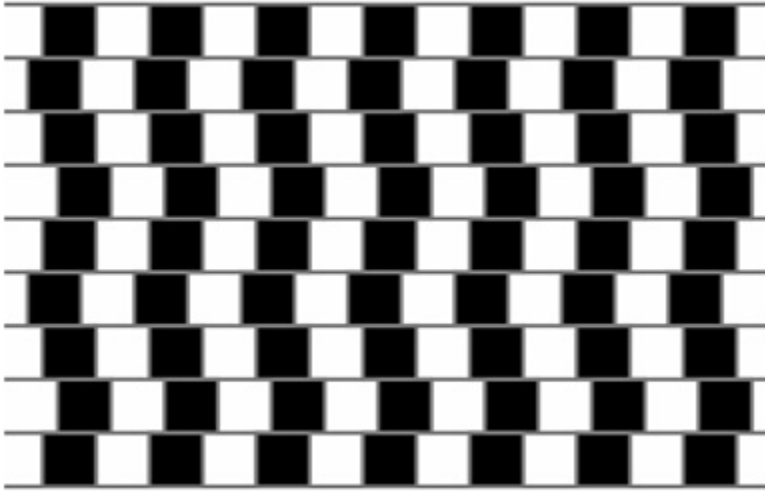


0 Van Inwagen and Zimmerman

Café wall illusion:



VI and Z characterize metaphysical debates as (roughly) those about the reality behind appearances, stated as strictly and literally as possible.

- “Humans are bipedal.”
- “This desk is solid.”
- “Mary’s plant died because she didn’t water it.”

*Ontology* is the part of metaphysics that deals with what exists.

- What sorts of entities are there in the world?
  - Pegasus or Santa Claus
  - Fundamental particles of physics
  - Tables and chairs
  - Souls or minds
  - Properties
- Are there abstract objects in addition to concrete objects?
  - Concrete: tables, protons, Earth, my copy of *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*
  - Abstract: numbers, concepts, the letter A, *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*

1 Realism and nominalism about universals

*Properties* are abstract entities that are *instantiated* by their bearers. Properties are also typically taken to be *universal* – that is, the same property can be instantiated by more than one particular object. (Relatedly, *relations* can also be universal.)

*Realism versus nominalism*

- *Realism* is the view that universals exist
- *Nominalism* is the view that only particular objects exist

Work that universals do:

- Explain ways a particular is and could be
- Explain resemblances and differences between distinct particulars
- Account for causal powers of particulars
- Provide semantic values for predicates (etc.) of our language

Arguments against universals:

- Linguistic
- Location
- Perceptual
- Bradley's regress
- Non-self-instantiation
  - Compare with Russell's paradox for naïve set theory