



# PyRIC v0.1.6.4: User Manual

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## 1 About PyRIC

PyRIC (is a Linux only) library providing wireless developers and pentesters the ability to identify, enumerate and manipulate their system's wireless cards programmatically in Python. Pentesting applications and scripts written in Python have increased dramatically in recent years. However, these tools still rely on Linux command lines tools to setup and prepare and restore the system for use. Until now. Why use subprocess.Popen, regular expressions and str.find to interact with your wireless cards? PyRIC puts iw, ifconfig, rfkill, udevadm, airmon-ng and macchanger in your hands (or your program).

PyRIC is designed with Python 2.7 in mind but has now been made compatible with Python 3.5. It will also work on Python 3.0 but you will have to hard code the command line options in the two examples as Python 3.0 does not include the module argparse

PyRIC is:

1. **Pythonic:** No ctypes, SWIG etc. PyRIC redefines C header files as Python and uses sockets to communicate with kernel.
2. **Self-sufficient:** No third-party files used, PyRIC is completely self- contained
3. **Fast:** (relatively speaking) PyRIC is faster than using iw through subprocess.Popen

4. **Parseless:** Get the output you without parsing output from iw. Never worry about iw updates and rewriting your parsers.
5. **Easy:** If you can use iw, you can use PyRIC

At it's heart, PyRIC is a Python port of (a subset of) iw and by extension, a Python port of Netlink w.r.t nl80211 functionality. The original goal of PyRIC was to provide a simple interface to the underlying nl80211 kernel support, handling the complex operations of Netlink seamlessly while maintaining a minimum of "code walking" to understand, modify and extend. But, why stop there? Since it's initial inception, PyRIC has grown to include ioctl support to replicate features of ifconfig such as getting or setting the mac address and has recently implemented rkill support to soft block or unblock wireless cards.

While users can utilize libnl.py to communicate directly with the kernel, the true utility of PyRIC is pyw.py. Like iw, pyw provides an interface/buffer between the caller and the kernel, handling all message construction, parsing and data transfer transparently and without requiring any Netlink knowledge or experience.

At this time, PyRIC can:

- enumerate interfaces and wireless interfaces,
- identify a cards driver, chipset and manufacturer,
- get/set hardware address,
- get/set ip4 address, netmask and or broadcast,
- turn card on/off,
- get supported standards, commands or modes,
- get if info,
- get dev info,
- get phy info,
- get link info,
- get STA (connected AP) info,
- get/set regulatory domain,
- get/set mode,
- get/set coverage class, RTS threshold, Fragmentation threshold and retry limits,
- add/delete interfaces,
- determine if a card is connected,
- get link info for a connected card,
- enumerate ISM and UNII channels,

- block/unblock rfkill devices.

And, through `libnl.py` and `libio.py`, users can extend the above functionality by creating additional commands.

## 1.1 Background

PyRIC arose out of a need in Wraith (<https://github.com/wraith-wireless/wraith>) for Python `nl80211/netlink` and `ioctl` functionality. Originally, Wraith used `ifconfig`, `iwconfig` and `iw` via `subprocess.Popen` and parsed the output. There are obvious shortfalls with this method, especially in terms of `iw` that is actively changing (revisions break the parser) and I started looking for an open source alternative. There are several open source projects out there such as `pyroute`, `pymnl` (and the python files included in the `libnl` source) but they generally have either not been maintained recently or come with warnings. I desired a simple interface to the underlying `nl80211` kernel support that handles the complex operations of `netlink` seamlessly while maintaining a minimum of "code walking" to understand, modify and extend. I decided to write my own because I do not need complete `netlink` functionality, only that provided by generic `netlink` and within the `nl80221` family. Additionally, for Wraith, I do not need a full blown port of `iw` et. al. functionality to Python but only require the ability to turn a wireless nic on/off, get/set the `hwaddr`, get/set the channel, determine some properties of the card and add/delete interfaces.

So, why did I do this and why is it done "this" way? When I first started to explore the idea of moving away from `iw` output parsing, I looked at the source for `iw`, and existing Python ports. Just to figure out how to get the family id for `nl80211` required reading through five different source files with no comments. To that extent, I have attempted to keep subclassing to a minimum, the total number of classes to a minimum, combine files where possible and where it makes sense and keep the number of files required to be open simultaneously in order to understand the methodology and follow the program to a minimum. One can understand the PyRIC program flow with only two files open at any time namely, `pyw` and `libnl`. In fact, only an understanding of `pyw` is required to add additional commands although an understanding of `libnl.py` is helpful especially, if for example, the code is to be extended to handle multicast or callbacks.

## 1.2 Naming Conventions

The terms `interface`, `device` and `radio` are all used interchangeably throughout to refer to a network interface controller (NIC). The following terms will always have one meaning:

- **dev** - the device name i.e. `wlan0` or `eth0` of a NIC,
- **phy** - the physical index of a NIC i.e. the 0 in `phy0`,
- **ifindex** - the interface index of a NIC,
- **card** or **Card** - a NIC abstraction, an object used in `pyw` functions see the following section for a description.

## 1.3 Cards

A `Card` is merely a wrapper around a tuple `t = (phy index, device name, ifindex)`. Since the underlying `Netlink` calls sometimes require the physical index, sometimes the device name, and sometimes the

chset	Total	Avg	Longest	Shortest
Popen(iw)	588.3059	0.0588	0.0682	0.0021
one-time	560.3559	0.0560	0.0645	0.0003
persistent	257.8293	0.0257	0.0354	0.0004

Table 1: Benchmark: Popen(iw) vs pyw

ifindex, pyw functions<sup>1</sup> take a Card object which doesn't require callers to know which identifier to use for each function. There are four primary methods to creating a Card:

1. **pyw.getcard** returns a Card object from a given dev,
2. **pyw.devinfo** returns the dict info where info['card'] is the Card object. (This function will take either a card or a ifindex),
3. **pyw.devadd** returns a new Card object (this function will only take a phy),
4. **pyw.ifaces** returns a list of tuples t = (Card,mode) sharing the same phy as a given dev.

A side affect of using Cards is that many of the netlink calls require the ifindex. The ifindex is found through the use of ioctl, meaning two sockets have to be created and two messages have to be sent, received and parsed in order to execute the command. With Cards, the ifindex is requested for only once.

Keep in mind that any identifier (phy, dev, ifindex) can be invalidated outside of your control. Another program can rename your interface, that is change the dev without your knowledge. Depending on what functions are being used this may not be noticed right away as the phy will remain the same. Also for usb devices, (if the usb is disconnected and reconnected) will have the same dev but the phy and ifindex will be different.

## 1.4 Benchmarks

PyRIC makes use of several "extensions" to speed up pyw functions:

1. **Persistent sockets:** pyw provides the caller with functions and the ability to pass their own netlink (or ioctl socket) to pyw functions
2. **One-time request for the nl80211 family id:** pyw stores the family id in a global variable
3. **Consolidation** different "reference" values are consolidated in one class (see the previous section)

While small, these changes can improve the performance of any programs using pyw. Table 1 shows benchmarks for hop time on an Alfa AWUS036NH conducted 10000 times. Note that we are not implying that PyRIC is faster than iw. Rather, the table shows that PyRIC is faster than using Popen to execute iw. Using one-time sockets, there is a difference of 28 seconds over Popen and iw with a small decrease in the average hoptime. Not a big difference. However, the performance increased dramatically when persistent netlink sockets are used with the total time and average hop time nearly halved.

---

<sup>1</sup>Not all functions accept only a Card, devinfo() accepts either a Card or a dev, devadd accepts either a Card or a ifindex and phyadd accepts only a physical index

Source	Stability	Recency	Installation
pip	5	3	5
PyPI	5	3	4
PyRIC Web	4	4	4
Github	3	5	3

Table 2: Stability vs Recency vs Installation

## 2 Installing PyRIC

The easiest way to install PyRIC is through PyPI:

```
sudo pip install PyRIC
```

You can also install PyRIC from source. The tarball can be downloaded from:

- PyPi: <https://pypi.python.org/pypi/PyRIC>,
- PyRIC Web: <http://wraith-wireless.github.io/PyRIC>, or
- Github: <https://github.com/wraith-wireless/PyRIC>.

After downloading, extract and run:

```
sudo python setup.py install
```

If you just want to test PyRIC out, download your choice from above. After extraction, move the pyric folder (the package directory) to your location of choice and from there start Python and import pyw. It is very important that you do not try and run it from PyRIC which is the distribution directory. This will break the imports pyw.py uses.

You will only be able to test PyRIC from the pyric directory but, if you want to, you can add it to your Python path and run it from any program or any location. To do so, assume you untared PyRIC to `/home/bob/PyRIC`. Create a text file named `pyric.pth` with one line

```
/home/bob/PyRIC
```

and save this file to `/usr/lib/python2.7/dist-packages` (or `/usr/lib/python3/dist-packages` if you want to try it in Python 3).

## 3 Using PyRIC

As stated previously, PyRIC provides a set of functions to interact with your system's radio(s) and the ability to interact directly with the kernel through netlink and ioctl sockets.

### 3.1 Interacting with the Wireless Core and Wireless NICs: pyw.py

If you can use iw, you can use pyw. The easiest way to explain how to use pyw is with an example. Imagine your wireless network, on ch 6, has been experiencing difficulties lately and you want to capture some traffic to analyse it. Listing 1 shows how to set up a wireless pentest environment.

```
1: import pyric                                     # pyric error (and ecode EUNDEF)
2: from pyric import pyw                           # for iw functionality
3: from pyric.utils.channels import rf2ch          # rf to channel conversion
4:
5: dev = 'wlan0'
6: dinfo = pyw.devinfo(dev)
7: card = dinfo['card']
8:
9: pyw.down(card)
10: pyw.macset(card, '00:03:93:57:54:46')
11:
12: pdev = 'pent0'
13: pcard = pyw.devadd(card, pdev, 'monitor')
14: for iface in pyw.ifaces(card):
15:     if iface[0].dev != pcard.dev:
16:         pyw.devdell(iface[0])
17: pyw.up(pcard)
18:
19: pyw.chset(pcard, 6, None)
20:
21: # DO stuff here
22:
23: card = pyw.devadd(pcard, card.dev, dinfo['mode'])
24: pyw.devdell(pcard)
25: pyw.macset(card, dinfo['mac'])
26: pyw.up(card)
```

Listing 1: Setting up a Wireless Pentest Environment

Listing 1 shows basic pyw functions and is the basic shell used in another project, Wraith[4], to instantiate a wireless (802.11) sensor - (for a full listing of all pyw functions see Appendix A) - with scanning capabilities.

Lines 1 and 2 should always be included as they import the pyric error and pyw functions. Line 3 imports the rf2ch conversion function.

In lines 5 through 10, a Card is created from the device wlan0. The info dict is save IOT to restore later. Next, the mac address of wlan0 is changed. Note, the device has to be brought down first.

Starting on line 12, a device named 'pent0' is created in monitor mode. First, a new Card, pcard is create in monitor mode. Then, all interfaces on the same phy are deleted<sup>2</sup>. The new Card is brought up and set to channel 6 NOHT.

Restoring the device starts on line 23, where the virtual interface is deleted, the previous interface is restored, the mac address is reset and the old Card is brought up.

---

<sup>2</sup>we have found that it is better to delete all interfaces on the same phy ensuring that external processes don't interfere with the new device

An extended version of Listing 1 can be found in the examples directory.

### 3.1.1 One-time vs Persistent Sockets

The example in Listing 1 uses one-time sockets (netlink and ioctl). When using iw, there are several things that occur prior to the actual command or request being submitted. First, iw creates a netlink socket. Then, iw will request the family id for nl80211. The relative time spent doing this is negligible but, it is redundant and it may become noticeable in programs that repeatedly use the Netlink service. Once complete, iw closes the socket. In some cases, the ifindex of the device is needed and iw will also initiate an ioctl call to retrieve it. PyRIC eliminates these redundancies by using a global variable in pyw that stores the family id after the first time it is requested and by providing callers the option to use persistent sockets.

- **One-time Sockets** Similar to iw. The command, creates the netlink socket (or ioctl socket), composes the message, sends the message and receives the response, parses the results, closes the socket and returns the results to the caller. At no time does the caller need to be aware of any underlying Netlink processes or structures.
- **Persistent Sockets** Communication and parsing only. The onus of socket creation and deletion is on the caller which allows them to create one (or more) socket(s). The pyw functions will only handle message construction, message sending and receiving and message parsing.

The caller needs to be cognizant of whether the function requires a netlink or ioctl socket. Passing the wrong type will result in an error.

NOTE: One must remember that there is an upper limit to the number of open netlink sockets. It is advised to use one-time functions as much as possible and save the use of persistent sockets for use in code that repeatedly makes use of netlink.

The latest version of pyw.py (v 0.1.\*) implements this functionality through the use of what I call templates<sup>3</sup>, Listing 2 and stubs Listing 3.

```
def fcttemplate(arg0, arg1, ..., argn, nlsock=None):
    # put parameter validation (if any) here
    if nlsock is None: _nlstub_(fcttemplate, arg0, arg1, ..., argn)

    # command execution
    ...
    return results
```

Listing 2: A Basic Netlink Function Template

The template function in Listing 2 checks if nlsock is instantiated<sup>4</sup>. If so, it proceeds to execution. If there is no socket, the stub is executed which creates one. If something other than a netlink socket is at argv[0], an error will be raised during execution.

<sup>3</sup>I use templates and stubs for the lack of any better naming convention

<sup>4</sup>ioctl calls operate in the same manner



```

def _nlstub_(fct ,*argv):
    nlsock = None
    try:
        nlsock = nlsock = nl.nl_socket_alloc()
        argv = list(argv) + nlsock=None
        return fct(*argv)
    except pyric.error:
        raise # catch & release
    finally:
        if nlsock: nl.nl_socket_free(nlsock)

```

Listing 3: Function `_nlstub_`

The stub function, Listing 3 allocates a netlink socket, executes the original (now with a netlink socket) and then destroys the netlink socket.

```

1: import pyric # pyric errors
2: from pyric import pyw # for iw functionality
3: from pyric.lib import libnl as nl # for netlink sockets
4:
5: nlsock = nl.nl_socket_alloc(timeout=1)
6: card = pyw.getcard('wlan0',nlsock)
7: print pyw.devnodes(card , nlsock)
8: nl.nl_socket_free(nlsock)

```

Listing 4: Using Persistent Sockets

Listing 4, shows the creation of a persistent netlink socket that is used in the creation of a card and in retrieved the card’s supported modes.

Use Python’s built in help features on `pyw` functions or see Appendix A to determine what type of socket is needed.

## 3.2 Additional Tools

In the `utils` directory, PyRIC includes `channels.py`, `hardware.py`, `rkill.py` and `ouifetch.py`. These provide a port of `rkill`, channel/frequency enumeration and device chipset, driver retrieval as well as some mac address functions. More information can be found in the Appendices and in `README.md`.

## 3.3 Interacting with the Kernel: `libnl.py` and `libio.py`

The kernel interfaces, `libnl.py` and `libio.py` are located in the `lib` directory. They handle socket creation/deletion, message creation/parsing and kernel communication. Aside from creating and deleting persistent sockets, there is little need to access their functions unless you plan on extending `pyw` functionality. As such, a further discussion of `libnl.py` and `libio.py` can be found in the next section.

## 4 Extending PyRIC

You may find that pyw does not offer some of the functionality you need. Using libnl.py and/or libnl.io, additional functionality can be added to your program.

It is helpful if the reader has a basic knowledge of netlinks. For a review, see "Communicating between the kernel and user-space in Linux using Netlink Sockets" [3].

### 4.1 Porting C

All Python ports of C header files can be found in the net directory. C Enums and #defines are ported using constants. C structs are ported using three Python structures and the Python struct package:

1. a format string for packing and unpacking the struct
2. a constant specifying the size of the struct in bytes
3. a function taking the attributes of the struct as arguments and returning a packed string

Listing 5 shows the C definition of the nlmsg\_hdr found in netlink.h.

```
struct nlmsg_hdr {
    __u32 nlmsg_len;
    __u16 nlmsg_type;
    __u16 nlmsg_flags;
    __u32 nlmsg_seq;
    __u32 nlmsg_pid;
};
```

Listing 5: C Struct nlmsg\_hdr

And Listing 6 shows the ported version in Python.

```
nl_nlmsg_hdr = "IHIII"
NLMSGHDRLEN = struct.calcsize(nl_nlmsg_hdr)
def nlmsg_hdr(mlen, nltyp, flags, seq, pid):
    return struct.pack(nl_nlmsg_hdr, NLMSGHDRLEN+mlen, nltyp, flags, seq, pid)
```

Listing 6: Corresponding Python Definition

When using pyw, dealing with these structures is handled transparently by libnl.py and libio.py. When extending or customizing pyw, a basic understanding of the definitions in netlink\_h.py, genetlink\_h.py and if\_h.py.

### 4.2 Input/Output Control (ioctl)

PyRIC provides more than just iw-related functions, it also implements functions from ifconfig and iwconfig. These command line tools still use ioctl (or the proc directory). For example, interfaces() reads from '/proc/net/dev' to retrieve all system interfaces and winterfaces() use ioctl to check if a device is wireless. Input/Output control calls have only been used when there was no viable alternative and, it should not be necessary to have to add any further ioctl commands. If you find that you need an ioctl related command, search through if\_h.py for the appropriate structure and add it's definitions to ifreq.

### 4.3 Netlink and nl80211

Documentation on Netlink, and nl80211 in particular, is so minimal as to be negligible. The clusterfuck of code and lack of comments in the iw source tree make it impossible to use as any sort of roadmap. Fortunately Thomas Graf's site[2] has excellent coverage of libnl, the Netlink library. Using this as a reference, a simple Netlink parser was put together which later became libnl.py. Using the command line tool strace and libnl.py, Netlink messages could be dissected and analyzed.

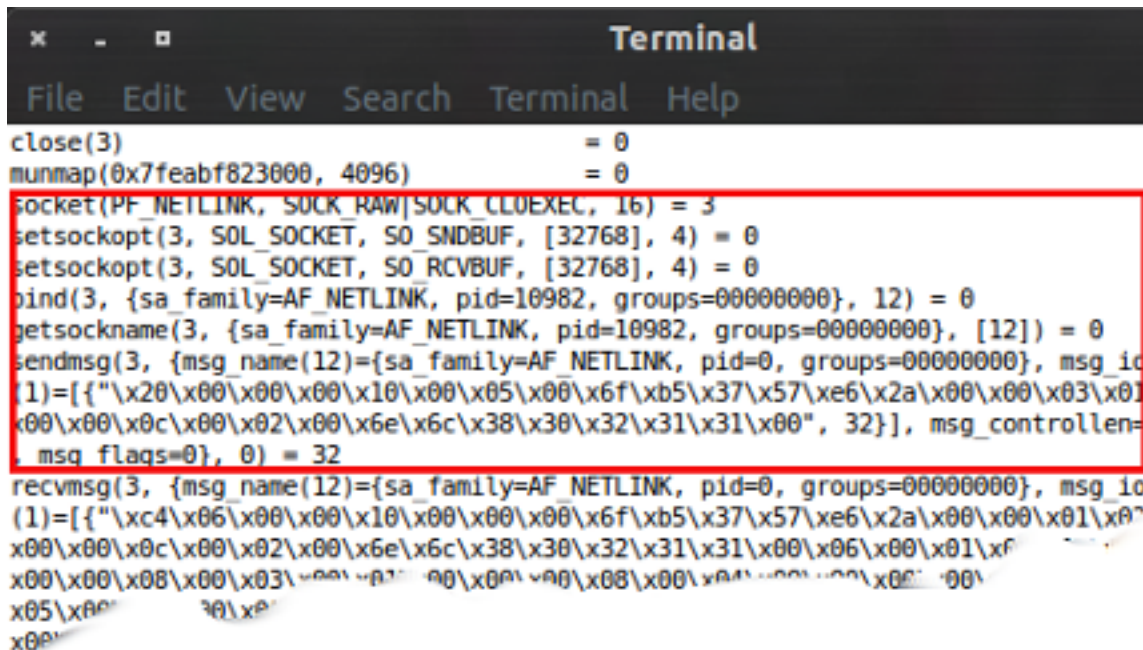
Let us consider adding a virtual interface with the command:

```
sudo iw phy0 interface add test0 type monitor
```

First, we need to see what is going on under the covers. Using strace:

```
strace -f -x -s 4096 iw phy0 interface add test0 type monitor
```

from a terminal will give you a lot of output, most irrelevant (to us). Scroll through this until the netlink socket creation as highlighted in Figure 1. You can see that a socket of type PF\_NETLINK is created and the send/receive buffers are set to 32768.



```
close(3) = 0
munmap(0x7feabf823000, 4096) = 0
socket(PF_NETLINK, SOCK_RAW|SOCK_CLOEXEC, 16) = 3
setsockopt(3, SOL_SOCKET, SO_SNDBUF, [32768], 4) = 0
setsockopt(3, SOL_SOCKET, SO_RCVBUF, [32768], 4) = 0
bind(3, {sa_family=AF_NETLINK, pid=10982, groups=00000000}, 12) = 0
getsockname(3, {sa_family=AF_NETLINK, pid=10982, groups=00000000}, [12]) = 0
sendmsg(3, {msg_name(12)={sa_family=AF_NETLINK, pid=0, groups=00000000}, msg_iov(1)=[{"\\xc2\\x00\\x00\\x00\\x10\\x00\\x05\\x00\\x6f\\xb5\\x37\\x57\\xe6\\x2a\\x00\\x00\\x03\\x01\\x00\\x00\\x0c\\x00\\x02\\x00\\x6e\\x6c\\x38\\x30\\x32\\x31\\x31\\x00", 32}], msg_controllen=, msg_flags=0}, 0) = 32
rcvmsg(3, {msg_name(12)={sa_family=AF_NETLINK, pid=0, groups=00000000}, msg_iov(1)=[{"\\xc4\\x06\\x00\\x00\\x10\\x00\\x00\\x00\\x6f\\xb5\\x37\\x57\\xe6\\x2a\\x00\\x00\\x01\\x00\\x00\\x00\\x0c\\x00\\x02\\x00\\x6e\\x6c\\x38\\x30\\x32\\x31\\x31\\x00\\x06\\x00\\x01\\xf..."}])
```

Figure 1: Netlink socket creation

What we want to analyze are the messages sent and received over the netlink socket. In Figure 1, iw is requesting the family id for nl80211. This id will be used in subsequent requests related to nl80211 as we will see shortly. The return message gives the nl80211 family id as 26 and returns other nl80211 attributes. This is handled by the private function `_familyid_` in `pyw.py`.

Figure 2 shows the add interface message being sent to the kernel.

```

close(4)
open(4, "0211", "index", O_RDONLY) = 4
read(4, "0\n", 199) = 2
close(4) = 0
sendmsg(3, {msg_name(12)={sa_family=AF_NETLINK, pid=0, groups=00000000}, msg_iov(1)=[{"\x30\x00\x00\x00\x1a\x00\x05\x00\x70\xb5\x37\x57\xe6\x2a\x00\x00\x07\x00\x00\x00\x08\x00\x01\x00\x00\x00\x00\x00\x0a\x00\x04\x00\x74\x65\x73\x74\x30\x00\x00\x00\x08\x00\x05\x00\x06\x00\x00\x00", 48}], msg_controllen=0, msg_flags=0}, 0) = 48
recvmsg(3, {msg_name(12)={sa_family=AF_NETLINK, pid=0, groups=00000000}, msg_iov(1)=[{"\x44\x00\x00\x00\x02\x00\x00\x00\x70\xb5\x37\x57\xe6\x2a\x00\x00\xff\xff\xff\xff\x30\x00\x00\x00\x1a\x00\x05\x00\x70\xb5\x37\x57\xe6\x2a\x00\x00\x07\x00\x00\x00\x08\x00\x01\x00\x00\x00\x00\x00\x0a\x00\x04\x00\x74\x65\x73\x74\x30\x00\x00\x00\x08\x00\x05\x00\x06\x00\x00\x00", 48}], msg_controllen=0, msg_flags=0}, 0) = 48

```

Figure 2: Netlink sendmsg

We are interested in the byte sequence following `msg_iov(1)`. Copy this and paste into in a python variable as in Listing 7 and pass it to the function `nlmsg_fromstream` which parses the byte stream and returns the `GENLMsg`.

```

>>> from pyric.lib import libnl as nl
>>> sent = "\x30\x00\x00\x00\x1a... \x00\x00"
>>> msg = nl.nlmsg_fromstream(sent)
>>> msg
nlmsg_hdr(len=48, type=26, flags=5, seq=1463268720, pid=10982)
genlmsg_hdr(cmd=7)
attributes:
  0: type=1, datatype=3
    value=0
  1: type=4, datatype=5
    value=test0
  2: type=5, datatype=3
    value=6

```

Listing 7: Parsing netlink messages

The first thing to notice is `nlmsg_hdr type = 26`, which of course is `nl80211` family id. The rest of the `nlmsg_hdr` components `len`, `flags`, `seq`, and `pid` are handled by `libnl.py` although you can supply your own flags if desired. At this time, you can manually look up what values the `cmd`, `type` and `datatype` correspond to in `nl80211_h.py` and `netlink_h.py` or you can use the tools provided in `nlhelp.py`.

```

>>> from pyric.net.netlink_h import NLA_DATATYPES
>>> from pyric.docs import nlhelp
>>> nlhelp.cmdbynum(7)
u'@NL80211_CMD_NEW_INTERFACE'
>>>
>>> for attr in msg.attrs:
...     print nlhelp.attrbynum(attr[0]), NLA_DATATYPES[attr[2]], attr[1]

```

```

...
@NL80211_ATTR_WIPHY u32 0
@NL80211_ATTR_IFNAME string test0
@NL80211_ATTR_IFTYPE u32 6
>>>
>>> from pyric.net.wireless.nl80211_h import NL80211_IFTYPES
>>> NL80211_IFTYPES[6]
'monitor'

```

Listing 8: Parsing netlink messages continued

In Listing 8 command number 7 corresponds to `NL80211_CMD_NEW_INTERFACE` and the attributes that need to be passed to the kernel are `NL80211_ATTR_WIPHY`, `NL80211_ATTR_IFNAME` and `NL80211_ATTR_IFTYPE`. The `IFTYPE` is also known as the mode i.e. 'monitor' which can be found in `nl80211_h.py` `NL80211_IFTYPES`. We don't parse the return message from the kernel but, it follows the same SOP. In this case, it returns the attributes of the new virtual interface.

With this information, we can now code our function. Recall the `fcctemplate` as defined in Listing 2 and fill in the command execution as shown in Listing 9.

```

# construct the message
msg = nl.nlmmsg_new(nltype=_familyid_(nlsock),
                   cmd=nl80211h.NL80211_CMD_NEW_INTERFACE,
                   flags=nlh.NLM_F_REQUEST | nlh.NLM_F_ACK)
nl.nla_put_u32(msg, card.phy, nl80211h.NL80211_ATTR_WIPHY)
nl.nla_put_string(msg, vdev, nl80211h.NL80211_ATTR_IFNAME)
nl.nla_put_u32(msg, IFTYPES.index(mode), nl80211h.NL80211_ATTR_IFTYPE)

# send, receive and parse return results, returning the new Card
nl.nl_sendmsg(nlsock, msg)
rmsg = nl.nl_recvmsg(nlsock) # success returns new device attributes
return Card(card.phy, vdev, nl.nla_find(rmsg, nl80211h.NL80211_ATTR_IFINDEX))

```

Listing 9: Coding the function

We construct a new `GENLMsg` passing the `nl80211` family id, the command we got earlier and flags specifying that this is a request and we want to get an `ACK` back<sup>5</sup>. Now, add each attribute to the message. Note the order: value, then attribute. With the message constructed, send it to the kernel, get the results, parse and return them.

Rather simple, in fact the hardest part is figuring out what to send to the kernel. Everything else is handled behind the scenes by `libnl.py`.

## Appendix A API: `pyw.py`

### A.1 Constants

- `_FAM80211ID_`: Global netlink family id of `nl80211`. Do not touch
- `IFTYPES`: redefined (from `nl80211_h.py`) interface modes

<sup>5</sup>`libnl.py` always forces an `ACK` and handles the underlying process of receiving it

- **MNTRFLAGS**: redefined (from nl80211\_h.py) monitor mode flags
- **TXPOWERSETTINGS**: redefined (from nl80211\_h.py) power level settings

## A.2 Objects/Classes

**Card** A wrapper around a tuple `t = (physical index, device name, interface index)` which exposes the following properties through `.'`:

- **phy**: physical index
- **dev**: device name
- **idx**: interface index (ifindex)

Because the underlying Netlink calls will sometimes require the physical index, sometimes the device name, and sometimes the ifindex, `pyw` functions accept a `Card` object. This allows callers to use `pyw` functions without having to remember which identifier the function requires. However, in some cases the function requires a `dev` or accepts both. See the next section on functions.

While callers could create their own `Cards`, it is recommend to use one of the following

- **pyw.getcard** returns a `Card` object from a given `dev`
- **pyw.devinfo** returns the dict `info` where `info['card']` is the `Card` object. This function will take either a `card` or a `dev`
- **pyw.devadd** returns a new `Card` object
- **pyw.devadd** returns a new `Card` object
- **pyw.ifaces** returns a list of tuples `t = (Card,mode)` sharing the same `phy` as a given device to do so. It is also recommended to periodically validate the `Card`. On some cheaper usb wireless nics, there are periodic disconnects which results in a new `phy` and `ifindex`.

## A.3 Functions

- `interfaces()`: (`ifconfig`), type: filesystem, returns list of all network device names
- `isinterface(dev)`: (`ifconfig <dev>`) type: filesystem, checks that `dev` is a device name
- `winterfaces(iosock=None)`: (`iwconfig`), type: ioctl, list wireless device names
- `iswireless(dev,iosock=None)`: (`iwconfig <dev>`), type: ioctl, check `dev` is a wireless interface
- `phylist()`: (`iw phy | grep wiphy`) type: N/A, list `phy` indexes and `phy` names present on system
- `regget(nlsock=None)`: (`iw reg get`), type: netlink, get regulatory domain
- `regset(rd,nlsock=None)`: (`iw reg set <rd>`), type: netlink, set regulatory domain to `rd`
- `getcard(dev,nlsock=None)` (N/A), type: hybrid netlink and ioctl: get a `Card` object for `dev`
- `validcard(card,nlsock=None)`: (N/A), type: (hyrbrid netlink and ioctl), verify `card` is still valid

- `macget(card,iosock=None)`: (ifconfig), type: ioctl, determine if card is up or down
- `macset(card,mac,iosock=None)`: (ifconfig card.<dev> hw ether <mac>), type: ioctl, set card's hw address to mac
- `isup(card,iosock=None)`: (ifconfig card.<dev>)
- `up(card,iosock=None)` (ifconfig card.<dev> up), type: ioctl, bring card up
- `down(card,iosock=None)`: (ifconfig card.<dev> down), type: ioctl, bring card down
- `isblocked(card)`: (rfkill list <rfkill\_idx>): type N/A returns tuple (Soft Block State, Hard Block State)
- `block(card)`: (rfkill block <rfkill\_idx>) type: N/A, soft blocks card
- `unblock(card)`: (rfkill unblock <rfkill\_idx>) type: N/A, removes the soft block on card
- `pwrsaveget(card,nlsock=None)` (iw dev card.<dev> get power\_save) type: netlink get card's power save state True = on, False = off
- `pwrsaveget(card,on,nlsock=None)` (iw dev card.<dev> set power\_save <on>) type: netlink, set card's power save state True = on, False = off
- `covclassget(card,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> get coverage <cc>) type: netlink get card's coverage class
- `covclassset(card,cc,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> set coverage <cc>) type: netlink set card's coverage class
- `retryshortget(card,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> info | grep 'retry short') type:netlink get card's retry short limit
- `retryshortset(card,lim,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> set retry short <lim>) type:netlink set card's retry short limit. NOTE: although 255 is specified as the max limit for this and the long retry, kernel v4 will not allow it.
- `retrylongget(card,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> info | grep 'retry long') type:netlink get card's retry long limit
- `retrylongset(card,lim,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> set retry long <lim>) type:netlink set card's retry long limit
- `rtsthreshget(card,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> info | grep rts) type: netlink set card's RTS threshold
- `rtsthreshset(card,thresh,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> set rts <thresh>) type: netlink set card's RTS threshold
- `fragthreshget(card,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> info | grep frag) type: netlink get card's fragmentation threshold
- `fragthreshset(card,thresh,nlsock=None)` (iw phy card.<phy> set frag <thresh>) type: netlink set card's fragmentation threshold

- `ifaddrget(card,iosock=None)`: (`ifconfig card.<dev>`), type: `ioctl`, get ip4 address, netmask and broadcast address of card
- `ifaddrset(card,ipaddr,netmask,broadcast,iosock=None)`: (`ifconfig card/<dev> <ipaddr> netmask <netmask> broadcast <broadcast>`), type: `ioctl`, set the interface addresses of the card
- `inetset(card,ipaddr,iosock=None)`: (`ifconfig card.<dev> <ipaddr>`), type: `ioctl`, set the card's ip4 address
- `maskset(card,netmask,iosock=None)`: (`ifconfig card.<dev> netmask <netmask>`), type: `ioctl`, set the card's netmask
- `bcastset(card,broadcast,iosock=None)`: (`ifconfig card.<dev> broadcast <broadcast>`), type: `ioctl`, set the card's broadcast address
- `devfreqs(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw phy card.phy info`), type: `netlink`, get card's supported frequencies
- `devchs(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw phy card.phy info`), type: `netlink`, get card's supported channels
- `devstds(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iwconfig card.<dev> | grep IEEE`), type: `nlsock`, returns a list of card's 802.11 supported standards by letter designator
- `devmodes(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw phy card.phy info | grep interface`), type: `netlink`, get card's supported modes
- `devcmds(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw phy card.phy info | grep commands`), type: `netlink`, get card's supported commands
- `ifinfo(card,iosock=None)`: (`ifconfig card.<dev>`), type: `ioctl`, get hardware related info for card
- `devinfo(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw dev card.<dev> info`), type: `netlink`, get info for dev
- `phyinfo(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw phy card.<phy> info`), type: `netlink`, get info for phy
- `ifaces(card,nlsock=None)`: (`APX iw card.dev | grep phy#`), type: `netlink`, get all cards (w/ modes) of interfaces sharing the same phy as card
- `txset(card,pwr,lvl,nlsock=None)` (`iw phy phy0 set txpower <lvl> <pwr>`), type: `netlink`, sets the tx power to pwr (in dBm) with level setting lvl
- `txget(card,iosock=None)`: (`iwconfig card.<dev> | grep Tx-Power card`), type: `ioctl`, get card's transmission power
- `chget(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw dev <card.dev> info | grep channel`), type: `netlink`, get card's current channel
- `chset(card,ch,chw=None,nlsock=None)`: (`iw phy <card.phy> set channel <ch> <chw>`), type: `netlink`, set card's current channel to ch with width chw
- `freqget(card,nlsock=None)`: (`iw dev <card.dev> info | grep channel`), type: `netlink`, get card's current frequency



- `freqset(card,rf,chw=None,nlsock=None)`: `iw phy <card.phy> set freq <rf> <chw>`, type: netlink, set card's current frequency to rf with width chw
- `devmodes(card,iosock=None)`: `(iw phy card.<phy>)`, type: netlink, get modes supported by card
- `modeset(card,mode,flags=None,nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> set type <mode> [flags])`, type: netlink, set card's mode to mode with flags (if mode is monitor)
- `modeget(card,nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> info | grep mode)`, type: netlink, get card's mode
- `devset(card,ndev,nlsock=None)`: (N/A) sets the dev (name) of card to ndev
- `phyadd(phy,vnic,mode,flags=None,nlsock=None)`: `(iw phy <phy> interface add <vnic> type <mode> flags <flags>)`<sup>6</sup>, type: netlink, creates a new virtual interface with dev vdev, in mode and using flags. Note: flags are only supported when creating a monitor mode
- `devadd(card (or ifindex),vnic,mode,[flags],nlsock=None)`: `(iw phy card.<dev> interface add <vnic> type <mode> flags <flags>)`, type: netlink, creates a new virtual interface with dev vdev, in mode and using flags. Note: flags are only supported when creating a monitor mode. This function accepts either a Card object or a ifindex.
- `devdel(card,nlsock=None)`: `(iw card.<dev> del)`, type: netlink, deletes card
  - `isconnected(card,nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> info | grep channel)`, type: netlink, determines if card is connected
  - `connect(card,ssid,bssid=None,rf=None,nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> connect <ssid> <rf> <bssid>)` connects to AP SSID with BSSID
  - `disconnect(card, nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> disconnect)`, type: netlink, disconnects card from AP
  - `link(card, nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> link)`, type: netlink, displays link specific details, i.e. AP details that card is connected to
  - `stainfo(card, mac, nlsock=None)`: `(iw dev card.<dev> link)` type: netlink, displays tx, rx metrics of the AP that card is connected to
  - `__hex2mac__(v)`: returns a ':' separated mac address from byte stream v
  - `__mac2hex__(v)`: returns a hex string corresponding to mac address v
  - `__hex2ip4__(v)`: returns a '.' separated ip4 address from byte stream v
  - `__validip4__(addr)`: determines if addr is a valid ip4 address
  - `__validmac__(addr)`: determines if addr is a valid mac address
  - `__issetf__(flags,flag)`: determines if flag is set in flags
  - `__setf__(flags,flag)`: set flag in flags to on
  - `__unsetf__(flags,flag)`: set flag in flags to off
  - `__familyid__(nlsock)`: returns and sets the Netlink family id for nl80211, only called once per module import

---

<sup>6</sup>There is a bug in some kernel v4.4.0-x where the given dev name is ignored and a system chosen one is used instead. See <https://wraithwireless.wordpress.com>. Whenever possible, use devadd to create interfaces instead.

- `_ifindex_(dev,iosock=None)`: returns dev's ifindex
- `_flagsget_(dev,iosock=None)`: get's the dev's interface flags
- `_flagsset_(dev,flags,iosock=None)`: set's the dev's interface flags
- `_iftypes_(i)`: returns the mode corresponding to i
- `_bands_(band)`: further parses band attribute returns dict of bands containing rf information and rate information
- `_band_rates_(rs)`: extracts list of rates from the unpacked rates rs
- `_band_rfs_(rfs)`: extracts list of RFs (and other data) from the unpacked frequencies rfs
- `_unparsed_rfs_(band)`: (legacy) returns a list of frequencies from the unparsed byte string band
- `_commands_(command)`: converts the list of numeric commands to a list of commands as strings
- `_ciphers_(cipher)`: returns a list of ciphers from the packed byte string cipher
- `_rateinfo_(ri)`: returns parsed rate info from the packed byte string ri
- `_iostub_(fct,*argv)`: ioctl stub function, calls fct with parameter list argv and an allocated ioctl socket
- `_nlstub_(fct,*argv)`: netlink stub function, calls fct with parameter list argv and an allocated netlink socket

## Appendix B API: channels.py

Channel, Frequency enumeration and conversions can be found in channels.py.

### B.1 Constants

1. **CHTYPES**: imported channel types from nl80211\_h
2. **CHWIDTHS**: imported channel widths from nl80211\_h
3. **ISM\_24\_C2F**: Dict containing ISM channel (key) to frequency (value) pairs
4. **ISM\_24\_F2C**: Dict containing ISM frequency (key) to channel (value) pairs
5. **UNII\_5\_C2F**: Dict containing UNII 5Ghz channel (key) to frequency (value) pairs
6. **UNII\_5\_F2C**: Dict containing UNII 5Ghz frequency (key) to channel (value) pairs
7. **UNII\_4\_C2F**: Dict containing UNII upper 4Ghz channel (key) to frequency (value) pairs
8. **UNII\_4\_F2C**: Dict containing UNII upper 4Ghz frequency (key) to channel (value) pairs

### B.2 Functions

1. `channels()`: returns a list of all channels
2. `freqs()`: returns a list of all frequencies
3. `ch2rf(c)`: convert channel c to frequency
4. `rf2ch(f)`: convert frequency f to channel

## Appendix C API: hardware.py

Hardware related: driver, chipset, manufacturer and mac address utility functions can be found in device.py.

### C.1 Constants

1. **dpath**: path to system device details
2. **drvpath**: path to device drivers

### C.2 Functions

1. `oui(mac)`: returns the oui portion of address <mac>
2. `ulm(mac)`: returns the ulm portion of address <mac>
3. `manufacturer(ouis,mac)`: returns the manufacturer name of <mac> given the dict of <ouis>
4. `randhw([ouis])`: returns a random mac address. If the dict ouis is specified will select a random oui from the dict otherwise will generate one
5. `ifcard(dev)`: returns the device driver and chipset
6. `ifdriver(dev)`: returns the device driver
7. `ifchipset(driver)`: returns the chipset associated with driver

## Appendix D API: ouifetch.py

The file ouifetch.py retrieves and saves a tab separated file of oui to manufacturer name for use by hardware.py functions. From a command line, type:

### D.1 Constants

1. **OUIURL**: url of IEEE oui file
2. **OUIPATH**: path to default location PyRIC oui.txt file

### D.2 Functions

1. `load([opath])`: returns a dict of oui:manufacturer key->value pairs stored in the text file at opath. If opath is not specified, uses the default
2. `fetch([opath])`: retrieves oui.txt from the IEEE website, parses the files and stores the results in a PyRIC friendly format in opath. If opath is not specified, uses the default. User must have root permissions in order to write to default opath

## Appendix E API: rkill.py

A port of the command line tool rkill, rkill.py writes and reads rkill\_event structures to /dev/rfkill using fcntl providing functionality to block and unblock devices.

## E.1 Constants

1. **RFKILL\_STATE**: list of boolean values corresponding to blocked, unblocked

## E.2 Functions

1. `rkill_list()`: corresponds to rkill list, returns a dict of dicts name -> {idx, type, soft, hard}. If type is 'wireless', then name will be of the form phy<n> such that n is the physical index of the wireless card
2. `rkill_block(idx)`: soft blocks the device at rkill index idx
3. `rkill_blockby(rtype)`: soft blocks all devices of type rtype
4. `rkill_unblock(idx)`: turns off the soft block at rkill index idx
5. `rkill_unblockby(rtype)`: turns off the soft blocks of all devices of type rtype
6. `soft_blockidx`: determines soft block state of device at rkill index idx
7. `hard_blockidx`: determines hard block state of device at rkill index idx
8. `getidx(phy)`: returns the rkill index of the device with physical index phy
9. `getname(idx)`: returns the name of the device at rkill index idx
10. `gettype(idx)`: returns the type of the device at rkill index idx

## Appendix F API: libnl.py

Providing libnl similar functionality, libnl.py provides the interface between pyw and the underlying nl80211 core. It relates similarly to libnl by providing functions handling netlink messages and sockets and where possible uses similarly named functions as those libnl to ease any transitions from C to PyRIC. However, several liberties have been taken as libnl.py handles only nl80211 generic netlink messages.

### F.1 Constants

- **BUFSZ** default rx and tx buffer size

### F.2 Classes/Objects

The two classes in libnl.py, `NLSocket` and `GENLMsg`, discussed in the following sections subclass Python's builtin dict. This has been done IOT to take advantage of dict's already existing functions and primarily their mutability and Python's 'pass by name' i.e. modifications in a function will be reflected in the caller. This makes the classes very similar to the use C pointers to structs in libnl.

### F.2.1 NLSocket

NLSocket is a wrapper around a netlink socket which exposes the following properties through '.':

- **sock**: the actual socket
- **fd**: the socket's file descriptor (deprecated)
- **tx**: size of the send buffer
- **rx**: size of the receive buffer
- **pid**: port id
- **grpm**: group mask
- **seq**: sequence number
- **timeout**: socket timeout

and has the following methods:

- `incr()`: increment sequence number
- `send(pkt)`: sends pkt returning bytes sent
- `recv()`: returns received message (will block unless timeout is set)
- `close()`: close the socket

NLSockets are created with `nl_socket_alloc` and must be freed with `nl_socket_free`. See Section F.3.

### F.2.2 GENLMsg

GENLMsg is a wrapper around a dict with the following key->value pairs:

- **len**: total message length including the header
- **nltype**: netlink type
- **flags**: message flags
- **seq**: seq. #
- **pid**: port id
- **cmd**: generic netlink command
- **attrs**: list of message attributes. Each attribute is a tuple  $t = (\text{attribute}, \text{value}, \text{datatype})$  where:
  - **attribute**: netlink attribute type i.e. `CTRL_ATTR_FAMILY_ID`
  - **value**: the unpacked attribute value
  - **datatype**: datatype of the attribute as defined in `nelink_h` i.e. `NLA_U8`

NOTE: as discussed below, on sending, the seq. # and port id are overridden with values of the netlink socket.

GENLMsg exposes the following properties:

- **len**: length of the message (get only)
- **vers**: returns 1 (default version) (get only)
- **nltpe**: message content i.e. generic or nl80211 (get or set)
- **flags**: message flags (get or set)
- **seq**: current sequence # (get or set)
- **pid**: port id (get or set)
- **cmd**: netlink command (get or set)
- **attrs**: attribute list (get only)
- **numattrs**: number of attributes (get only)

GENLMsg has the following methods:

- `__repr__()`: returns a string representation useful for debugging
- `tostream()`: returns a packed netlink message

There are two methods of creating a GENLMsg. Create a new message (to send) with `nlmsg_new` and create a message from a received packet with `nlmsg_fromstream`. These are discussed below.

## F.3 Functions

### – Netlink Socket Related

- \* `nl_socket_alloc(pid,grps,seq,rx,tx,timeout)`: creates a netlink socket with port id = pid, group mask = grps, initial seq. # = seq, send and receive buffer size = tx and rx respectively and blocking timeout = timeout
- \* `nl_socket_free(sock)`: closes the socket
- \* `nl_socket_pid(sock)`: (deprecated for `NLSocket.pid`) returns the port id
- \* `nl_socket_grpmask(sock)`: (deprecated for `NLSocket.grpmask`) returns the group mask
- \* `nl_sendmsg(sock,msg,override=False)`: sends the netlink msg over socket. NOTE: `NLSockets` will automatically set the port id and seq. # regardless of their value in the message. If `override` is `True`, the message's pid and seq. # will be used instead.
- \* `nl_recvmsg(sock)`: returns a GENLMsg or blocks unless the socket's timeout is set. Should only be called once per every `nl_sendmsg`.

### – Netlink Message Related

- \* `nlmsg_new(nltpe=None,cmd=None,pid=None,flags=None,attrs=None)`: creates a new GENLMsg with zero or more attributes defined.

- \* `nmsg_fromstream(stream)`: parses the message in stream returning the corresponding `GENLMsg`
- \* `nla_parse(msg,l,mtype,stream,idx)`: parses the attributes in stream appending them to the attribute list of message where `msg` = the `GENLMsg`, `l` = the total length of the message, `mtype` = the message content (i.e. netlink type) `stream` is the original byte stream and `idx` is the index of the start of the attribute list
- \* `nla_parse_nested(nested)`: returns the list of packed nested attributes extracted from the stream `nested`. Callers must unpack and parse the returned attributes themselves
- \* `nla_put(msg,v,a,t)`: appends the attribute `a`, with value `v` and datatype `t` to the `msg`'s attribute list
- \* `nla_put_<DATATYPE>(msg,v,a)`: eight specialized functions that append attribute `a` with the value `v` and type `<DATATYPE>` to `msg`'s attribute list
- \* `nla_putat(msg,i,v,a,d)`: puts attribute `a`, with value `v` and datatype `d` at index `i` in `msg`'s attribute list.
- \* `nla_pop(msg,i)`: removes the attribute tuple at index `i`, returning the popped tuple
- \* `nla_find(msg,a,value=True)`: returns the first attribute `a` in `msg`'s attribute list. If `value` returns only the value otherwise returns the attribute tuple
- \* `nla_get(msg,i,value=True)`: returns the attribute at index `i`. If `value` returns only the value otherwise returns the attribute tuple
- \* `_nla_strip(v)`: (private) strips padding bytes from the end of `v`
- \* `_attrpack(a,v,d)`: (private) packs the attribute tuple
- `_maxbufsz_()`: (private) returns the maximum allowable socket buffer size

## Appendix G API: libio.py

A very basic interface to `ioctl`, `libio` provides socket creation, deletion and transfer.

### G.1 Functions

1. `io_socket_alloc()`: returns an `ioctl` socket
2. `io_socket_free(iosock)`: closes the `ioctl` socket `iosock`
3. `io_transfer_(iosock,flag,ifreq)`: sends the `ifreq` structure with `sockios` control call `flag` to the kernel and returns the received `ifreq` structure

## Appendix H Copyright and License

PYRIC: Python Radio Interface Controller v0.1.6.4

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