Issue 121 – Happy New Year?

The only advice we at Blog Wyrm have for those of you coming into this new year is that the notion of contradiction can be an empowering thing. An innocent example would be to assert that the only New Year’s resolution you should make is make no New Year's resolutions. On the admittedly more cynical side we would point out that if you wish to not comply with a mask mandate run for office and become a politician who calls for the imposition of mandatory masks on everyone for the good of the country. If you wish to not be bound by fairness and honesty become an objective journalist who decries the lies of those with different views than your own. If you wish to not live up to anyone else’s standards advocate for double standards one and live by the motto ‘rules for thee but not for me’. Be judgmental about judgementalism and intolerant of intolerance and, above all, accept all forms of diversity that conform to what you think is diverse. This kind of totalitarian sophistry is rampant in our country and is ruining what many of us hold dear.

All that said, there continue to growing glimmers of hope wherein good people of conscience, who may not always agree with each other but are always consistent with their respect for each other, are finally putting their collective feet down about this nonsense. Hopefully, these efforts will increase until we put these modern sophist ideas back in the rubbish where they belong.

Now onto the columns.

[Aristotle2Digital](http://aristotle2digital.blogwyrm.com/?p=1408) presents part 4 of the investigation into the Monte Carlo evaluation of integrals. This month’s installment introduces a ‘real-world’ importance sampling example where the probability distribution is chosen to match the general behavior of the integrand. This toy example sets the stage for understanding the sophisticated techniques that exist for evaluating the complex multiple integrals often encountered in math, science, and engineering.

This month [CommonCents](http://commoncents.blogwyrm.com/?p=926) reflects on how a simple event like a snow fall can provide not just a virgin and pristine landscape outside the window but also an insightful and far-reaching look at how properly constructed incentives make life better for us all. Amazing what a little ownership does for motivation.

The assertions and laws of classical thermodynamics are unequaled in both their scope and their importance. This month’s [UndertheHood](http://underthehood.blogwyrm.com/?p=1640) explores the Carnot engine whose simply construction belies the power that it provides in understanding the possible and the impossible of the physical world and for the fact that it sets the stage for that most elusive of all physical quantities: entropy.

Enjoy!