

promptu experiment. When the contest was over and the prizes had been awarded, Galton borrowed the tickets from the organizers and ran a series of statistical tests on them. Galton arranged the guesses (which totaled 787 in all, after he had to discard thirteen because they were illegible) in order from highest to lowest and graphed them to see if they would form a bell curve. Then, among other things, he added all the contestants' estimates, and calculated the mean of the group's guesses. That number represented, you could say, the collective wisdom of the Plymouth crowd. If the crowd were a single person, that was how much it would have guessed the ox weighed.