

Has Miss Betty Boop Boop-Oop-a-Dooped Into The Public Domain? Sort of.

January 20, 2026 – The TMCA

by Breanne Wernars



Fans of the iconic Betty Boop character have taken to social media to share their dream celebrity casting for Miss Boop now that *Dizzy Dishes*, the six-minute cartoon that first featured the Betty Boop character, has entered the public domain. However, fans may be disappointed to learn this entrance into the public domain doesn't make the Betty Boop IP free for all to use.

Originally introduced in 1930 by Fleischer Studios, *Dizzy Dishes* depicts a Betty Boop character who is "dog-like; [a] singing, dancing hybrid being with huge, droopy Cocker Spaniel-like eyes, a button of a nose and long puppy dog ears that tossed back and forth as she sang and danced." In fact, the Betty Boop character the world has come to recognize

was not introduced until 1932, and has undergone numerous transformations to keep the nearly 100 year old character relevant in the modern day.

Under U.S. Copyright law, works published between 1924 and 1978 are protected at most for 95 years, making the six-minute *Dizzy Dishes* cartoon and original Betty Boop character available for public use and creation of derivative works. But the versions of Betty which have developed over the last 95 years are still off-limits without proper licensing, and trademark law may provide additional protections for the brand owner.

Related People

- Breanne Wernars

Related Capabilities

- Trademark, Copyright + Advertising
- Intellectual Property Litigation

CEO of Fleischer Studios, Mark Fleischer has made clear the company intends to vehemently protect its valuable IP in the Betty Boop character despite the entrance of *Dizzy Dishes* into the public domain, making an official statement on the Fleischer website which states, in part:



While the copyright in the “Dizzy Dishes” cartoon may fall into the public domain in 2026, this does not affect Fleischer Studios’ copyright in the fully developed BETTY BOOP character Fleischer Studios created in subsequent cartoons and other uses and continues to use today. Fleischer Studios’ copyright in that character will therefore remain in force for some years to come, as will Fleischer Studios’ copyrights in the many subsequently revised and modern versions of the BETTY BOOP character and related elements.

Equally important, the BETTY BOOP name and various related character designs are well-known and valuable Fleischer Studios trademarks, recognized and registered around the world for a multitude of goods/services and activities, including a full range of merchandise licensed by Fleischer Studios. These brands continue to enjoy the full protection of trademark and related laws and are unaffected by the expiration of the “Dizzy Dishes” copyright or any other copyright.

Based on this, the public may be able to freely use clips from the *Dizzy Dishes* cartoon or create a spin-off character from the version of Betty depicted in the cartoon, but use of the BETTY BOOP trademark and character we have come to recognize are likely still off-limits.

In the United States alone, Fleischer owns over 25 trademark registrations and applications spanning a wide range of goods and services, including entertainment services and a variety of merchandise products. As such, use of the BETTY BOOP name with any of these protected goods or services may still result in a cease and desist letter.

So, while we may expect to see a *Dizzy Dishes* remake in the near future, third parties should be careful to consider the vast portfolio of still-protected IP rights Fleischer has under its belt, and appears prepared to protect.