A1 Details on Study 3

The experimental text in Studies 1 and 2 explained "the couple sees reasons for and against conceiving another child," which was intended as a non-technical suggestion for non-academic readers that the decision is otherwise balanced. However, the possibility remains that some of the participants' responses may have been motivated by beliefs about consequences for the potential child's parents.[1] Study 3 was conducted[2] to test this possibility explicitly. Its experimental text was identical to that in Study 2, except that the cognitive reflection test[3] was omitted, and the quality of life treatment was interacted with a binary treatment, in which it was either made further explicit or not that there would be no effect on other people. This randomized treatment, received by half of the participants, was the inclusion in the text of:

> For the purposes of this survey question, you should assume that, although life will be different for the parents if they have the additional baby, the good and bad consequences are balanced: the parents, their other children, and every other person (except the new baby itself) will be just as well off whether the parents have the baby or not.

This explicit balancing treatment had no effect on participants' judgments, and in particular did not interact with the effect on Asymmetry judgments of the possible child's quality of life. Figure A2 presents this result: the lines are visually similar with and without the explicit balancing treatment. In the statistical supplementary appendix, Table A5 and Figure A2 present more details, alternative functional forms, and statistical significance tests. These results emphasize that test statistics on the interaction are small: the absence of a statistically significant interaction is not merely because the results are noisy, but is rather because the interaction coefficient is small and close to zero.

The results of Study 3 are also quantitatively close to the results of Study 2, as comparing Tables A4 and A5 shows. For example, an extra point of quality of life for the potential child is linearly associated in Study 2 with a 5.98 percentage point increase in the fraction of respondents reporting that the fact counts in favor of creating the child, and with a 5.38 percentage point increase in Study 3.

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[1]Not all statements of the Asymmetry in the literature are fully explicit about ruling out this indirect mechanism: **?**) begins a statement of the Asymmetry with "everything else being equal," but **?**) does not, for example. **?**) argues that "there is no moral reason to create a person whose life would foreseeably be worth living, just *because* her life would be worth living," where the emphasis on because rules out an effect because the parents' lives would be improved (p. 2-3).

[2]264 participants (12 for each of 22 experimental treatment categories) completed Study 3 over mTurk in January 2018.

[3]The purpose of Study 3 was to confirm that the general method of this paper, and the specific method of Study 2, is robust to clarification of this *ceteris paribus* assumption. The triple interaction required to fully interact Study 3's treatment with Study 2's CRT treatment would have required a very large sample to be adequately powered.

A2   Cognitive Reflection Test text

The three questions are:

- A bat and a ball cost $1.10 in total. The bat costs $1.00 more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?

- If it takes 5 machines 5 minutes to make 5 widgets, how long would it take 100 machines to make 100 widgets?

- In a lake, there is a patch of lily pads. Every day, the patch doubles in size. If it takes 48 days for the patch to cover the entire lake, how long would it take for the patch to cover half of the lake?

Table A1: Study 1a: Randomized question order influences utilitarian judgment

	(1) utilitarian	(2) asymmetry	(3) good life	(4) bad life	(5) good | bad
Panel A: Without controls					
good before bad	-0.119*	0.0500	-0.0491	-0.0691	-0.070
	(0.0583)	(0.0444)	(0.0544)	(0.0458)	(0.051)
constant	0.795***	0.102***	0.811***	0.898***	0.886***
	(0.0360)	(0.0270)	(0.0349)	(0.0270)	(0.0299)
Panel B: With controls					
good before bad	-0.129*	0.0659	-0.0616	-0.0628	$-0.089^{\dagger}$
	(0.0615)	(0.0481)	(0.0574)	(0.0487)	(0.052)
n	232	232	232	232	201

"Good before bad" is an indicator that the participant was randomly assigned to be asked about a good life before being asked about a bad life. "Utilitarian" is an indicator for saying that a good life and a bad life both matter ethically; "asymmetry" is an indicator for saying that a bad life matters but a good life does not. "Good life" and "bad life" are indicators that these are judged to matter, rather than be irrelevant. "Good \| bad" is an indicator for believing a good life is relevant, with the sample restricted to those who think a bad life is relevant. Two-sided p-values: † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Table A2: Study 1a: Question order interacts with cognitive reflection for utilitarian judgment

	(1) utilitarian	(2) asymmetry	(3) good life	(4) bad life
good before bad	$0.0853^{\dagger}$	-0.0473	0.107*	0.0380
× CRT score	(0.0494)	(0.0384)	(0.0473)	(0.0403)
good before bad	-0.273*	$0.146^{\dagger}$	-0.244*	-0.126
	(0.106)	(0.0833)	(0.102)	(0.0844)
CRT score	-0.0689*	0.0377	-0.0714*	-0.0312
	(0.0319)	(0.0238)	(0.0303)	(0.0265)
other controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
n	232	232	232	232

"Good before bad" is an indicator that the participant was randomly assigned to be asked about a good life before being asked about a bad life. "Utilitarian" is an indicator for saying that a good life and a bad life both matter ethically; "asymmetry" is an indicator for saying that a bad life matters but a good life does not. "Good life" and "bad life" are indicators that these are judged to matter, rather than be irrelevant. Two-sided p-values: † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Table A3: Study 1a: Female participants are less likely to make utilitarian judgments

	(1) utilitarian	(2) asymmetry	(3) good life	(4) bad life
female	-0.168**	0.103*	-0.153**	-0.0657
	(0.0556)	(0.0416)	(0.0515)	(0.0439)
constant	0.835***	0.0680**	0.874***	0.903***
	(0.0367)	(0.0249)	(0.0329)	(0.0293)
n	232	232	232	232

"Female" is an indicator that the participant is female. "Utilitarian" is an indicator for saying that a good life and a bad life both matter ethically; "asymmetry" is an indicator for saying that a bad life matters but a good life does not. "Good life" and "bad life" are indicators that these are judged to matter, rather than be irrelevant. Two-sided p-values: † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Table A4: Study 2: Quality of life matters for judgments in favor of and against having a child

| dependent variable:	(1) counts for	(3) counts for	(2) counts against	(4) counts against
child's quality of life	0.0543***	0.0598***	-0.0863***	-0.0947***
	(0.00605)	(0.00765)	(0.00528)	(0.00680)
CRT first		0.0569		0.0179
		(0.0490)		(0.0465)
constant	-0.0160	-0.0994*	0.747***	0.787***
	(0.0267)	(0.0410)	(0.0381)	(0.0532)
n	426	239	426	239
sample	full	high-quality	full	high-quality

The high quality sample correctly reported at the end of the survey the randomized child's quality of life which was that respondent's experimental treatment and correctly reported that the woman in the question was not pregnant. Two-sided p-values: † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Table A5: Study 3: Robustness: The effect on judgments of quality of life information does not interact with whether the *ceteris paribus* assumption for parents is made explicit

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
dependent variable:	response (-1, 0, 1)	positive	negative	response (-1, 0, 1)
model:	OLS	OLS	OLS	ordered logit
child's quality of life	0.124***	0.0538***	-0.0705***	0.417***
	(0.0162)	(0.0103)	(0.0110)	(0.0630)
explicit balance treatment	0.0720	0.0341	-0.0379	0.113
	(0.143)	(0.0661)	(0.111)	(0.504)
interaction	-0.00379	0.00379	0.00758	0.0106
	(0.0247)	(0.0156)	(0.0159)	(0.0864)
interaction test statistic:	$t = -0.15$	$t = 0.24$	$t = 0.48$	$z = 0.12$
n (responses)	264	264	264	264

Two-sided p-values: † $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$. "Interaction test statistic" tests whether the interaction between the quality of life and the explicit balance treatment is statistically significantly different from zero.

Figure A1: Study 3: Robustness check that results of Study 2 are not sensitive to making explicit the *ceteris paribus* assumption about parents' lives
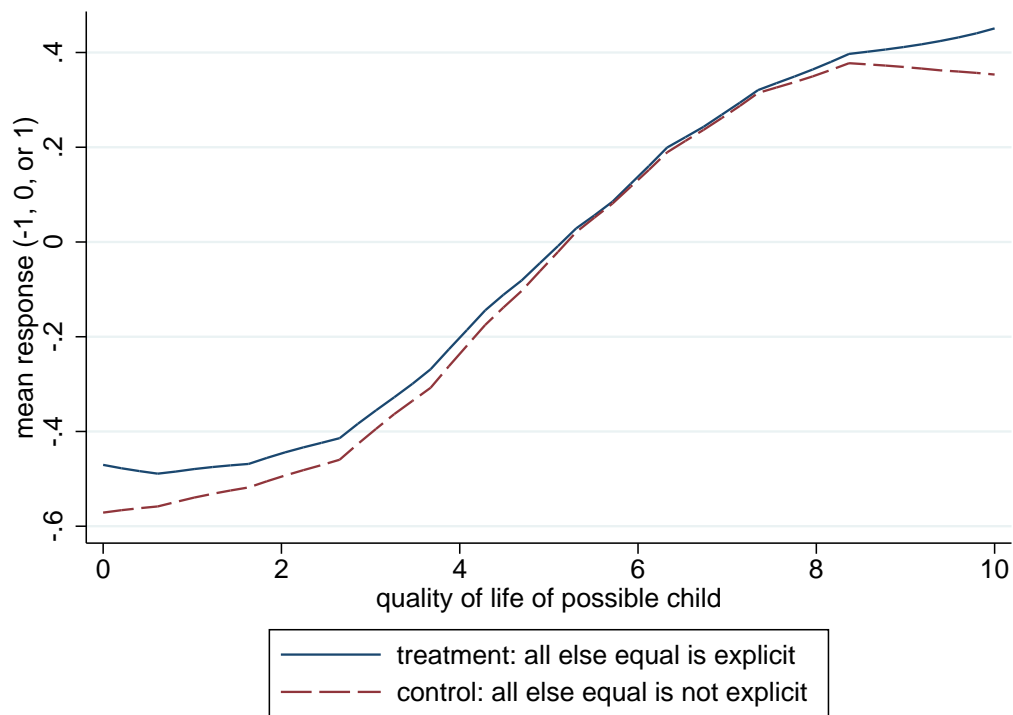
Note: For further results, see Table A5 and Figure A2 of the Statistical Supplementary Appendix.

Figure A2: Study 3: Graphical results (see Table A5)

(a) fraction of respondents reporting quality of life counts ethically **in favor of** having child
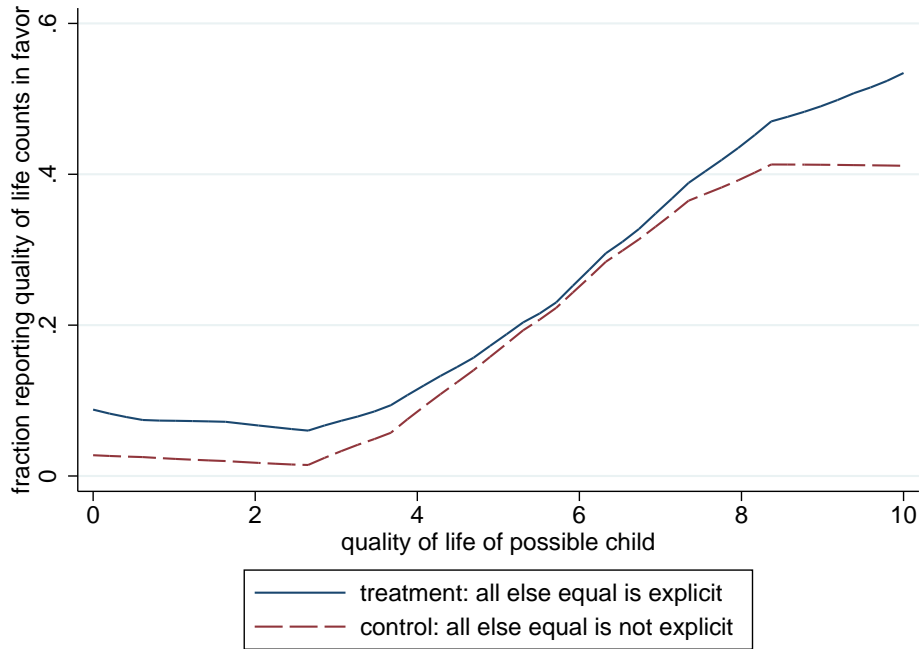
(b) fraction of respondents reporting quality of life counts ethically **against** having child