Talking about the best of all possible worlds

This talk is about expressions of comparative goodness with finite clauses denoting the subject of comparison as in (1).

(1) a. Es ist besser, dass die Katze dick ist.
     It is better that the cat fat is
    b. Es ist besser, wenn die Katze dick ist.
     It is better if the cat fat is
    c. Es wäre besser, wenn die Katze dick wäre.
     It would.be better, if the cat fat were

In recent work, Lassiter has brought forward strong conceptual arguments against semantic accounts that analyse these constructions as comparisons of possible worlds. On his account, these constructions compare the goodness of propositions.

In my talk, I want to focus on the use and distribution of indicative and subjunctive mood in constructions of comparative goodness with finite clauses that to my knowledge haven't been discussed in earlier literature. I want to argue that this data is rather puzzling on Lassiter's account, while it has a straight forward explanation on a Heim-style semantics of comparative goodness where the subjects of comparison are possible worlds. In light of these empirical arguments in favour of a classical account of comparative goodness, I want to reconsider Lassiter's conceptual arguments and discuss possible options for a remedy.