

- Logical Possibility vs. Logical Impossibility

Possibility vs Impossibility

- Erich von Däniken (*Chariots of the Gods*) once wrote:
 - “...nothing is incredible any longer. The word ‘impossible’ should have become literally impossible for the modern scientist. Anyone who does not accept this today will be crushed by the reality tomorrow.”
 - (New York. Bantam Books, 1970) pg. 30.
- *Example: Meteorites*
 - Lavoisier (1743 – 1794) – French Chemist
 - Thomas Jefferson
- Erich von Däniken → Nothing is impossible

Interesting ...

- **According to a 2001 National Science Foundation Survey:**
 - **1) 60% of people polled hold that some people do possess psychic powers or ESP**
 - **2) 30% of respondents agreed that some of the unidentified flying objects that have been reported are really space vehicles from other civilizations.**

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 - **4) 28% believe in astrology**
 - **5) 26% believe in witches**

Possible?

- **1) Time Travel**
- **2) Psychokinesis**
- **3) Ancient Astronauts**

- **Are these logically possible?**

Logically Possible

- **Logical impossibility** = Claim that violates the rules of logic (primarily the Law of Non-Contradiction)
- Examples:
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 - This circle is a square.
 - The largest number is X.

Logically Possible

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- Examples:
 - John, who is a bachelor, has been married for 9 years.
 - This circle is a square.
 - The largest number is X.
- **What is logically Impossible cannot exist**
- **Logical Possibility** = Claim that does not violate a rule of logic – one where there is no logical contradiction present.

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 - But: Note: Just because something is logically possible, does not mean that it is authentic or real
 - **Physical / Causal Impossibility** → Violates the laws of science or nature

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- Is psychokinesis physically possible? → NO
- **Something can be physically impossible although logically possible**
 - Logical possibility is more inclusive than physical possibility

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- 3) Ancient Astronauts who visited the Earth?
 - Logically Possible
 - Physically Possible (well... depends really)
 - *ISSUE: Perhaps Not Technologically Possible*

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 - Physically Possible
 - *Not Technologically Possible*
- **Take Alpha Centauri (closest star)**
 - **Option 1: Traditional Propulsion System @ 25% speed of light → would require more fuel than is available from all the matter in the universe**

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 - Option 2: Warp Drive (or something like it) → would require a system capable of producing energy equivalent to 10 billion times the mass of the visible universe

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- **Not impossible – (both Logically and Physically Possible – maybe not option 2) – just not very likely → does not = it being actual/real**

What About...

- **1) Moon Jumping Cows?**
- **2) A Bunny That Lays Multi-Colored Eggs?**
- **3) This Soccer ball is completely red and completely white at the same time.**
- **4) Jane is taller than herself.**
- **5) It was crazy. During her last concert appearance in Sacramento, while on stage, Brittny Spears turned into a frog. A real frog!**
- **6) John robbed all the banks in Sacramento in one day.**
- **7) This triangle has four sides.**