

**Positive Illusions About Dyadic Perspective Taking
as a Moderator of the Association Between
Attachment Insecurity and Marital Satisfaction**

by
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Abstract

Attachment insecurity (i.e., attachment anxiety or avoidance) puts people at risk for dissatisfying relationships, but positive illusions may buffer against insecurities. In 196 mixed-sexed newlywed couples, I investigated whether spouses' positive illusions about partner's dyadic perspective taking moderated the association between spouses' attachment insecurity and both partners' marital satisfaction over two years. Multilevel modeling indicated that wives' positive illusions buffered the contemporaneous negative association between wives' attachment anxiety and wives' marital satisfaction, and husbands' positive illusions buffered the negative associations between husband's attachment avoidance and both partners' marital satisfaction. Husbands' positive illusions also buffered the negative association between husbands' attachment avoidance and husbands' subsequent marital satisfaction. Despite this evidence for buffering, there was also evidence for potentiation; husbands' positive illusions potentiated the negative association between attachment anxiety and subsequent marital satisfaction, and wives' positive illusions potentiated the negative association between wives' attachment avoidance and subsequent marital satisfaction. Thus, in the moment, positive illusions may allow spouses to feel happy in their relationship despite insecurities, but positive illusions may not sustain marital satisfaction over time and may even be harmful in the face of insecurity.

Keywords: couples; attachment insecurity; positive illusions; perspective taking; marital satisfaction; relationship satisfaction

I would like to dedicate my thesis to my granddad and SFU alumnus, Alan Legg. Thank you for your support and wisdom. I wish you were here so I could share this moment with you. I know you are with me in spirit.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

People desire happy romantic relationships, but some are more successful at achieving this goal than others. Attachment insecurity is one characteristic that can lead to unsatisfying relationships (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Feeney & Noller, 1992; Stackert & Bursik, 2003). However, positive illusions, or exaggerated positive perceptions of romantic partner's personal qualities, might buffer negative aspects of relationships (e.g., Murray et al., 1996) such as attachment insecurity. Positive illusions are related to stable and satisfying relationships (Cobb et al., 2001; Miller et al., 2006; Murray et al., 1996). According to Murray and colleagues (1996b), positive illusions buffer relationship doubt and conflict by providing individuals with reassurance that it is worthwhile to be in a relationship with their partner. Thus, the buffering effect of positive illusions may weaken the association between attachment insecurity and relationship satisfaction. I predicted that positive illusions and attachment insecurity would be related to changes in relationship satisfaction over time, and that positive illusions would moderate the association between attachment insecurity and newlywed couples' relationship satisfaction over the first two years of marriage.

1.1. Attachment Security and Relationship Satisfaction

Attachment theory provides a framework to understand the formation and quality of romantic relationships (Bowlby, 1969). Social experiences, including those in early childhood, can produce enduring differences in how individuals approach relationships that are characterized by attachment security or insecurity (Feeney & Noller, 1991). Security allows individuals to maintain an appropriate balance of closeness and distance with their partner, and insecurity is reflected by an excessive need for closeness or a strong desire to remain emotionally distant. Individual differences in attachment insecurity are best conceptualized as two dimensions: attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Attachment anxiety is associated with feeling unworthy of love and being preoccupied with fears of abandonment by one's partner, and attachment avoidance is associated with distrust of close others and avoidance of emotional intimacy with romantic partners (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).

Attachment insecurity puts people and their partners at risk for dissatisfying relationships and relationship dissolution (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Feeney & Noller, 1992; Stackert & Bursik, 2003). Attachment insecurity may activate behavioural strategies that damage the relationship over time. For example, attachment anxiety is associated with hyperactivating strategies that stem from a heightened awareness of and emotional response to perceived signs of abandonment and from a desire to make an unresponsive attachment figure pay attention and provide care and support (Butzer & Campbell, 2008). Thus, attachment anxiety may manifest as an excessive need for closeness and possessiveness. Attachment avoidance is associated with deactivating strategies to disengage from an unresponsive attachment figure, which leads to emotional distance from a partner and a lack of intimacy and closeness (Butzer & Campbell, 2008). These behaviours make relationships difficult and unsatisfying for both partners, and because these social patterns of relating to others are often established early in life, modifying these behaviours can be challenging.

Attachment insecurity and its associated behaviours may be challenging for individuals to manage in their relationship; however, it may be that qualities and skills of individuals and partners may buffer the effects of insecurities on the relationship. The dyadic regulation model of insecurity buffering suggests that partners who respond to attachment anxiety with emotional support and reassurance or respond to attachment avoidance with instrumental support and soft influences (that allow the insecure partner to retain personal autonomy) will buffer attachment insecurity (Simpson & Overall, 2014). When partners are responsive when attachment fears are prominent, insecure individuals may have perceived their relationship in positive ways and experience reductions in insecure behaviour. For example, partners of insecure individuals who are skilled at communication and support can help individuals regulate their attachment insecurity (Simpson & Overall, 2014). Insecure individuals' perceptions of their partner's qualities also buffer the association between their attachment insecurity and individuals' relationship satisfaction (Overall & Simpson, 2015).

1.2. Positive Illusions and Relationship Satisfaction

Positive illusions are exaggerated favorable perceptions about the self and other people, and positive illusions specifically about romantic partners predict positive romantic relationship outcomes such as love and relationship stability for up to thirteen

years (Miller et al., 2006; Murray & Holmes, 1997). In a meta-analysis of unmarried couples, positive illusions were the strongest negative predictor of nonmarital romantic relationship dissolution, and were a stronger predictor of dissolution than other important relationship factors, such as commitment, trust, and satisfaction (Le et al., 2010). Individuals' positive illusions are also positively related to partner's relationship outcomes. For example, individuals' positive illusions about their partner's attachment security or about partners' interpersonal qualities are positively related to partner's relationship satisfaction (Cobb et al., 2001; Murray et al., 1996b).

Murray and colleagues (1996b) proposed that positive illusions buffer the negative association between relationship conflict or doubt and relationship satisfaction (i.e., the buffering hypothesis). Seeing the best in a partner may provide reassurance that it is worth staying in the relationship and may lead to more positive interactions and better communication, which then lead to greater relationship satisfaction for individuals and their partner. For example, men's positive illusions about their partners' interpersonal qualities buffer the association between negative conflict and the likelihood of the couple breaking up over one year (Murray et al., 1996b). Thus, when men saw the best in their partner, couples were less likely to break up, even when there was conflict.

Although the evidence of the benefit of positive illusions for relationship quality is strong, some research suggests that positive illusions may not always be good for relationship outcomes (Huston et al., 2001; Swann et al., 1994). Positive illusions may only provide a flimsy sense of reassurance that leads to high expectations and results in future disappointment. For partners who are on the receiving end of positive illusions, it may be hard to live up to excessively positive perceptions. Over time, partners receiving the positive illusions may feel invalidated because they are not being seen accurately (Murray et al., 1996b). There is evidence that in some situations positive illusions could have negative consequences; for example, when individuals have a negative self-appraisal, partner's positive partner-appraisals are negatively associated with individuals' self-reports of relationship intimacy (Swann et al., 1994). Despite the mixed evidence regarding the benefits of positive illusions, most research on positive illusions suggests they are an important aspect of healthy relationships.

1.3. Current Study

In this study, I examined how positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking, which is the cognitive component of empathy (Long, 1990), buffered the negative association between attachment insecurities and partners' marital satisfaction over two years in newlywed mixed-sex couples. This study builds on previous research in several ways. First, I examined positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking, which has yet to be explored in close relationships. Researchers have investigated positive illusions about specific personality or relationship attributes such as agreeableness and attachment security, or about general interpersonal qualities that are important for healthy relationships (Cobb et al., 2001; Miller et al., 2006; Murray et al., 1996a). However, positive illusions can be about any partner quality. People who are skilled in dyadic perspective taking have the imaginative tendency to put themselves in the place of their partner and to see situations from a partner's perspective (Long, 1990). Dyadic perspective taking is an important part of successfully navigating conflicts in romantic relationships and is positively associated with relationship quality (Khojastehmehr et al., 2014; Long & Andrews, 1990) and helps to buffer the association between conflict and relationship dissatisfaction (Gordon & Chen, 2016). Partners' dyadic perspective taking may be important for individuals high in attachment anxiety because it shows that the partner is understanding and able to provide empathy. It may also be important for individuals high in attachment avoidance because it suggests that the partner can be understanding without individuals needing to disclose their feelings and reveal vulnerability. Having positive illusions about partner's perspective taking might lead individuals to feel their partner truly understands them, knows what they are feeling, and these positive illusions may protect against the negative role of attachment insecurities.

A second contribution is that I examined whether positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking weakened the negative association between attachment insecurity and changes in marital satisfaction, which extends this literature beyond relationship dissolution and conflict and tests hypotheses derived from the models of positive illusions and attachment insecurity buffering. I predicted that as positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking increased, individuals would perceive their partner as someone who can empathize and take their perspective, which would attenuate attachment fears due to insecurity, and lead to increased marital satisfaction.

A third strength is the focus on dyadic associations; given the importance of understanding the dyadic nature of relationships, I expected that the more positive illusions people had about their partner, the less consequential the negative role of their attachment insecurities on their own and their partner's marital satisfaction. In other words, positive illusions may keep individuals happy in their relationship because they feel they have a partner who understands them despite their attachment fears. Additionally, individuals who are the target of partners' positive illusion may feel relationally happy because their partner sees the best in them, despite their partners' potentially destructive attachment behaviours.

A final way this study builds on previous research is the inclusion of multiple waves of longitudinal data. Positive illusions may have long lasting effects, and I expected that positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking would not only buffer contemporaneous associations but would also buffer the association between attachment insecurity and subsequent changes in marital satisfaction.

My first hypothesis was that attachment insecurity (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) would be negatively associated with contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction. In other words, I expected that spouses' attachment insecurity would be negatively associated with their own and partner's marital satisfaction and would predict declines in marital satisfaction over a two-year period. My second hypothesis was that positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking would be negatively associated with contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction. In other words, I expected that the degree to which spouses saw the best in each other would be associated with greater marital satisfaction in the moment and over time.

My third hypothesis was that positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking would moderate the contemporaneous and lagged associations between attachment insecurity and marital satisfaction within- and cross-partners. Specifically, I expected that the association between attachment insecurity and marital satisfaction would be stronger for spouses with lower positive illusions because they lack the reassurance that positive illusions provide. However, when spouses' positive illusions are higher, I expected that the association between attachment insecurity and marital satisfaction would be weaker because positive illusions provide reassurance to help couples weather difficult times in the relationship. I also expected that spouses' positive illusions would buffer the

association between spouses' attachment insecurity and their partner's marital satisfaction. In other words, I expected when spouses had few positive illusions about their partner, attachment insecurities would be more strongly negatively associated with partners' marital satisfaction, and when spouses' had more positive illusions, the reassurance provided may weaken the role of spouses' insecurity in partners' marital satisfaction.

Chapter 2. Methods

2.1. Participants

Participants were 196 mixed-sexed couples who participated in the Transition to Marriage Study. The average relationship length at the beginning of the study was 4.12 years ($SD = 2.86$) and 46.9% of the couples cohabited before marriage. Husbands averaged 29.16 years of age ($SD = 4.75$), 16.28 years of education ($SD = 3.09$), and an annual income of CAD \$30,000-39,000. Most husbands identified as Caucasian (76.53%), followed by 14.29% Asian, 3.06% Indo-Canadian, 1.53% Middle Eastern, and 4.19% who identified as “other.” Wives averaged 27.41 years of age ($SD = 4.17$), 16.63 years of education ($SD = 2.41$), and an income of CAD \$20,000-29,000 annually. Most wives identified as Caucasian (72.45%), followed by 18.37% Asian, 5.61% Indo-Canadian, and 3.06% who identified as “other.”

2.2. Procedures

The Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Board approved all procedures. Participants were recruited via newspaper advertisements, wedding-related online forums, campus and community bulletin boards, TV/print media coverage of the study, mailing lists and booths at bridal shows, advertisements in wedding-related service retailers, and notices to religious organizations. Eligible couples were (a) between 18-45 years old, (b) engaged with a set wedding date, (c) entering their first marriage, (d) childless, (e) proficient at reading and writing in English, and (f) living in the Metro Vancouver area. Of the 617 individuals who contacted the lab expressing interest in the study, 493 completed a 15-minute phone screening interview. Of the 124 couples not screened, 94 did not respond to our attempts to contact them and 30 responded after recruitment was completed. Of the couples screened, 237 were eligible, 221 received T1 questionnaires, and 196 completed sufficient questionnaires to be included in these analyses (see Poyner-Del Vento & Cobb, 2011 for more information about study procedures and screening).

Once couples were enrolled in the study, each partner received an information email with an electronic copy of the consent form, a unique ID number, a password, and

a link to the online questionnaires, which were hosted on a secure server. Participants provided consent by reading a consent form at the beginning of the survey and clicking a radio button, which then gave them access to the questionnaires. Couples completed baseline surveys (T1) approximately three months prior to their wedding date and then online surveys every three months thereafter for two years. Couples also attended an in-person lab session three months and two years after their wedding. Surveys completed at T1 and every six-months took about one hour and included questionnaires assessing marital satisfaction, self- and other-dyadic perspective taking, and attachment insecurity. Intervening surveys completed between each of the six-month data points included only marital satisfaction; data from the intervening short surveys and the lab sessions were not included in these analyses. The focus of this study is on questionnaires administered at the six-month lags, which are referred to Times 1 – 5 (T1 - T5). Couples received \$425 for completing all phases of the two-year study as follows: T1 = \$75, T2 and lab session = \$100, T3 = \$50, T4 = \$50, T5 and lab session = \$150.

2.2.1. Attrition

Of the 196 couples who participated in T1, 12 husbands and 12 wives dropped out over the course of the two-year study, four couples (2%) separated or divorced, and some spouses did not complete some waves of data; 196 husbands and 196 wives completed T1, 190 husbands and 189 wives completed T2, 175 husbands and 176 wives completed T3, 170 husbands and 173 wives completed T4, and 180 husbands and 182 wives completed T5. The participants who did not complete the study ($n = 24$) did not differ from study completers ($n = 172$) with respect to age, income, race (Caucasian vs. non-Caucasian), relationship length, cohabitation before marriage, attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking, or marital satisfaction measured at T1. Non-completer husbands had fewer years of education ($M = 14.38$, $SD = 1.96$) than completer husbands ($M = 16.44$, $SD = 3.12$), $t(194) = 2.60$, $p = .01$; $d = .79$; completer wives did not differ on education from non-completer wives.

2.3. Measures

2.3.1. Demographic Information

Participants reported their date of birth, race, number of years of education, whether they cohabitated with their partner before marriage, and annual income at T1. The date their relationship began was assessed during the phone screen interview and was used to calculate relationship length.

2.3.2. Attachment security

The Experience in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R; Fraley et al., 2000) consists of 18 items that assess attachment anxiety and 18 items that assess attachment avoidance. Items are rated on a seven-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). A sample attachment anxiety item is, “I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me,” and a sample attachment avoidance item is “I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.” Relevant items are reverse scored, and subscales of attachment anxiety and avoidance are computed as a mean; higher scores reflect higher attachment anxiety or avoidance. Over the five timepoints, coefficient alphas for attachment anxiety ranged from .86 to .93 for husbands and .91 to .95 for wives and coefficient alphas for attachment avoidance ranged from .87 to .95 for husbands and .87 to .95 for wives.

2.3.3. Marital Satisfaction

The Quality of Marriage Index (QMI; Norton, 1983) is a 6-item measure that assesses marital satisfaction (e.g., “My relationship with my partner is very stable”). Five items are scored from 1 (*very strong disagreement*) to 7 (*very strong agreement*) and one item is scored from 1 (*very unhappy*) to 10 (*perfectly happy*). A total score is computed by summing items and can range from six to 45, with higher values denoting higher marital satisfaction. Scores below 30 are considered in the maritally distressed range. Over the five timepoints, coefficient alphas ranged from .93 to .96 for husbands and .91 to .97 for wives.

2.3.4. Positive Illusions about Dyadic Perspective Taking

To assess positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking, I computed a residual difference score between spouses' rating of their partner and the partners' rating of themselves on The Self and Other Dyadic Perspective Taking Scale (SDPTS; ODPTS; Long, 1990). The SDPTS is comprised of 13 items and the ODPTS is comprised of 20 items. The SDPTS assesses participants' ability to put themselves in their partner's position (e.g., "I not only listen to my partner, but I understand what he/she is saying, and seem to know where he/she is coming from,"). The ODPTS assesses participants' perceptions that their partner understands their point of view (e.g., "When involved in an argument with me, my partner is the type of person who will consider and take into account my point of view and compare that with his/her own,"). SDPTS items are scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (*does not describe me very well*) to 4 (*does describe me very well*). The ODPTS items are also scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (*does not describe him/her very well*) to 4 (*does describe him/her very well*). Scores are computed by summing the relevant items and higher scores denote greater dyadic perspective taking. Over the five timepoints, coefficient alphas for the SDPTS ranged from .89 to .94 for husbands and .91 to .95 for wives across five waves of data. Coefficient alphas for the ODPTS ranged from .94 to .95 for husbands and .94 to .97 for wives across five waves of data.

Computing residual difference scores protect from ceiling and floor effects that are a common problem with difference scores. Additionally, residual difference scores are superior to differences scores because they avoid confounding positive illusion with the component variables (Griffin et al., 1999). To calculate the residual difference score, I computed the mean of the SDPTS and ODPTS items separately using all 13 items from the SDPTS and 13 items from the 20 item ODPTS that matched the wording of comparable SDPTS items. For example, the SDPTS item, "In my relationship with my partner I believe that there are two sides to every question, and I try to look and think about both sides," matches the ODPTS item, "My partner believes that there are two sides to every argument and tries to look at both sides." I regressed partner's perception of their dyadic perspective taking skills (SDPTS) on individuals' perception of their partners' dyadic perspective taking (ODPTS) and saved the standardized residual scores. The residuals, which are deviations from self-ratings (the proxy of reality), are the positive illusion scores.

2.4. Data Analytic Plan

Given the nested and dependent nature of the data, I tested all hypotheses using Multilevel Modeling (MLM) analysis using an Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS; Kenny et al., 2006). Level 1 predictors were centred around the grand mean standardized across time and spouses, except for time, which was scored as 0 at T1 with each subsequent timepoint as the number of years from T1. I first ran each analysis with husbands' and wives' coefficients constrained to be equal, which provides pooled estimates. Then I reran the constrained model with gender as an interaction term to detect whether there were any gender differences in any predictors. If gender differences were present, I reran the model with two intercepts, which provides separate estimates for husbands and wives (cf. Girme et al., 2018). If no gender differences were present, I presented constrained pooled parameter estimates for husbands and wives. MLM accounts for missing data using restricted maximum likelihood estimations; therefore, no correction for missing data was necessary (Kenny et al., 2006). Interactions were calculated in MLM by multiplying the mean centered scores (e.g., Positive Illusions X Attachment Anxiety). The general form of the equation for the main analyses, excluding cross partner and interaction effects, is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Level 1 } Y (\text{Marital Satisfaction}) = & \beta_0(\text{Husband Intercept}) + \beta_1(\text{Wife Intercept}) + \\ & \beta_2(\text{Husband Time}) + \beta_3(\text{Wife Time}) + \beta_4(\text{Husband Time}^2) + \beta_5(\text{Wife Time}^2) + \\ & \beta_6(\text{Husband Predictor}) + \beta_7(\text{Wife Predictor}) + r \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Level 2 } \beta_0(\text{Husband Intercept}) = \gamma_{00} + \mu_0$$

$$\beta_1(\text{Wife Intercept}) = \gamma_{01} + \mu_1$$

$$\beta_2(\text{Husband Time}) = \gamma_{02} + \mu_2$$

$$\beta_3(\text{Wife Time}) = \gamma_{03} + \mu_3$$

$$\beta_4(\text{Husband Time}^2) = \gamma_{04} + \mu_4$$

$$\beta_5(\text{Wife Time}^2) = \gamma_{05} + \mu_5$$

$$\beta_6(\text{Husband Predictor}) = \gamma_{06} + \mu_6$$

$$\beta_7(\text{Wife Predictor}) = \gamma_{07} + \mu_7$$

If interactions were significant, I tested the simple slopes and graphed the interaction using the Simple Intercepts, Simple Slopes, and Regions of Significance in HLM 2-way Interactions software (Preacher et al., 2006). I then graphed the association between attachment insecurity (attachment anxiety or avoidance) and marital satisfaction at low (i.e., one standard deviation below the mean) and high (one standard deviation above the mean) levels of positive illusions.

After conducting contemporaneous analyses, I conducted time-lagged analyses. I examined how variables at Time_(T) were associated with changes in marital satisfaction from Time_(T) to Time_(T+1). Time-lagged analyses were conducted averaging over four six-month lags (T1→T2, T2→T3, T3→T4, T4→T5). The general form of the Level 2 is similar to the previous sample equation and the Level 1 equation to test time-lagged hypotheses was as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Level 1 } Y (\text{Marital Satisfaction}_{T+1}) = & \beta_0(\text{Husband Intercept}) + \beta_1(\text{Wife Intercept}) + \\ & \beta_2(\text{Husband Marital Satisfaction}_T) + \beta_3(\text{Wife Marital Satisfaction}_T) + \\ & \beta_4(\text{Husband Time}_{T+1}) + \beta_5(\text{Wife Time}_{T+1}) + \beta_6(\text{Husband Time}^2_{T+1}) + \\ & \beta_7(\text{Wife Time}^2_{T+1}) + \beta_8(\text{Husband Predictor}_T) + \beta_9(\text{Wife Predictor}_T) + r \end{aligned}$$

Chapter 3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Analysis

Means and standard deviations of study variables and the proportion of participants scoring in the maritally distressed range of the QMI at each time point (scores less than 30; Norton, 1983) are in Table 1. Means and standard deviations are not reported for positive illusions because they have a mean of 0.00 and a standard deviation of 1.00 across all time points.

3.2. Changes in Attachment Anxiety, Attachment Avoidance, Positive Illusions and Marital Satisfaction

I conducted separate MLM analyses to examine whether attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, positive illusions, and marital satisfaction exhibited linear or quadratic change over time. Changes in attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, positive illusions, and marital satisfaction were not different for husbands and wives and therefore pooled estimates are reported. As shown in Table 2, attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, and positive illusions did not change linearly or quadratically. Marital satisfaction demonstrated curvilinear change. I graphed changes in marital satisfaction over time using a Curvilinear Effect Calculator (Girme, 2017) in Microsoft Excel. As shown in Figure 1, spouses' marital satisfaction increased slightly from T1 to T2 (the time of their wedding) and then decreased over time.

3.3. Positive Illusion about Dyadic Perspective Taking as a Moderator of the Contemporaneous and Lagged Association Between Attachment Insecurity and Marital Satisfaction

I tested Hypothesis 1 and 2 by regressing individuals' and partners' attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, positive illusions on individuals' marital satisfaction in a contemporaneous and a lagged analysis. In the same contemporaneous and lagged analyses, I tested Hypothesis 3 by regressing individuals' and partners' interactions between attachment anxiety and positive illusions and between attachment avoidance and positive illusions on individuals' marital satisfaction. Results for the

contemporaneous analyses are in Table 3 and results for the lagged analyses are in Table 4 and the results are described below. In both analyses there were gender differences, therefore unpooled estimates are presented separately for husbands and wives. Where there were significant differences between husbands' and wives' path estimates, the line is bolded in the tables.

3.3.1. Actor Main Effects of Attachment Insecurity and Positive Illusions on Marital Satisfaction

The actor associations between predictor variables and marital satisfaction for husbands and wives are in the upper left and right quadrants respectively in Table 3 and 4. Hypothesis 1 was partially supported; husbands' attachment anxiety was negatively contemporaneously associated with their own marital satisfaction and husbands' and wives' attachment avoidance was negatively associated with their own contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction. Contrary to expectation, individuals' attachment anxiety did not generally predict marital satisfaction in either the contemporaneous (with the exception of husbands) or lagged analyses. Hypothesis 2 was also generally supported with regard to actor effects; as expected, individuals' positive illusions generally predicted contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction with the exception that husbands' positive illusions did not predict their subsequent marital satisfaction.

3.3.2. Partner Main Effects of Attachment Insecurity and Positive Illusions on Marital Satisfaction

Partner association in the lower half of Tables 3 and 4. The association between wives' predictors and husbands' marital satisfaction are on the right, and between husbands' predictors and wives' marital satisfaction are on the left. Hypothesis 1 was partially supported with respect to partner effects; partners' attachment avoidance negatively predicted husbands' but not wives' contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction. In contrast to my hypothesis, wives' attachment anxiety was positively associated with husbands' contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction. Neither husbands' attachment anxiety nor attachment avoidance predicted wives' contemporaneous or subsequent marital satisfaction. Hypothesis 2 was partially supported with regards to partner effects; as expected, husbands' and wives' positive

illusions were positively associated with their partners' contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction, with the exception that wives' positive illusions did not predict husbands' subsequent satisfaction.

3.3.3. Positive Illusions as a Moderator of the Contemporaneous Association Between Attachment Insecurity and Marital Satisfaction

I first tested Hypothesis 3 by examining whether positive illusions buffered the contemporaneous association between attachment insecurity and marital satisfaction; results are in Table 3. Of the eight actor and partner interactions tested, three were consistent with my hypothesis. Husbands' positive illusions moderated the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and husbands' marital satisfaction, wives' positive illusions moderated the association between wives' attachment anxiety and wives' satisfaction, and husbands' positive illusions moderated the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and wives' marital satisfaction. No other within- or cross-partner interactions were significant. The three significant interactions are graphed in Figures 2, 3, and 4. The general pattern of results for each interact was the same; as positive illusions increased, the association between attachment insecurity (attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance) and marital satisfaction became weaker. Thus, consistent with Hypothesis 3, positive illusions buffered the negative contemporaneous effects of attachment insecurity on marital satisfaction for husbands and wives in a few instances.

3.3.4. Positive Illusions as a Moderator of the Association Between Attachment Insecurity and Subsequent Marital Satisfaction

I next tested the longitudinal aspect of Hypothesis 3 by examining whether positive illusions buffered the association between attachment insecurity and subsequent marital satisfaction. The results in Table 4 show that three of the four within-spouse interactions were significant, but positive illusions did not moderate the associations between spouses' attachment insecurities and their partner's marital satisfaction. Regarding the within partner interactions, the results were largely inconsistent with my hypothesis with one exception. As shown in Figure 5 and consistent with Hypothesis 3, as husbands' positive illusions increased, the negative association

between attachment avoidance and subsequent marital satisfaction became weaker. In contrast to my hypothesis and shown in Figures 6 and 7, when spouses' positive illusions increased, the negative association between attachment insecurity and subsequent marital satisfaction also increased. Thus, only one of eight interactions supported the buffering hypothesis with regard to changes in marital satisfaction and instead, two of three significant interactions supported a potentiation effect. In other words, husbands' positive illusions buffered the negative effects of husbands' attachment avoidance on their subsequent marital satisfaction, but positive illusions potentiated the association between husbands' attachment anxiety and their subsequent marital satisfaction and the association between wives' attachment avoidance and their subsequent marital satisfaction.

Chapter 4. Discussion

I investigated whether positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking buffered the negative association between attachment insecurity and contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction over the first two years of marriage in mixed-sexed couples. As expected, positive illusions generally predicted more satisfying relationships for husbands and wives, and with some exceptions, attachment anxiety and avoidance generally predicted relationship dissatisfaction. Positive illusions occasionally buffered negative effects of insecurity on contemporaneous marital satisfaction and changes in marital satisfaction as expected. Specifically, husbands' positive illusions buffered the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and both spouses' current marital satisfaction and husbands' subsequent satisfaction, and wives' positive illusions buffered the association between wives' attachment anxiety and their current marital satisfaction. There were two notable exceptions that did not support the buffering hypothesis where positive illusions potentiated the negative association between insecurity and changes in marital satisfaction. Husbands' positive illusions potentiated the association between husbands' attachment anxiety and their subsequent marital satisfaction, and wives' positive illusions potentiated the association between wives' attachment avoidance and their subsequent marital satisfaction.

4.1. Attachment Insecurity and Marital Satisfaction

For husbands, attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were generally negatively associated with husbands' marital satisfaction, which was as expected and consistent with previous studies (e.g., Joel et al., 2020). There was an unexpected exception; wives' attachment anxiety was positively associated with husbands' relationship current and subsequent satisfaction. Although attachment anxiety generally leads to maladaptive reactions to perceived attachment threats, in certain situations attachment anxiety may motivate wives to engage in relationship maintenance (Eastwick & Finkel, 2008; Tran & Simpson, 2009), which may be why it is associated with greater marital satisfaction for husbands. Attachment anxiety is also associated with hypersensitivity to signs of rejection that may lead wives to be more attentive to problems in the relationship (Tran & Simpson, 2009), which could then benefit husbands

over time. In other words, insecurities may not be uniformly problematic for relationships, but rather they could motivate beneficial relationship maintenance behaviours.

Consistent with previous findings, wives' attachment avoidance was negatively related to their current and subsequent satisfaction (e.g., Butzer & Campbell, 2008). However, inconsistent with previous research (e.g., Birnbaum, 2007), wives attachment anxiety and husbands' attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were unrelated to wives' current and subsequent marital satisfaction. The lack of associations was unexpected but could be due to multicollinearity between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. Multicollinearity occurs when two or more predictor variables in a regression are highly correlated, which can create instability in the statistical analysis (Clark, 2013). The correlation between individuals' attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance across the five time points ranged from .50 to .72 for husbands and .49 to .60 for wives. In a post hoc analysis, when attachment avoidance was removed as a predictor, both spouses' attachment anxiety was negatively associated with wives' current, but not subsequent, marital satisfaction. Therefore, multicollinearity may be responsible for the lack of association between attachment anxiety and marital satisfaction.

4.2. Positive Illusions and Marital Satisfaction

Spouses' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking were positively associated with both partners' contemporaneous relationship satisfaction, but both spouses' positive illusions predicted wives', but not husbands', subsequent marital satisfaction. Spouses who have positive illusions and who think their partner is good at being empathic and can take their perspective, even when their partner may not necessarily feel the same, may feel reassured and believe that their relationship is worthwhile. This is consistent with all previous studies where positive illusions about romantic partners are associated with more satisfying relationships (Murray et al., 1996b). Recipients of positive illusions also had greater marital satisfaction; thus, when spouses see the best in each other, even if the partner does not see it in themselves, both partners may feel more satisfied in the relationship (Murray et al., 1996a).

Contrary to expectations, husbands did not appear to benefit from positive illusions over time, as neither spouses' positive illusions predicted changes in husbands'

subsequent satisfaction. However, the findings for wives were more robust and consistent with the hypotheses. Wives were happiest when both spouses had positive illusions about each other. This is consistent with a previous longitudinal study in which both spouses' positive illusions predicted subsequent satisfaction consistently for wives, but less consistently for husbands (Murray & Holmes, 1997). It may be that wives' relationship maintenance role in comparison to husbands' (Brandau-Brown & Ragsdale, 2005) makes wives more concerned with how they see their partner and how their partner sees them.

4.3. Positive Illusion as a Buffer of the Association Between Attachment Insecurity and Marital Satisfaction

As expected, husbands' positive illusions buffered the negative association between husbands' attachment avoidance and husbands' contemporaneous and subsequent marital satisfaction and wives' positive illusions buffered the association between wives' attachment anxiety and wives' contemporaneous marital satisfaction. These within-partner effects are consistent with the buffering hypothesis (Murray et al., 1996b) and insecurity buffering effects (Simpson & Overall, 2014). Spouses who see the best in their partner may feel reassurance that allows them to overcome some of their attachment fears or behave in ways that are less driven by their attachment insecurities. In contrast, it may be that individuals, who held fewer positive illusions about their partner, were less reassured, thus attachment fears become a predominant predictor of marital dissatisfaction. Cross partner buffering also emerged such that husbands' positive illusions buffered the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and wives' contemporaneous satisfaction. Husbands who see the best in their wives may subtly communicate this positive view to their wives, which may lead wives to be less bothered by their husbands' emotional distance; perhaps because being the recipient of positive illusions allows people to feel more confident about their partner's positive regard even if the partner does not seek much intimacy. However, when husbands have few positive illusions, this perception may be also be communicated in some way, and wives may be more dissatisfied when husbands are more emotionally distant and independent. Together these results suggest that in the moment, positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking create a buffer that weakens the negative effect of attachment insecurity on relationship satisfaction.

4.4. Positive Illusion as a Potentiator of the Association Between Attachment Insecurity and Marital Satisfaction

Despite some evidence for the buffering hypothesis, particularly contemporaneously, there were findings that were more consistent with the potentiation hypothesis. Inconsistent with my expectations, husbands' positive illusions potentiated the association between husbands' attachment anxiety and their subsequent marital satisfaction, and wives' positive illusions potentiated the association between wives' attachment avoidance and their subsequent marital satisfaction. Perhaps positive illusions only aid spouses in overlooking their partner's shortcomings in the moment, but ultimately these illusions fail, with the exception that husbands' positive illusions continue to buffer the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and their subsequent marital satisfaction. Other researchers have suggested that positive illusions could lead couples down the path of disappointment and disillusionment (Huston et al., 2001; Murray et al., 1996b). When individuals see their partner in unrealistically positive ways, they may be blind to looming problems in their relationship. Eventually, the partner will not live up to these positive perceptions, and the holder of positive illusions may feel blindsided by a partner who is very different than their illusions (Huston et al., 2001). These results are consistent with these notions and suggest that positive illusions may not be sustainable or that they may not sustain marital satisfaction in the face of attachment insecurities in the long term.

In the context of attachment insecurity, enhanced perceptions of partners' empathy may make any attachment fear inducing situations worse over time as insecure spouses may overestimate their partners' awareness of their insecurities. If partners do something to activate insecurities, insecure spouses may assume their partner is acting maliciously or out of frustration rather than being ignorant of these insecurities. Eventually, these problems may become so obvious that positive illusions can no longer sustain marital satisfaction. When positive illusions fail, this may exacerbate the relationship difficulties related to attachment insecurity. It is also possible that attachment insecurities may erode positive illusions over time. In other words, positive illusions may fade with time and with repeated interactions driven by attachment insecurity. To examine this idea, I conducted a post hoc analysis to see how attachment insecurity was related to changes in positive illusions. Similar to the two potentiation effect, husbands' attachment anxiety and wives' attachment avoidance predicted

declines in their own positive illusions. Spouses' insecurities were unrelated to changes in their partners' positive illusions. Although speculative, it may be that in the context of attachment insecurity, realistic perceptions of partners' benefit relationships in the long term and positive illusions may have only a transient role in bolstering marital satisfaction.

Why positive illusions potentiated the negative roles of husbands' attachment anxiety and wives' attachment avoidance, while husbands' positive illusions buffered the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and their subsequent marital satisfaction is unclear and the gender differences were unexpected. The gendered pattern whereby husbands' attachment anxiety and wives' attachment avoidance were potentiated by positive illusions, but husbands' attachment avoidance was buffered could be due to societal expectations. Specifically, men are expected to be emotionally distant (Fischer & Good, 1997) and women are expected to be concerned about relationship maintenance (Brandau-Brown & Ragsdale, 2005). Men with attachment anxiety and women with attachment avoidance may have thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that are inconsistent with these norms, which can be problematic when positive illusions about perspective taking are prominent. For example, a husband's attachment anxieties coupled with his positive illusions about his wife's perspective taking might make him think she sees his flaws and shortcomings, including his attachment anxieties, which are inconsistent with gender norms, and lead to uncertainty and unhappiness in the relationship. Similarly, if a wife's positive illusions about her partner's perspective taking leads her to think that her partner recognizes her lack of need for intimacy, which is counter to gender norms, she could feel devalued or unworthy of a satisfying marital relationship.

4.5. Study Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the strengths of this study, several limitations need to be considered. The results may not generalize to all types of romantic relationships as the sample included only mixed-sex, mostly Caucasian couples transitioning to marriage, capturing only a narrow view of the kinds of couples that exist. Also, few couples in this study were maritally distressed; it may be that positive illusions will not buffer the negative association between attachment insecurity and marital satisfaction in clinically distressed couples.

Measures of marital satisfaction, attachment insecurity, and self-dyadic perspective taking were all self-reports, which are vulnerable to biases such as social desirability and retrospective bias. Additionally, issues with self-report bias may be most problematic when calculating positive illusions. I calculated positive illusions by using partners' self-ratings of their own dyadic perspective taking as the benchmark to compare to individuals' perceptions of their partner. Partners may have overestimated or underestimated their own dyadic perspective taking skills, which would cause error in the positive illusions scores. In future research, third-party ratings of partners' dyadic perspective taking, such as a rating from a friend or a behavioural observation from a trained coder, may mitigate this bias. However, these alternative methods introduce their own sources of bias, as people tend to perceive other's partners more negatively than their own (Niehuis et al., 2011). Partner self-ratings are the most conservative benchmark when calculating positive illusions because of peoples' tendency to exaggerate favorable qualities about themselves (Niehuis et al., 2011). Thus, when comparing individuals' perceptions of their partner with partners' ratings of themselves, any suggestion of a positive illusion about the partner goes beyond partners' own self-directed positive illusions.

In this study, I measured a specific novel positive illusion about dyadic perspective taking. Previous studies have focused on a variety of positive illusions that are either broader and more global in scope (e.g., general interpersonal qualities; Murray et al., 1996) or are specific personality constructs or relationship constructs (e.g., attachment security; Cobb et al., 2001; agreeableness; Miller et al., 2006). It is possible that the observed results regarding positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking do not apply to all types of positive illusions. General perceptions of partners are more stable than perceptions of specific qualities (Karney et al., 2001). Therefore, it is possible that positive illusions about global qualities (e.g., My partner is a good husband) are more stable over time than positive illusions about specific behaviours or skills (e.g., dyadic perspective taking). More stable, global positive illusions may continue to buffer the association between attachment insecurity and subsequent marital satisfaction, while specific positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking do not.

In future studies of positive illusions, inclusion of idealization would be useful. Idealization represents a glorification of one's partner and, unlike positive illusions, are disconnected with reality (e.g., saying a partner is the best partner imaginable when in

reality they are abusive; Feeney & Noller, 2004). Idealizing a partner is also related to devaluing oneself in times of relationship conflict, which ultimately leads to ineffective relationship maintenance strategies (Pistole & Silverman, 1995). It is not possible in this study to determine whether positive illusions are confounded with idealization. Perhaps idealization is responsible for the potentiation between attachment insecurity and subsequent marital satisfaction. Therefore, idealization should be measured and controlled for in future studies.

4.6. Conclusion

Positive illusions can help couples to weather uncertainty in their relationship. They allow couples to overlook negative aspects of their partner by overshadowing the shortcomings of high attachment insecurity with exaggerated favorable perceptions. Results of this study partially support the positive illusion buffering hypothesis and insecurity buffering: Positive illusions about perspective taking mitigated the negative association between attachment insecurity and contemporaneous marital satisfaction for both spouses, and husbands' positive illusions mitigated the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and their subsequent marital satisfaction. However, positive illusions also potentiated some associations between attachment insecurity and subsequent marital satisfaction. These unexpected findings are consistent with the disillusionment model and suggest that positive illusions may fail over time and make problems more salient for some couples. These results shed light on the complexity of how positive illusions may influence marital satisfaction over time. In the moment, positive illusions may provide reassurance and buffer the association between problematic aspects of attachment insecurity and marital satisfaction. However, positive illusions may not be a long-term solution, as they may fail as a buffer over time and could potentially exacerbate problems associated with attachment insecurity.

4.7. Tables and Figures

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Study Variables for Husbands and Wives at Each Time Point.

	Husbands				Wives				Differences	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	% <i>distress</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	% <i>distress</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>d</i>
Marital Satisfaction										
T1	41.10	5.08	3.68	190	41.73	4.06	1.56	192	-1.33	0.14
T2	41.63	4.39	2.14	187	41.81	4.36	1.62	185	-0.41	0.04
T3	40.91	4.93	3.55	169	41.58	4.91	3.53	170	-1.26	0.14
T4	39.95	5.99	6.13	163	40.88	5.63	4.76	168	-1.45	0.16
T5	39.66	5.98	5.68	179	40.09	6.48	7.26	179	-0.64	0.07
Attachment Anxiety										
T1	2.18	0.83		194	2.47	1.01		193	-3.03**	0.31
T2	2.15	0.89		182	2.42	1.08		182	-2.61**	0.27
T3	2.07	0.93		166	2.41	1.09		171	-3.10**	0.34
T4	2.12	0.98		153	2.41	1.15		160	-2.42*	0.27
T5	2.10	0.96		160	2.40	1.16		165	-2.51*	0.28
Attachment Avoidance										
T1	2.17	0.76		194	2.14	0.82		193	0.35	0.04
T2	2.30	0.78		184	2.12	0.76		181	2.29*	0.23
T3	2.07	0.90		167	1.94	0.86		172	1.32	0.15
T4	2.18	0.89		153	2.01	0.91		162	1.61	0.19
T5	2.16	0.96		160	2.02	0.91		166	1.36	0.15

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 2. Attachment insecurity, positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking, and marital satisfaction association with time and time squared. No gender differences present.

Attachment Anxiety _(T)			
	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio
Intercept	2.29	0.05	43.17***
Time _(T)	-0.09	0.11	-0.79
Time ² _(T)	0.03	0.05	0.59
Attachment Avoidance _(T)			
	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio
Intercept	2.18	0.05	48.11***
Time _(T)	-0.17	0.09	-1.81
Time ² _(T)	0.06	0.04	1.62
Positive Illusions _(T)			
	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio
Intercept	0.01	0.04	0.27
Time _(T)	0.04	0.10	0.46
Time ² _(T)	-0.03	0.04	-0.61
Marital Satisfaction _(T)			
	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio
Intercept	41.50	0.29	141.05***
Time _(T)	0.72	0.61	1.20
Time ² _(T)	-0.71	0.25	-2.84**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. Positive Illusions About Dyadic Perspective Taking as a Moderator of the Association Between Attachment Anxiety or Avoidance and Contemporaneous Marital Satisfaction

	Husbands' Marital Satisfaction _(T)			Wives' Marital Satisfaction _(T)		
	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio
Intercept	41.74	0.27	153.08***	42.12	0.26	165.06***
Time _(T)	0.27	0.58	0.47	0.65	0.55	1.19
Time ² _(T)	-0.53	0.25	-2.09*	-0.50	0.24	-2.08*
Positive Illusions _(T)	1.55	0.16	9.70***	1.68	0.15	10.99***
Attachment Anxiety _(T)	-0.51	0.21	-2.42*	-0.19	0.15	-1.24
Attachment Avoidance _(T)	-1.95	0.23	-8.54***	-1.35	0.20	-6.89***
Attachment Anxiety X Positive Illusions _(T)	0.21	0.20	1.02	0.30	0.14	2.16*
Attachment Avoidance X Positive Illusions _(T)	1.16	0.22	5.36***	0.28	0.18	1.54
Partner Positive Illusions _(T)	0.52	0.16	3.28**	0.91	0.15	6.10***
Partner Attachment Anxiety _(T)	0.33	0.16	2.04*	-0.02	0.20	-0.10
Partner Attachment Avoidance _(T)	-1.23	0.21	-5.92***	-0.23	0.21	-1.08
Partner Attachment Anxiety X Partner Positive Illusions _(T)	0.01	0.14	0.08	-0.04	0.19	-0.23
Partner Attachment Avoidance X Partner Positive Illusions _(T)	0.02	0.17	0.13	0.71	0.19	3.74***

Note. For rows where predictors that are significantly different between husbands and wives are bolded ($p < .05$).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4. Positive Illusions about Dyadic Perspective Taking as a Moderator of the Time-Lagged Association Between Attachment Insecurity (Attachment Anxiety and Attachment Avoidance) and Subsequent Marital Satisfaction

	Husbands' Marital Satisfaction $_{(T+1)}$			Wives' Marital Satisfaction $_{(T+1)}$		
	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i> -ratio	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i> -ratio
Intercept	44.04	0.69	63.81***	41.93	0.76	55.25***
Time $_{(T+1)}$	-4.91	1.12	-4.40***	-0.76	1.27	-0.60
Time $^2_{(T+1)}$	1.47	0.39	3.79***	0.02	0.46	0.05
Marital Satisfaction $_{(T)}$	0.43	0.04	10.56***	0.49	0.05	10.85***
Positive Illusions $_{(T)}$	0.36	0.19	1.91	0.48	0.20	2.42*
Attachment Anxiety $_{(T)}$	-0.43	0.24	-1.80	0.25	0.19	1.33
Attachment Avoidance $_{(T)}$	-0.91	0.27	-3.34**	-0.97	0.25	-3.91***
Attachment Anxiety $_{(T)}$ X Positive Illusions $_{(T)}$	-0.73	0.24	-3.12**	0.17	0.16	1.08
Attachment Avoidance $_{(T)}$ X Positive Illusions $_{(T)}$	1.11	0.26	4.35***	-0.49	0.21	-2.33*
Partner Positive Illusions $_{(T)}$	0.27	0.18	1.51	0.45	0.19	2.33*
Partner Attachment Anxiety $_{(T)}$	0.37	0.18	2.06*	-0.01	0.25	-0.02
Partner Attachment Avoidance $_{(T)}$	-1.00	0.23	-4.26***	-0.11	0.28	-0.41
Partner Attachment Anxiety $_{(T)}$ X Partner Positive Illusions $_{(T)}$	0.01	0.15	0.09	-0.01	0.25	-0.02
Partner Attachment Avoidance $_{(T)}$ X Partner Positive Illusions $_{(T)}$	-0.01	0.19	-0.07	0.09	0.26	0.35

Note. Predictors that are significantly different between husbands and wives are bolded ($p < .05$).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

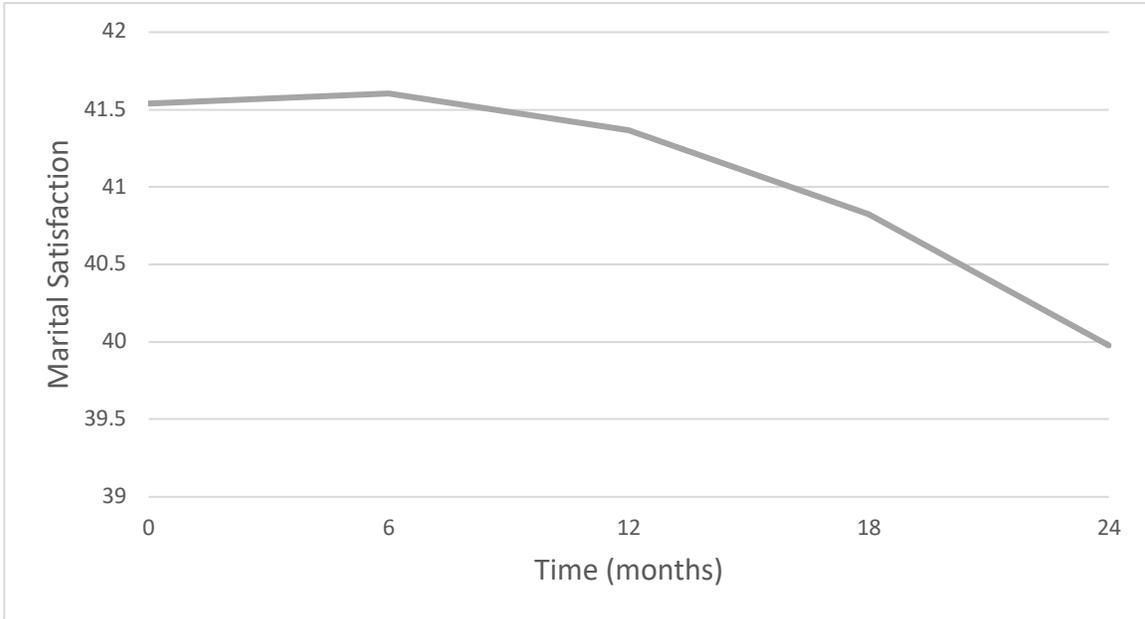
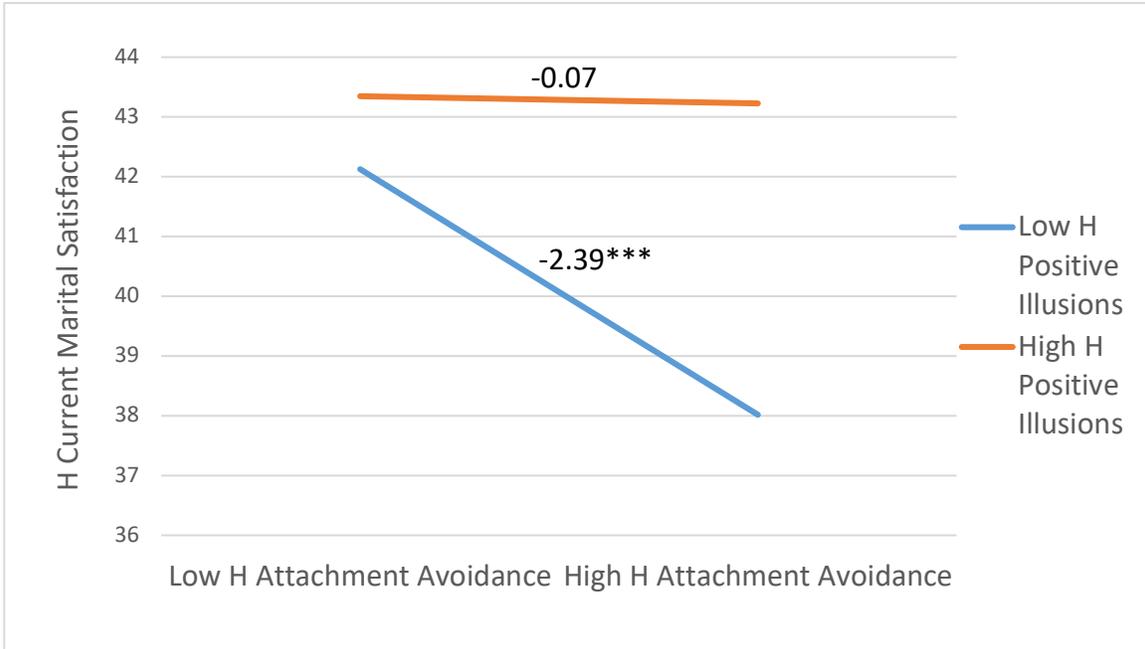
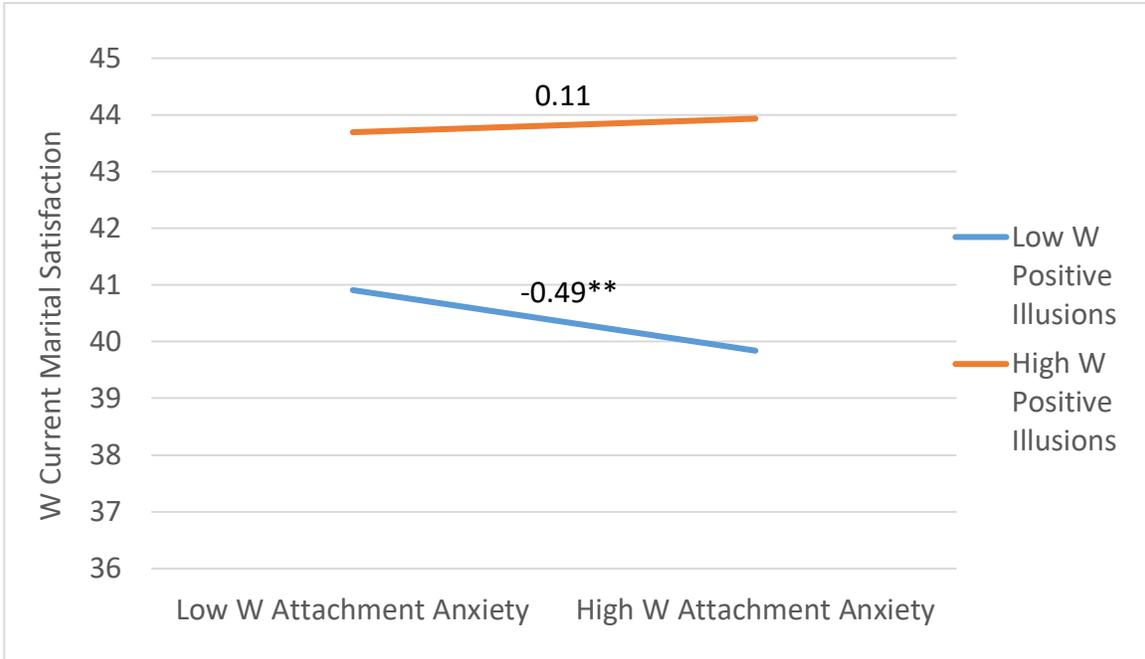


Figure 1. The curvilinear association between time and marital satisfaction. Estimates are pooled for husbands and wives.



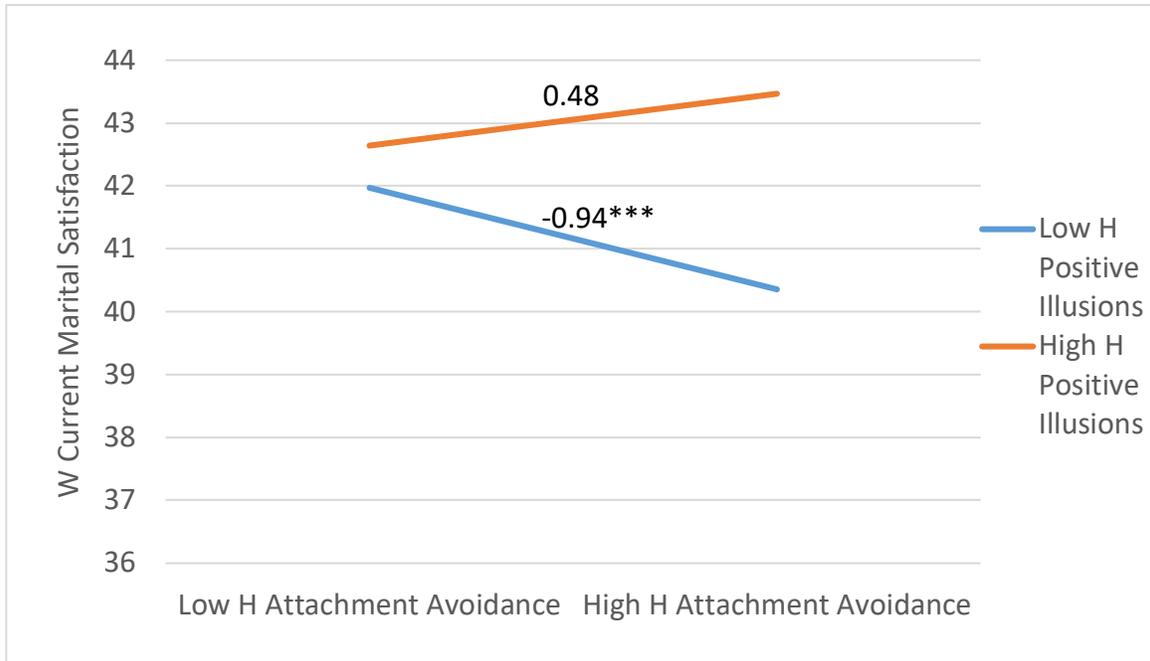
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 2. Husbands' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking moderates the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and husbands' contemporaneous marital satisfaction.



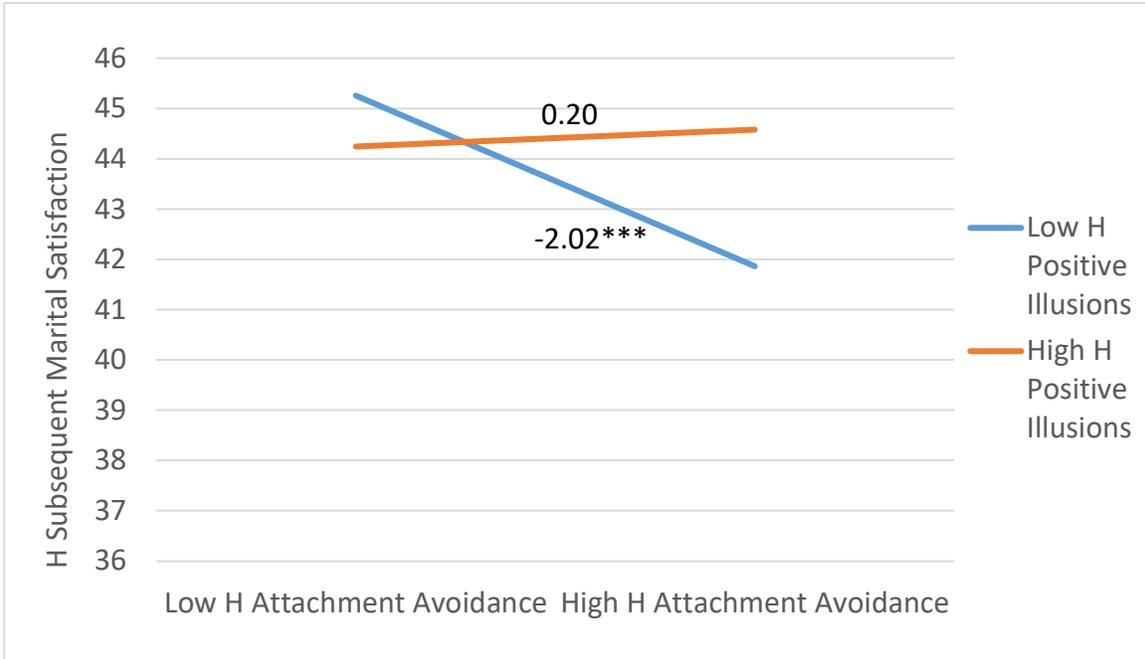
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 3. Wives' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking moderates the association between wives' attachment anxiety and wives' contemporaneous marital satisfaction.



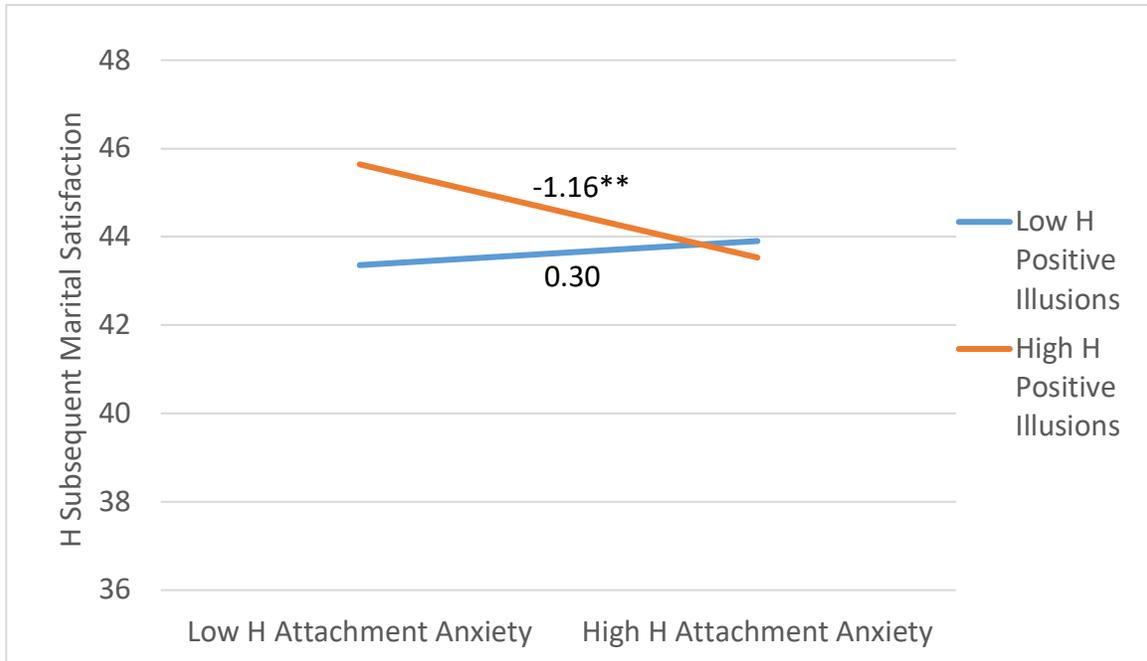
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 4. Husbands' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking moderates the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and wives' contemporaneous marital satisfaction.



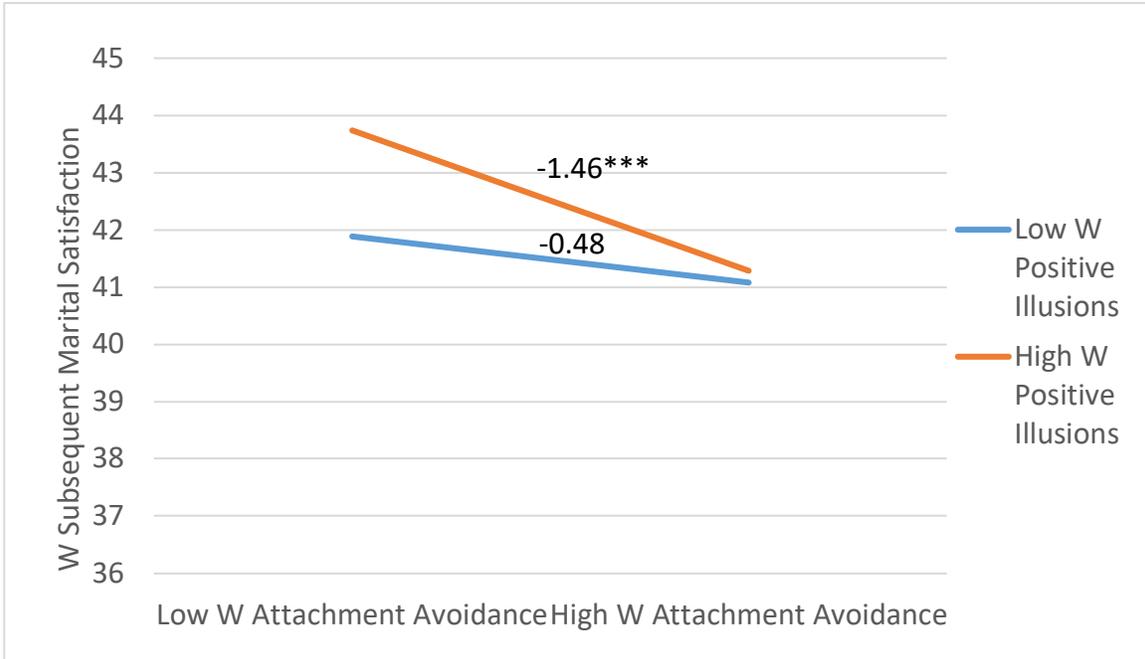
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 5. Husbands' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking moderates the association between husbands' attachment avoidance and husbands' subsequent marital satisfaction.



* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 6. Husbands' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking moderates the association between husbands' attachment anxiety and husbands' subsequent marital satisfaction.



* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 7. Wives' positive illusions about dyadic perspective taking moderates the association between wives' attachment avoidance and wives' subsequent marital satisfaction.

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