Judicial Power and Strategic Communication in Mexico

Although they are not directly accountable to voters, constitutional court judges around the world nevertheless communicate with the general public through the media. In Judicial Power and Strategic Communication in Mexico, Jeffrey K. Staton argues that constitutional courts develop public relations strategies to increase the transparency of judicial behavior and promote judicial legitimacy – two conditions that are favorable for the exercise of independent judicial power. Yet, in some political contexts, there can be a tension between transparency and legitimacy, and for this reason, courts cannot necessarily advance both conditions simultaneously. The argument is tested via an analysis of the Mexican Supreme Court during Mexico’s recent transition to democracy and also through a cross-national analysis of public perceptions of judicial legitimacy. The results demonstrate that judges can be active participants in the construction of their own power. More broadly, the study develops a positive political theory of institutions, which highlights the connections between democratization and the rule of law.

Jeffrey K. Staton is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Emory University. His research has appeared in the American Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Research Quarterly, and International Studies Quarterly. Professor Staton was previously Assistant Professor of Political Science at Florida State University and postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for U.S. Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego, and at the New York University School of Law.
Judicial Power and Strategic Communication in Mexico

JEFFREY K. STATON
Emory University
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Jeffrey K. Staton

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In memory of Nadeem Siddiqui
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