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What the Industry Reads First

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New FCC: Who is Brendan Carr?

No eyebrows were raised over news Wednesday night that President *Trump* intends to nominate **FCC** general counsel *Brendan Carr* to fill the empty Republican Commission seat. While the move has been expected for weeks, Carr isn't especially well known—at least among cable's Washington crowd. Word inside the Beltway is that a full Commission could be seated as early as the August open meeting. A free market thinker, Carr received the standard praise from **NCTA**, **ACA** and other players. Still, having only been in the general counsel seat for a few months and coming from Wireless, Public Safety and International (he was FCC chmn *Ajit Pai's* legal adviser on those issues for three years), it's a bit fuzzy how Carr will fall on media and broadband issues. Carr did help craft the UHF discount order, upheld by the DC Circuit earlier this month. *Francisco Montero*, managing partner at **Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth**, praised his experience both within the agency and as a private practitioner (he previously worked at **Wiley Rein** in appellate, litigation and telecom). "A knowledge of the agency's rules and procedures are invaluable to a commissioner and it is always good to deal with an FCC commissioner who understands the process and 'gets it,'" he said. Fun fact: Carr was an intern for former FCC commish *Kathleen Abernathy*. Another fun fact: if confirmed, he'll be the first FCC gen counsel to serve on the Commission since *Bill Kennard* was tapped by *Bill Clinton*. Given Carr's close association with *Pai*, he probably won't step too far from the chairman. But FCC history does include a record of GOP commissioners who have cast key swing votes—from *Kevin Martin* going against then-FCC chmn *Michael Powell* on some proposed Bell deregulation to Republicans *Robert McDowell* and *Deborah Taylor Tate* joining with Dems for a 4-1 vote against *Martin* (and for cable) in a dispute over **Verizon** marketing practices. Carr was vocal during the 2015 Open Internet proceeding, challenging former *Tom Wheeler* aide *Gigi Sohn* on **Twitter** over whether the proposal could regulate broadband prices. Carr will likely be put up for Senate confirmation alongside Democrat *Jessica Rosenworcel*, a former commissioner who had to vacate her post at the end of 2016 because the Senate did not take up her nomination. Current Democratic commish *Mignon Clyburn* remains the wild card, with many expecting her to exit the Commission shortly (her term expires Friday, but she can stay on until the end of the next Congressional session). In an interview with **C-SPAN's** "The Communicators" this week, she repeated comments that she's not made any decisions. "I've not



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turned in any paperwork. I haven't even talked to Ethics about my series of next steps. I am here to serve," she said. "I'm pleased I have the opportunity to do so, and I will be an advocate for those who don't have a voice." The C-SPAN interview will be available on C-SPAN.org Friday afternoon and airs Saturday at 6:30pm ET on C-SPAN.

Ad-Free AMC: Some interesting experimentation going on between **Comcast** and **AMC**, with Xfinity customers now having the option to pay an additional \$4.99/month for AMC Premiere. The premium service will get them ad-free versions of new episodes of current-season shows at the same time as the live broadcast, as well as exclusive and first-look content and curated movies. Don't confuse this with AMC Networks' deal with **Charter**, which is for content made specifically for Spectrum subs. AMC Premiere soft launched Thursday with more content to roll out over the summer.

Nielsen Talks OpenAP: Nielsen execs took the stage Thursday on Day 2 of **Bernstein's** Future of Media Summit in New York. Asked about **OpenAP**, the cross-publisher audience targeting platform developed by **Fox**, **Viacom** and **Turner**, Nielsen svp, product management *Kelly Abcarian* said she sees it as the market catching up to data it has made available through its Catalina and Buyer Insights programs. "Nielsen's actually been providing data sets for many, many years across the marketplace that describe consumers outside of just age-gender. The marketplace has just kind of relegated around transacting on age-gender against the C-3, C-7 metrics." Abcarian added. Nielsen plays a key role in OpenAP. "We collect hundreds of data sets across our panel that describe consumers: auto intenders and pet owners and all of these things that go into an ability to basically create segments and then to overlay those segments on ratings. So, we'll be bringing that same view of the consumer base and delivery of the telecast out to the OpenAP system." Advertisers can also log into OpenAP and input their own definitions of what a target consumer looks like. It's important to note, however, that OpenAP is not itself a programmatic buying platform, but rather a tool for developing cross-publisher proposals.

CMT Change-up: *Brian Philips* is exiting **CMT** on a high note, with the net seeing nice numbers for "Nashville," its highest-rated original to-date. **TV Land** gm *Frank Tanki* will expand his role to include oversight of both brands. CMT has racked up 29 straight weeks of YOY growth with 18-49s. In a note to employees, Philips said he's been contemplating a change for some time, but agreed to stay on to help CMT through its recent brand renewal. He's been at the Viacom net for 16 years, recalling the early days when "we worked from a shelled-out Opryland building on a dime-store budget," contrasting it today when Nashville is a highly sought after city with CMT firmly entrenched in it.

Lifeline GAO: A **GAO** report released Thursday found fraud and waste in the **FCC's** Lifeline program subsidizing phone and broadband service for low-income households. The independent probe was unable to confirm eligibility for 36% of subscribers (1.2mIn people) that it reviewed. It found 6378 individual reported as deceased who are receiving Lifeline benefits and 5510 potential duplicate subscribers. Where do we go from here? Sen Commerce chmn *John Thune* (R-SD) put the blame on previous FCC leadership, but said the current regime must address shortcomings and he'll work to make sure it happens. FCC commish *Mignon Clyburn* warned against using the "limited findings" of the GAO report to scale back the program, adding many of the issues raised will be addressed by a national eligibility verifier. FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* said staff is already working on recommendations to "crack down on the unscrupulous providers that abuse the program so that the dollars we spend support affordable, high-speed broadband Internet access for our nation's poorest families."

Nick Funds Esports League: **Nickelodeon** is part of a group of investors funding **Super League Gaming's** \$15mIn Series C funding round. SLG, which focuses on hosting friendly esports competitions between kids, has raised more than \$28mIn in total. Other investors in the most recent round include **DMG Entertainment**, **Toba Capital** and Tampa Bay Lightning Owner *Jeffrey Vinik*.

FCC Privacy Rules: The **FCC** released an order Thursday that makes certain the Code of Federal Regulations accurately reflects the 2017 dissolution of last year's broadband privacy order. As a result, the previous rules that applied to wireless and wireline telephone carriers have been reinstated, including the annual compliance certification requirements and recordkeeping requirements. Carriers subject to the annual compliance certification requirement must file such a certification no later than March 1.

21CF's Sky Play: Thursday came and went and *Rupert Murdoch* didn't get a straight yes or no on **21st Century Fox's** plans to acquire the rest of European satellite company **Sky**. Instead, British regulators announced plans for a phase two review over the potential impact of such a deal.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

FX's 'Snowfall' Takes Its Time

David Andron, showrunner for the upcoming FX show "Snowfall," didn't want the first season of the show to feel like a "slow burn." Given that the show's tagline is "How Crack Began," however, viewers will likely be expecting to actually see the sub-titular substance by the midway point of the 10-episode run, which debuts Wednesday at 10pm. Andron's intent is to show viewers the impact the drug had on minority communities in 1980s L.A. by first painting a picture of what life was like before its arrival. "I don't want to spend five minutes in that neighborhood and then drop crack in and watch everything start getting shot up," Andron said. "What's very interesting is this notion that, holy shit, this was a working-class neighborhood. There weren't bars on windows, it wasn't a war zone." Also impacting the pacing of the show is the presentation of three separate plot lines that, while all involving powder cocaine, have little connection. The most prominent is that of Franklin Saint, an African-American teenager from South Central who begins selling blow to raise his station and take care of his single mother. Meanwhile in East L.A., luchador Gustavo "Oso" Zapata gets involved with a Mexican-American crime family that values his brute strength. Then there's the story of Teddy McDonald, a disgraced CIA agent exiled from to the West Coast. In order to get back in the good graces of the Agency, McDonald works to help fund the government's secret support of the Contras' revolution in Nicaragua by—you guessed it—selling cocaine. Each storyline is fairly compelling in its own right, but there is no meaningful confluence of the parallel paths through five episodes. "You can feel the collision course, hopefully, that they're on," Andron said. "I want it to feel like even though they weren't in the same room together, you did ultimately feel like they were struggling to try to get similar things." — Alex Silverman

Reviews: "First Ladies Revealed," premiere, 9pm, Sunday, **Smithsonian**. *Dolley Madison* was one half of America's first power couple, the first ep of this delightful four-part series tells us. Not only that, the Princeton-educated First Lady used her social skills to bring political rivals together at salons, augmented with whiskey-punch and champagne, not the kind of libations cultured people typically imbibed in the early 1800s. And you thought the stylish First Lady was a *Jackie Kennedy* conception. She was special, but Dolley created DC society. In this ep about style, Mrs. K receives much adulation as Smithsonian curators show off her couture. *Nancy Reagan* also receives a lot of attention, particularly the thorny issue of her being portrayed in the press as an uncaring socialite. Those who worked for her, and are interviewed here, provide a different perspective. As you might have guessed, the ep's footage is spectacular. -- "Casual," Season 3, new eps each Tuesday, **Hulu**. The first two seasons of this dark, brother-sister dramedy received critical acclaim; Season 3, too. In the premiere, *Casual* drops a bomb that changes the dynamic somewhat. For viewers craving action, *Casual* won't be a favorite. Those seeking relationship-heavy content may find *Casual* appealing. — Seth Arenstein

Basic Cable Rankings (6/19/17-6/25/17)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	FOXN	1.1	2419
2	ESPN	0.7	1608
2	MSNB	0.7	1539
4	HGTV	0.6	1473
4	USA	0.6	1435
4	TBSC	0.6	1409
7	A&E	0.4	1021
7	DISC	0.4	989
7	CNN	0.4	961
7	HIST	0.4	940
7	FX	0.4	939
7	ID	0.4	935
7	DSNY	0.4	876
7	BET	0.4	864
7	TLC	0.4	861
7	HALL	0.4	805
7	DSE	0.4	73
18	FOOD	0.3	799
18	AMC	0.3	798
18	ADSM	0.3	744
18	NAN	0.3	739
18	TVLD	0.3	692
18	TNT	0.3	677
18	OWN	0.3	668
18	FRFM	0.3	632
18	SYFY	0.3	620
18	LIFE	0.3	619
18	BRAV	0.3	569
18	VH1	0.3	565
18	DSJR	0.3	546
18	HMM	0.3	534
18	INSP	0.3	522
18	NKJR	0.3	519
18	LMN	0.3	472
35	SPK	0.2	519
35	WETV	0.2	492
35	TRAV	0.2	450
35	APL	0.2	442
35	MTV	0.2	441
35	EN	0.2	428
35	CMDY	0.2	417
35	FS1	0.2	415
35	NGC	0.2	373
35	WGNA	0.2	372

*Nielsen data, supplied by ABC/Disney, is based on coverage area of individual networks



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