

UNIT 1: APPEARANCE & REALITY

1.1 | HOW APPEARANCE AND REALITY COME APART

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INTRODUCTION TO UNIT 1

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY *APPEARANCE*?

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2. that *x* looks to me a certain way, or has a certain outward “appearance”, as when I say

“The Sun is much larger than it appears.”

3. *x* seems to me to be a certain way, I believe (but do not *know*) that *x* is a certain way, as when I say

“The restaurant appears to be closed.”

CONFLICTS BETWEEN APPEARANCE & REALITY

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APPEARANCE

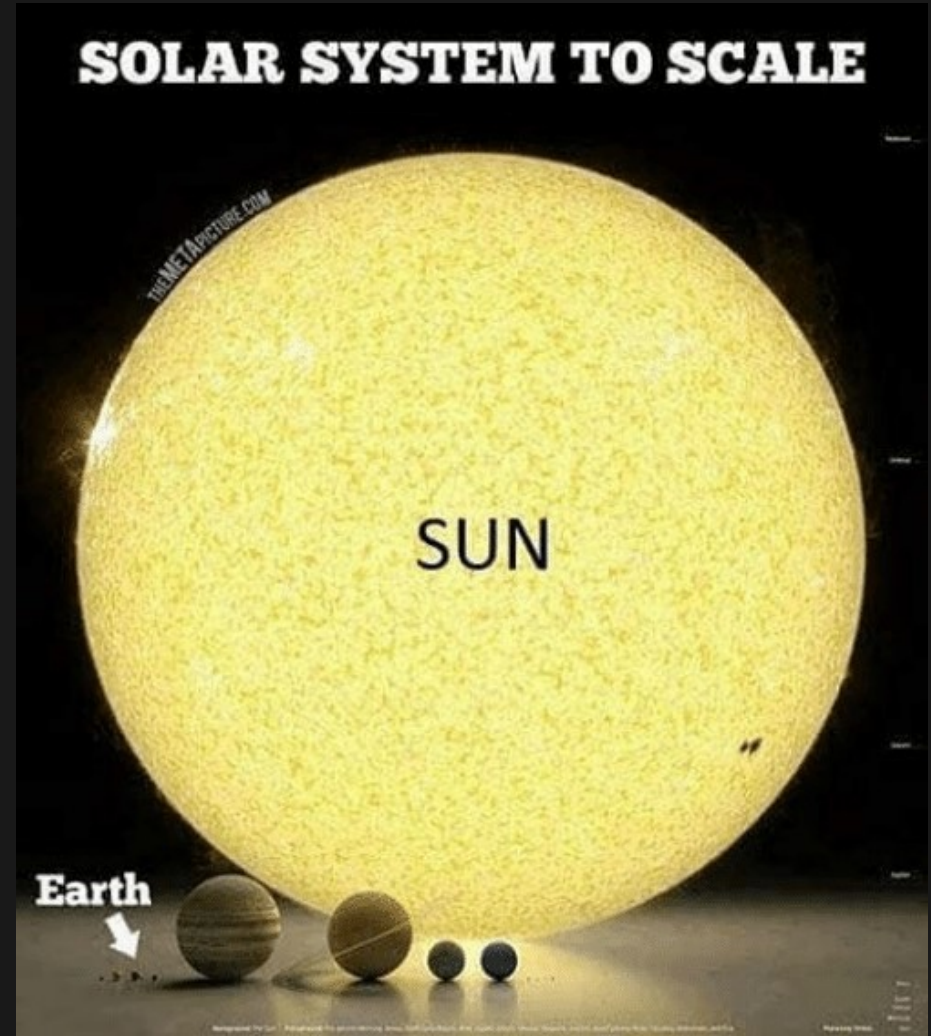


CONFLICTS BETWEEN APPEARANCE & REALITY

APPEARANCE



REALITY



CONFLICTS BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY IN GENERAL

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- Other times, they are *not* how they appear to us.

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If so, how can we avoid making false judgments when things are *not* as they appear?

PERCEPTUAL APPEARANCE & PERCEPTUAL EXPERIENCE

PERCEPTUAL APPEARANCE DEFINED

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- The table before me looks brown and rectangular.
- The table before me feels solid and smooth.
- The person shouting in the distance sounds angry.

Note

The same object can perceptually appear in different and incompatible ways to different perceivers, or to the same perceiver at different times!

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- We often make judgments about how things are in reality on the basis of how they appear to us in perception.
- Sometimes, we assume, things really are how they perceptually appear to us.
- Other times, they are *not* how they appear to us.

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Non-Veridical Perception

I perceive o as being F , but:

- o is not really F , or
- there is no o I'm perceiving at all.

ILLUSION

EXHIBIT A: THE SUN “ILLUSION”



EXHIBIT B: THE BENT-STICK “ILLUSION”



EXHIBIT C: THE MÜLLER-LYER ILLUSION

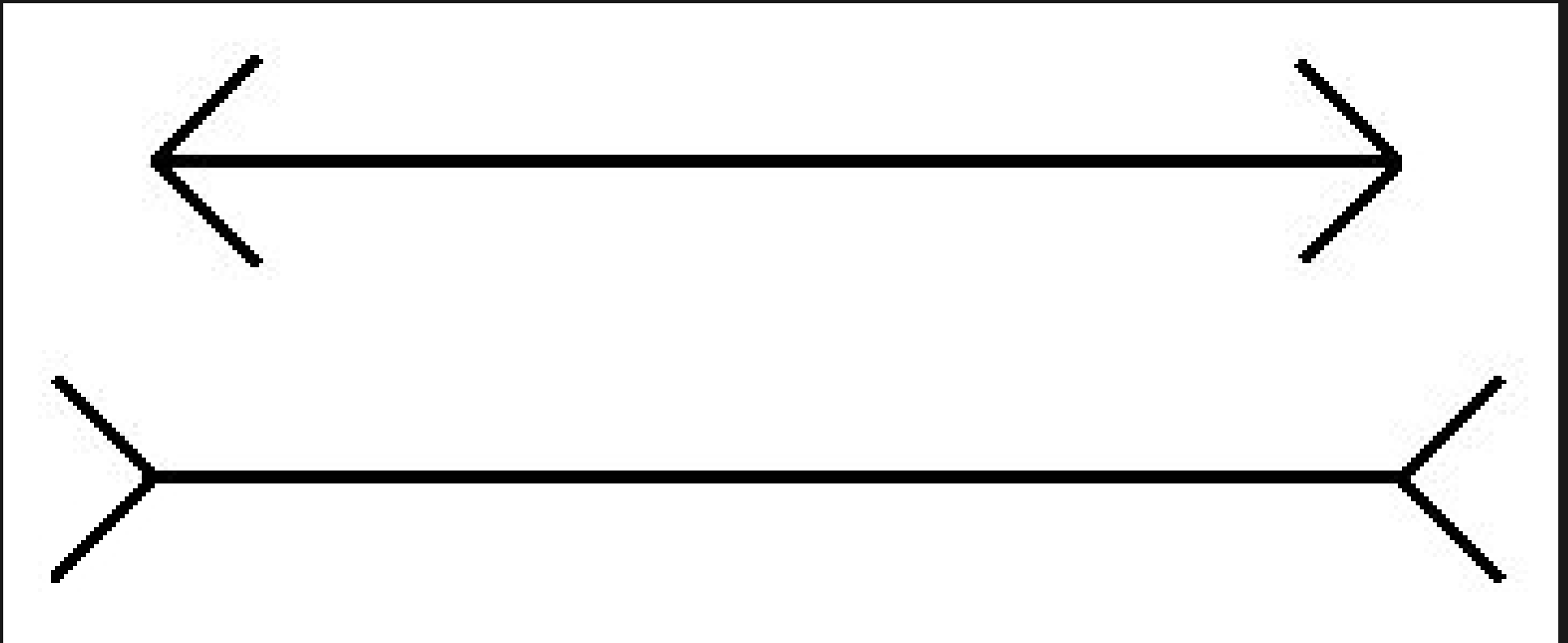


EXHIBIT D: PARALLEL LINE ILLUSION

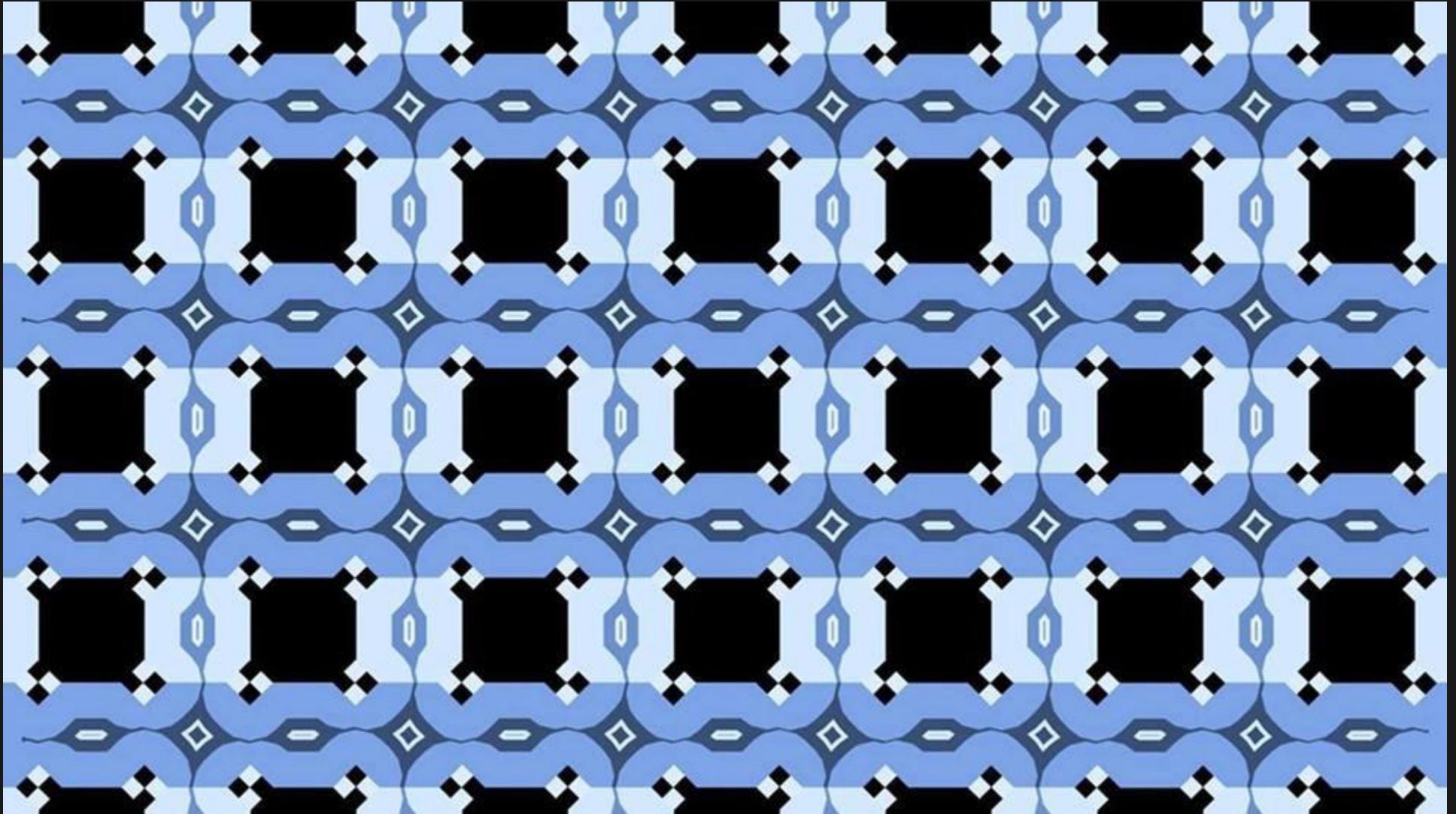


EXHIBIT E: THE CHECKER SHADOW ILLUSION

Question

Don't believe me? Check out the [Illusions Index](https://www.illusionsindex.org/)!



The
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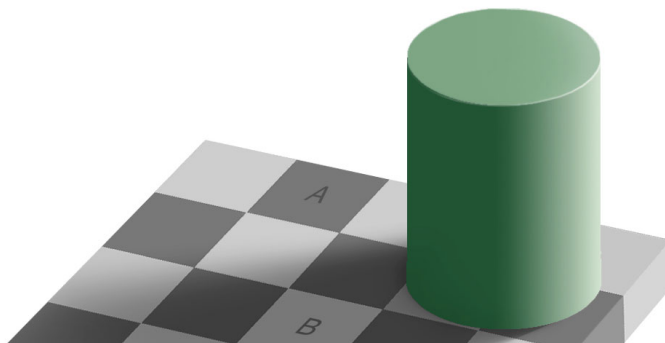
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Adelson's Checker-Shadow Illusion

[VISUAL](#)

[LIGHTNESS CONSTANCY](#)

[SIMULTANEOUS LIGHTNESS CONTRAST](#)



INSTRUCTIONS

Look at the two target squares labelled "A" and "B". Is one darker than the other? Hover your cursor over the image to reveal the truth.

EFFECT

HALLUCINATION

EXHIBIT F: MACBETH'S DAGGER



EXHIBIT G: PHANTOM LIMB PAIN



TOTAL HALLUCINATION



Total Hallucination

An experience in which *nothing* in a perceiver's experience corresponds to the reality of her perceptual environment.

REMAINING QUESTIONS

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Does the fact that we are susceptible to illusion and hallucination hamper our efforts to learn about the world by means of our senses?

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If so, how can we avoid making false judgments on the basis of illusory or hallucinatory perceptual experiences?

PREVIEW: PERCEPTION AND EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE

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SO FAR

We've seen that...

- Perception can be either veridical or non-veridical, and if non-veridical, then either illusory or hallucinatory.
- Intuitively, if a perceptual appearance is non-veridical, then it gives us no basis for judging that the world is as it appears to the perceiver.
- It is not always obvious whether a perceptual appearance is veridical, illusory, or hallucinatory.

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In other words...

Is it possible to acquire **empirical knowledge** if we are subject to illusion and hallucination?

KNOWLEDGE IN GENERAL

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Epistemology

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Epistemology

The philosophical discipline devoted to the study of knowledge.

The Classical Theory of Knowledge

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that the interior angles of a triangle sum to 180 degrees
that Istanbul is the largest city in Turkey,

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She must (be prepared to) **accept the fact as true.**

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The fact must really be **true**; and

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a person must meet 3 conditions:

Belief

She must (be prepared to) **accept the fact as true.**

Truth

The fact must really be **true**; and

Justification

She must have **good reasons** for accepting it as true.

WHAT IS *EMPIRICAL* KNOWLEDGE?

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Knowledge whose **justification** derives from perceptual experience, including:

- knowledge of the external world
- knowledge of one's own body

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Empirical Knowledge

Knowledge whose **justification** derives from perceptual experience, including:

- knowledge of the external world
- knowledge of one's own body
- Contrast knowledge of mathematical or conceptual truths, *e.g.*:
 - knowledge that triangles have interior angles summing to 180°
 - knowledge that scarlet is a shade of red

The Difference?

Knowledge of mathematical or conceptual truths
cannot be justified on the basis of perceptual
experience!

A SKEPTICAL ANSWER TO QUESTION 2

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Skeptical Conclusion

A SKEPTICAL ANSWER TO QUESTION 2

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Skeptical Conclusion

Yes! It shows that perceptual experiences *cannot* justify beliefs about the world.

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Skepticism

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The view that knowledge, or knowledge of some type, is impossible.

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Skepticism About Empirical Knowledge

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Skepticism

The view that knowledge, or knowledge of some type, is impossible.

Skepticism About Empirical Knowledge

The view that empirical knowledge is impossible.

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- **Premise 3.** It is not the case that: if *o* appears to be *F*, then *o* is in fact *F*.

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- **Premise 1.** Empirical knowledge concerns what is *in fact* the case, e.g. whether *o* is in fact *F*.
- **Premise 2.** Perception tells us only what *appears* to be the case, e.g. whether *o* appears to be *F*.
- **Premise 3.** It is not the case that: if *o* appears to be *F*, then *o* is in fact *F*.
- **Conclusion.** So, empirical knowledge cannot be derived from perceptual experience.

RUSSELL ON APPEARANCE AND REALITY

[I]f we take any common object of the sort that is supposed to be known by the senses, what the senses *immediately* tell us is not the truth about the object as it is apart from us, but only the truth about certain sense-data which, so far as we can see, depend upon the relations between us and the object...

Thus what we directly see and feel is merely “appearance,” which we believe to be a sign of some “reality” behind. But if the reality is not what appears, have we any means of knowing whether there is any reality at all ? And if so, have we any means of finding out what it is like? (23)

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

Units 1–2 explore Question 2 (and the Skeptical Conclusion) from two different perspectives:

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Unit 1.2–3

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Unit 2

What *theory* of perceptual experience best accounts for the empirical evidence?

