

WEDNESDAY: HILLS HAVE EYES

*Hills have eyes, the hills have eyes
Who are you to judge, who are you to
judge?
Hide your lies, girl, hide your lies
Only you to trust, only you*

– excerpt, The Hills by The Weeknd

That tune's NSFW, by the way, as is much of The Weeknd's oeuvre.

Today's theme is stuff to watch – things that aren't quite done, may have long-term impact, or don't make sense just yet.

U.S. Senate gun control filibuster

Right now I'm keeping an eye on the filibuster under way, now 13-plus hours in progress on the Senate floor, begun by Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT) to support legislation for universal background checks and barring firearms sales to suspected terrorists. As of 11:15 p.m. EDT, 40 Senators had already spoken in participation; there were only two Republicans (Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania and Ben Sasse of Nebraska) and one Independent (Angus King of Maine) who joined Democrats so far. The Brady Campaign has been taking calls from constituents in support of the filibuster at (855) 331-8593 and redirecting calls to senators' voicemail so that the Senate can hear the public's demand for gun control.

If you want to watch the filibuster, you can catch it on cable at CSPAN-2 or [this link](#).

I'm also keeping an eye on these issues:

Next on Net Neutrality

A rare bright spot over the last week is the FCC's win over ISPs in US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit; you can bet this fight isn't over, though the court found the FCC could regulate ISPs as it does common

carriers. Worth brushing up on net neutrality, given Comcast's support of candidate Trump by way of NBC coverage both as candidate and reality TV personality. Comcast could well parlay its support into demands for an end to net neutrality should Trump win the White House.

Brexit bonking bankers

Polling flipped over the last two weeks from Remain to Leave. Bankers are beginning to worry and are scheduling a very long night when polls close next week.

Microsoft and LinkedIn merger

Technology folks can't make any sense out of this prospective marriage, which must yet be approved by the feds. I can't make any sense out of it, either, given the losses several of LinkedIn's largest investors must eat – they're also Microsoft investors, which means the money merely changes pockets without actually increasing. The deal is massive in terms of cost, dwarfing previous acquisitions by Microsoft.

So why do this deal, apart from the obvious access to technology decisionmakers with high levels of discretionary income? Wouldn't it simply be cheaper to buy ad space on LinkedIn or even invest a smaller amount rather than acquire the entire business?

Or has Microsoft changed its overall business model – does it intend to sell something other than software once it has closed the LinkedIn deal?

All I know is that I'm leaving LinkedIn as soon as the feds approve the deal. I don't want Microsoft to have any more of my time and money than they have right now, and I'm sick of their highly intrusive habits. Imagine the persistent nagging of Microsoft combined with the icky annoyance of LinkedIn reminders, like ones I still get about long-deceased acquaintances. Clippy the Undead, nagging me about software updates...Gah.

Volatile Venezuela

Clearly candidate Trump is watching Venezuela closely, though I wonder if he would have noticed without being included in security briefings. With the latest El Nino now ended, the weather may change bringing relief from drought if not from political insecurity and volatility due to the collapse of oil prices over the last several years. Interesting op-ed on the violence in Venezuela suggests a new perspective must be considered: the violence suggests the end of the state apparatus.

Mongolia's addresses

The country is migrating physical addresses to a three-word phrase to accommodate a spread-out nomadic population in country with few roads and little infrastructure. In some ways, this mirrors virtual addresses used in networked environments. Is this a model for other countries in the near future?

Zika virus and blood supply safety

Hadn't even thought of this – if Zika can be transmitted by sex, it's certainly transmitted by other bodily fluids like blood. We need to think about blood supply safety, especially once the virus is spread by domestic mosquitoes. Pregnant women, and persons intending to become parents within months of receiving a transfusion should not receive Zika-contaminated blood.

What are you watching?