

*Stefan M. Herzog*

## **The wisdom of crowds within a single mind**

Averaging multiple observations from the same person to increase statistical precision has a long tradition in psychology and cognitive science. Relatedly, the predictive power of averaging multiple judgments from different people has fascinated researchers and the public alike—since Galton’s (1907) seminal “drosophila”-demonstration of the “wisdom of crowds” (Surowiecki, 2004) in judging the weight of an ox. This talk synthesizes those two related, uses of averaging by reviewing whether, when and how the wisdom of crowds can be created within a single mind. Although Stroop demonstrated the power of such a “crowd within” already in 1932, interest in creating the wisdom of crowds within one mind has reemerged only within the last decade. I will give a historical overview of the crowd within. Furthermore, I will review empirical work on averaging continuous quantities and confidence judgments using “passive” and “active” ways of decreasing error dependence between multiple estimates (and thus increasing error cancellation) within the same person (e.g., time delay vs. dialectical bootstrapping using the consider-the-opposite technique; Herzog & Hertwig, 2009; Vul & Pashler, 2008). Additionally, boundary conditions for averaging gains, as well as insights into people’s willingness to use their crowd within are covered. Finally, open questions and the future of research on the crowd within are discussed, including the potential of using cognitive modeling for better understanding and enhancing the crowd within.