

TREES – A Decision-Maker’s Lament

1980 Operations Research 28(1), p. 3

{ Annotated for those interested in Karaoke: See “Trees” by the Platters }

I think that I shall never see[^]... a decision complex as that tree -
A tree with roots in ancient day’-s... at least as old as Reverend ‘Bayes...
A tree with trunk all gnarled and twi’-sted... with ax-i-oms by Savage lis’-ted...
A tree with branches sprouting branches... and nodes decla’-ring what the chance is.

A tree with flowers in its tre[^]sses... each flower made of blooming gue-sses -
A tree with utiles at its ti’-ps... values gleaned from puzzled li’-ps...
A tree with stems so deeply nested... intu-i-tion’s completely bested.

A tree with branches in a tan[^]gle... impenetrable from any an-gle -
A tree with that tried to tell us “shou’-ld”... although its essence was but “wou’-ld” -
A tree that did de-cision hold’-back... ‘til calculation had it rolled back...
Decisions are reached by ‘fools like ‘me... but it took a consultant to make that tree.

Michael H. Rothkopf
with apologies to Joyce Kilmer and to competent,
conscientious decision analysts everywhere.