My friend Mike Hutchinson, in the UK, sent me to this site to see that the UK Advertising Standards Authority [ASA] have announced a decision against an advertisement shown on TV that touted the miraculous powers of gems, and offered expensive rings and pendants that would grant these boons to the buyer. Said the announcer in these ads:

With their mysterious and amazing powers, gems have a great influence on the mind, body and soul of a human who wears them. They can help in controlling your anger, reducing your stress, increasing your confidence and it also enhances your decision making abilities. To grow further in life and to achieve what you have always wished for, it is extremely essential that your fate favors you. For good fortune, and for a favorable effect of all the planets on your fate, Global Sky Shop presents a special product, Global Zodiac Rings and Pendents *[sic]*.

As authentication for these claimed benefits, they offered astrologer Sir Bejaan Daruwala, who declared:

The greatest benefit is your attitude, your perspective. You should be positive. You should be confident. In today's tough times, you should be mentally strong and balanced and positive. And the greatest benefit of the gems is they can make you, they can make you very positive. They can make you quite self-confident and brave. Look at my hands? Tell me, do they tremble? They don't. Sometimes you hear some people, even nowadays, they talk about evil eye. They ask me to save them from evil eyes. Well, whether you believe it or not, people have such notions in their minds. But with the help of these gems we can be protected from evil eyes. There are many traders or businessmen who are not too stable. They are very finicky; they fail to stick to one thing or one direction. They are always indecisive about their plans. They may achieve stability by choosing to wear Global Sky Shop's Emerald stone. If such people wear this Opal stone, their power to attract people towards them might increase a hundred times. There is nothing much to say now if these gems help you then you should buy them ... Coral stone is red in color. By wearing the Coral stone, one may experience extra power.

How astrologer Sir Bejaan Daruwala got to be knighted, is a burning question I'll just have to wonder over...

The presenter went on to explain that Global Sky Shops Zodiac gems are "made in five metals" - an impossibility - but used the provisional word "may" some 13 times in his dialogue, along

with a few uses of "might" and "probably," thus dimming any notion that a guarantee was being provided. Also heard several times was the likely-true statement, "results may vary." Astrologer Bejaan went on at length extolling the magical powers of the gems, even dropping in the fact that they'd been placed under a pyramid, which - as we know - will further strengthen their magic.

The ASA decided to dampen the operation.

They noted that the ads said that Global Zodiac Rings and Pendants would control anger, reduce stress, increase confidence and enhance decision-making abilities, bring success, good fortune and happiness in the wearers personal and professional life, protect from evil eyes, form a protective shield all around the wearer and not let negative energies affect the wearer, increase the wearers power to attract others, improve finances, become more intellectual, and become better at organizing, and they questioned whether the expensive trinkets - £90.95 [US$140] - had, as claimed, electrification effects, power, and energy, just because they'd been placed under a pyramid. They also questioned whether the celebrities shown in the ad actually wore the items.

In response, the promoters explained that the ad was intended for broadcast on Asian channels only - as if only Asians would be naïve enough to accept such nonsense - and said they believed most viewers would regard it merely as entertainment. In fact, a caption stating "These products are for entertainment purposes only" was repeated several times during the broadcast. Promoters explained that the products were "presented as an aid to positive thinking and in that context the statements were not intended to be taken literally." Duh.

The Advertising Standards Authority, in its wisdom, found that the ads for Global Zodiac Rings and Pendants were misleading, were unsupported by evidence, were designed to attract vulnerable viewers, claimed a power to influence the future, and exploited the superstitious. So there! And what was their decision?

First, remember that such nonsense as homeopathy, spiritualism, and "intelligent design" are very popular UK delusions, and they are widely and freely advertised without any substantiation. In fact, they have been conclusively shown to be farcical. Bearing that in mind, consider what decision the ASA reached:

We concluded that the ad must not be shown again in its present form and that the product should not be advertised without adequate substantiation for the claims made for it.

Oops! My mind just boggled again...