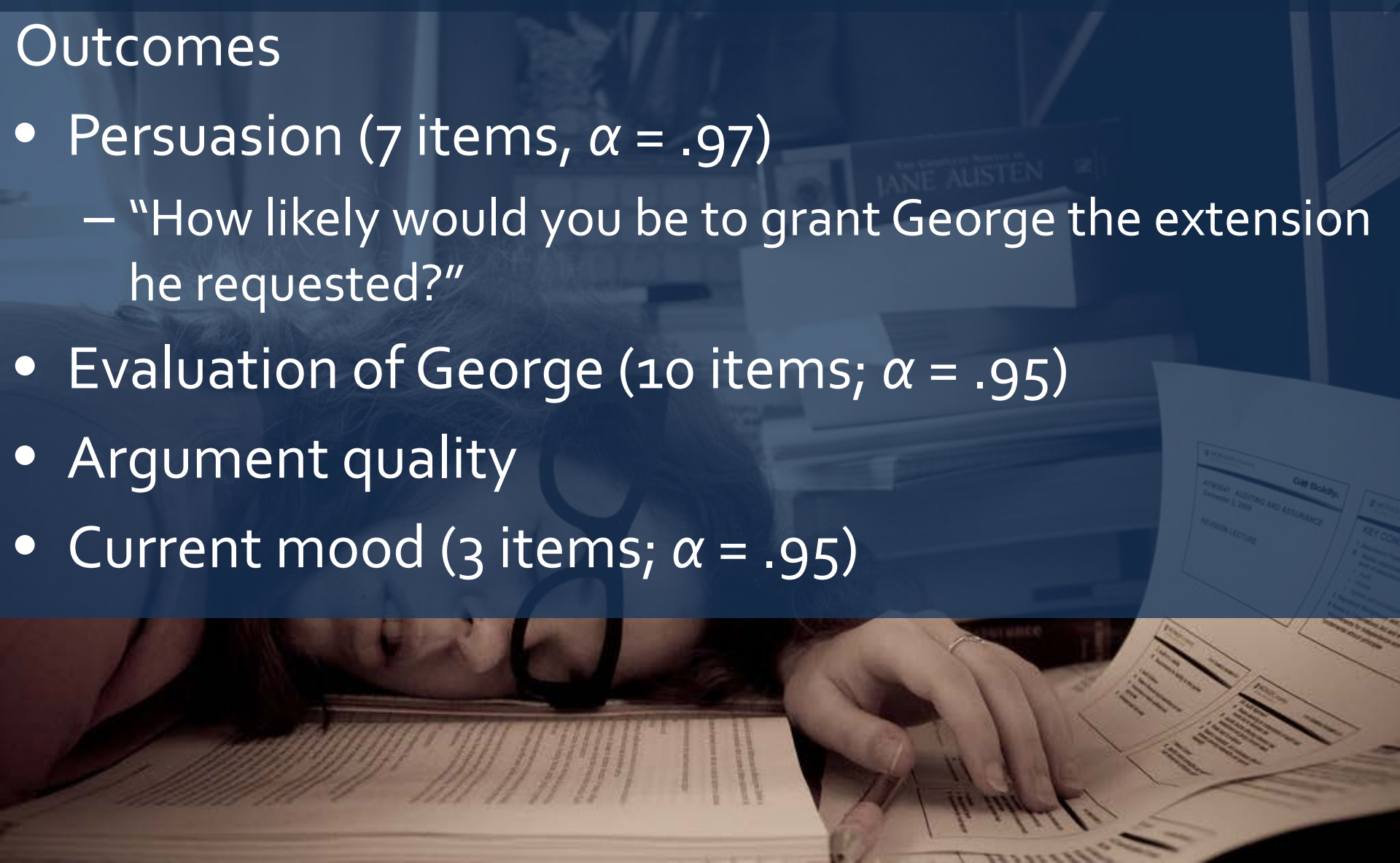
Stimuli: Strong vs. Weak Argument

- I am so sorry for missing last night's deadline. My only explanation is that I have been unable to sleep much over the past week I am currently **about 90% finished** with my report and I am attaching what I have so far. I would like to request an extension...An extension would allow me to **be as thorough as possible in reviewing all potential sites for the new building.** ...Granting me a short extension **would also prevent you from having to start from scratch** and give it to someone who hasn't been on the project ...
- I am so sorry for missing last night's deadline. My only explanation is that I have been unable to sleep much over the past week... I'm currently **about halfway finished** with my report and I am attaching what I have so far. I would like to request an extension...An extension would allow me to make sure **none of the sites in my list are mistyped or duplicates.** ...Granting me a short extension **would also allow the rest of the company to relax for a bit** before having to read through my report.

Measures

Outcomes

- Persuasion (7 items, $\alpha = .97$)
 - “How likely would you be to grant George the extension he requested?”
- Evaluation of George (10 items; $\alpha = .95$)
- Argument quality
- Current mood (3 items; $\alpha = .95$)



Mediators

- Personal Involvement (10 items; $\alpha = .94$)
- Similarity to George (3 items; $\alpha = .84$)

Predictors

- Current fatigue (4 items, $\alpha = .94$)
- NFC (18 items; $\alpha = .95$)

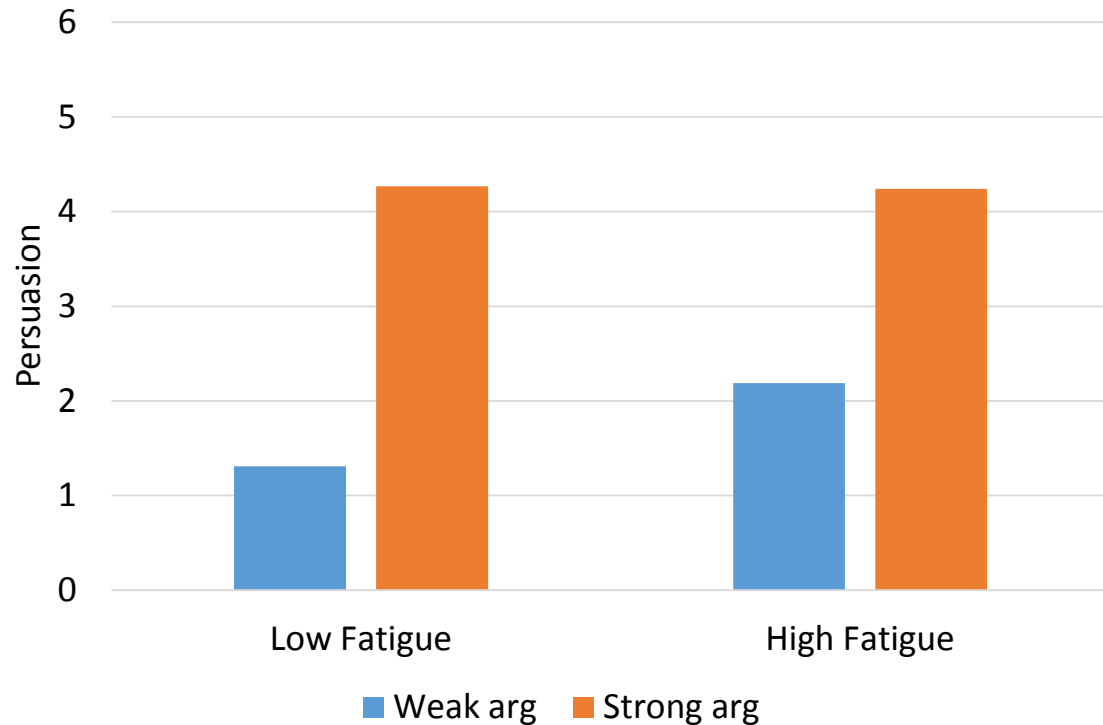
Results

- Between-subjects ANCOVA predicting **persuasion** from:
 - Argument quality (strong vs. weak)
 - Current fatigue
 - NFC
 - All interactions
 - Covariates: mood, age, gender, argument complexity

Results

- No effect of/interactions with NFC
- Argument quality x fatigue, $F(1,296) = 7.39, p = .007, \eta^2_p = .02$

Simple effect of fatigue for weak arguments, $b = .44, SE = .13, F(1,296) = 12.26, p = .001, \eta^2_p = .04$

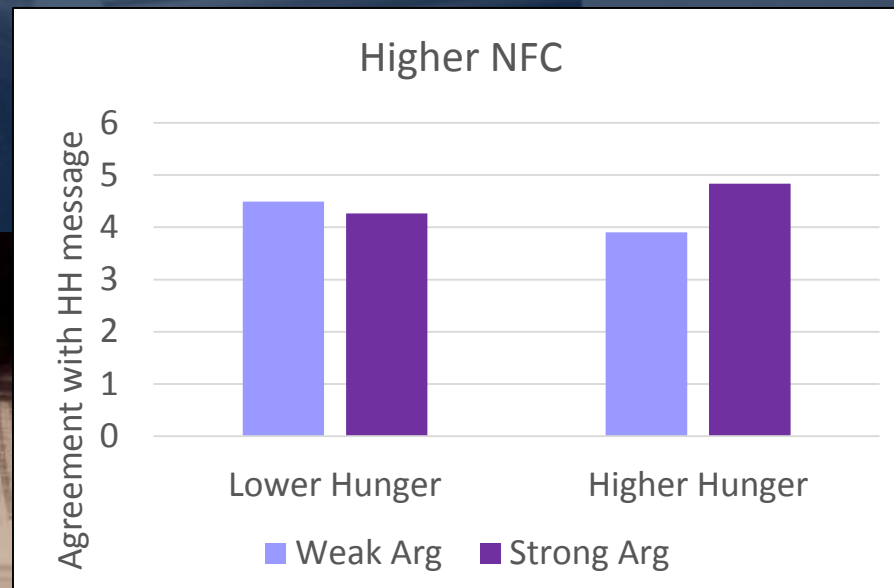
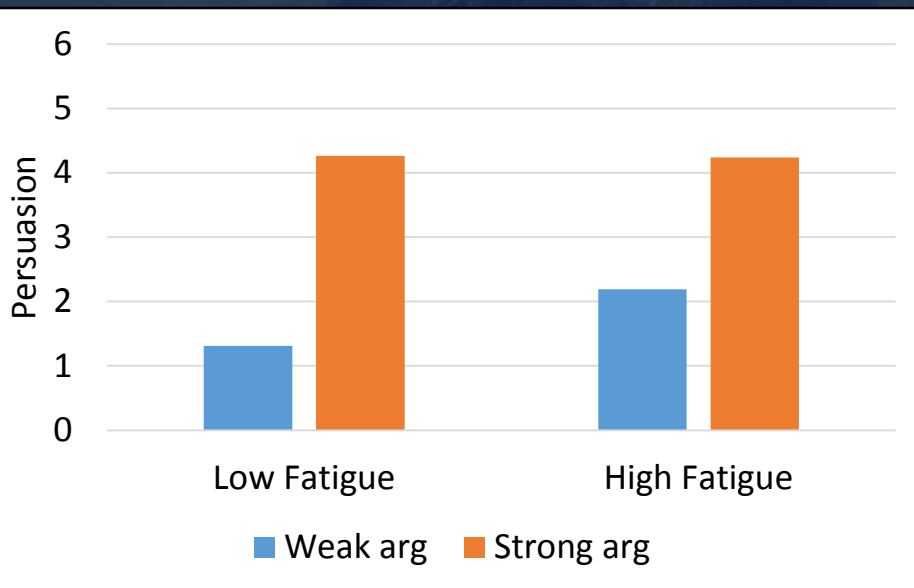


Which prediction is supported?

- Impact of fatigue
 - Did persuasion increase regardless of argument quality? No.
 - Did argument quality effects...
 - Increase due to relevance?
 - Apparently not.
 - Decrease due to distraction?
 - Possible. Weak arguments were more persuasive for fatigued people
 - BUT evidence that weak arguments were more INVOLVING for fatigued people...

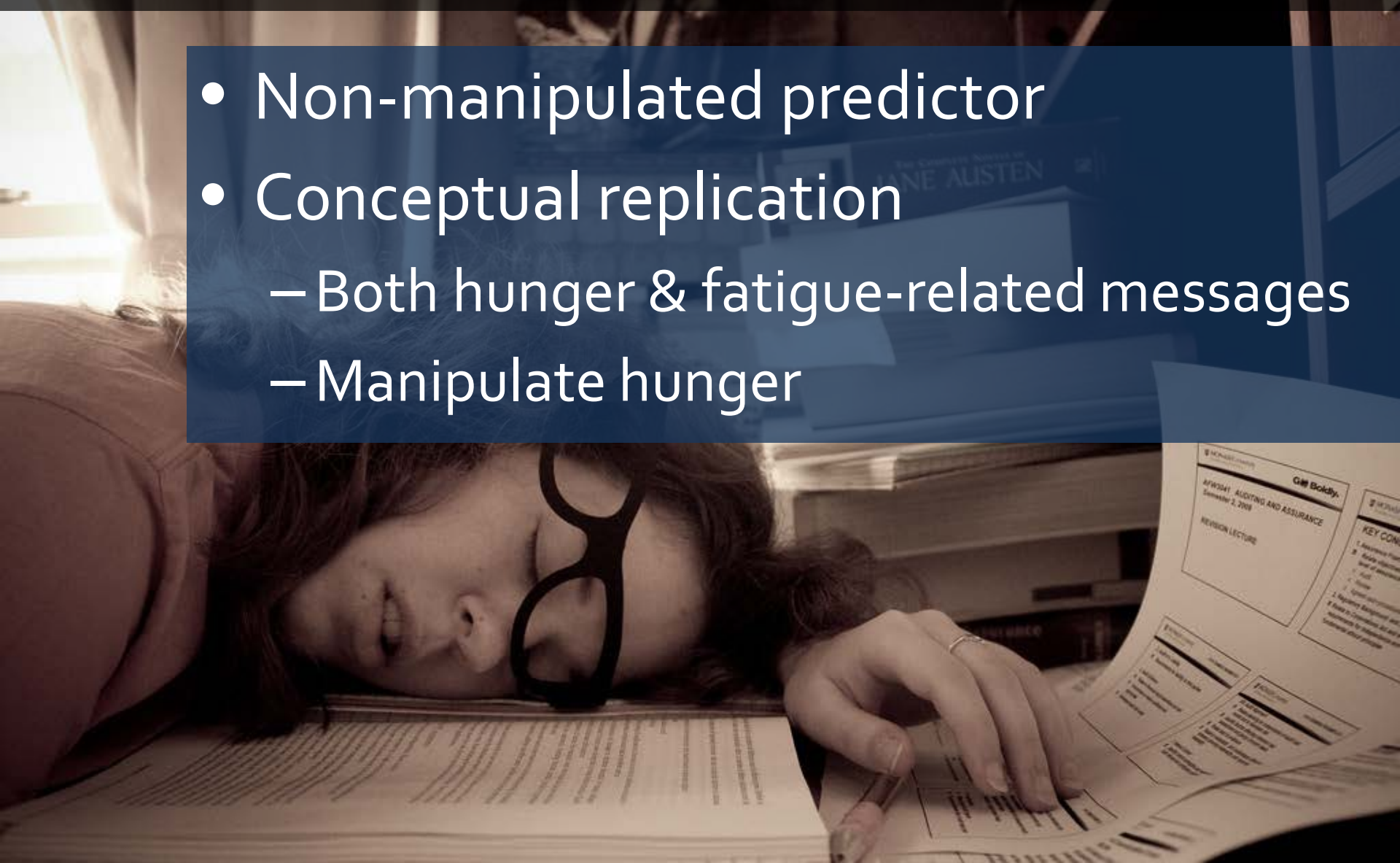
Compare with Research on Hunger

- Among people higher in NFC, hunger increased argument quality effects
 - Hunger = higher relevance?
 - Fatigue = higher distraction?



Limitations & Future Directions

- Non-manipulated predictor
- Conceptual replication
 - Both hunger & fatigue-related messages
 - Manipulate hunger



Thank You!

- Anna George
- Andy Luttrell
- Russ Fazio

