Judicial Intuition

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Do judges make decisions by intuition or by careful deliberation? Debate has raged for many decades, but without much hard evidence. Contemporary psychological research demonstrates that people possess two cognitive “systems”: an intuitive system and a deliberative system. Relying on this research, as well as our own research on judicial decision making, we propose a new model of judging. This “intuitive-override” model provides a more accurate account of judging and points to several reforms the civil and criminal justice systems could implement to produce more just and accurate outcomes in (and out of) court.

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