

Netflix sued by Choose Your Own Adventure publishers over Black Mirror: Bandersnatch

The publisher of the *Choose Your Own Adventure* book series is suing Netflix over its interactive *Black Mirror* episode *Bandersnatch*. Chooseco filed its lawsuit against Netflix today in a Vermont court, accusing Netflix of willfully infringing on the “Choose Your Own Adventure” trademark and claiming that the episode is so dark it will tarnish the books’ reputation.

The complaint, as published by *Polygon*, claims that Netflix started trying to license the Choose Your Own Adventure name starting in 2016. While the companies engaged in “extensive negotiations,” Netflix allegedly didn’t get the license. Chooseco says it’s already sent cease-and-desist notices about its trademark “on at least one occasion” regarding a different TV show – potentially one of Netflix’s earlier, child-focused interactive programs.

Chooseco takes issue with *Bandersnatch*’s protagonist Stefan Butler describing a fictitious interactive novel (which is also titled *Bandersnatch*) as “a ‘Choose Your Own Adventure’ book,” implying it’s an official part of the series. It’s particularly upset with the reference because *Bandersnatch* is “a dark film” that “can include references to and depictions of a demonic presence, violent fighting, drug use, murder, mutilation of a corpse, decapitation, and other upsetting imagery.” (We can’t really argue with any of that.) “Association with this grim content tarnishes Chooseco’s famous trademark,” says the complaint.

Chooseco is asking for damages of at least \$25 million for

Netflix's alleged infringement. Netflix didn't immediately reply to a request for comment. The streaming video company settled a similar lawsuit last year with the Satanic Temple, which accused Netflix of copying elements of its Baphomet design in the original series *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*.

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/1/11/18178846/netflix-black-mirror-bandersnatch-choose-your-own-adventure-book-trademark-lawsuit-chooseco>