

Ood for thought

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THE OOD NUMBER AMONG THE GREATEST CREATIONS OF **Doctor Who**'s 2005 relaunch. They represent the new series' most coherent engagement with the idea first established in *The Sensorites* (1964): that those who seem monstrous can be kindly and gentle, and are probably more afraid of the Doctor and other humanoids (and by extension us viewers) than we are of them. They stand for one of the most triumphant, punch-the-air moments in the show's entire history, when they stage their own revolution against the evil corporation which enslaves them without the Doctor's help. The Doctor and Donna are allies and bystanders in *Planet of the Ood* (2008), which would have unfolded almost identically without them. They are an emblem of one of the greatest instances of the show criticising itself — notably how it failed to properly address, investigate or characterise the Ood in their debut appearance — and then doing something about it. And lastly, of course, they're a fabulous design: icky enough to make us feel deeply uncomfortable about realizing we're judging them because we find them ugly. They've been patchily used since 2008, slotting into the 'Magical Negro' trope, though 2011's *The Doctor's Wife* does at least voice my own position: 'Love an Ood!'