

Estimated Classification Trees for the Supreme Court Forecasting Project 2002 Term

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This document contains the estimated classification trees used to produce forecasts for the 2002 term. These trees were estimated using data from all cases decided by the current natural court, and were chosen to maximize classification of case outcomes. Replication code and datasets are available on the project website:

<http://wusct.wustl.edu>

The actual forecasts produced by the classification trees are for conservative (1) liberal (0) votes. All of the justice-specific trees produce forecasts of liberal and conservative votes, which are then translated to affirm/reverse predictions using the lower court direction variable, discussed below. The unanimous case trees predict either a unanimous decision (1) or a non-unanimous decision (0).

To forecast a case, one begins with the two unanimous case trees: Unan. Conservative and Unan. Liberal. If one of these two trees predicts a unanimous outcome (1), then the direction of that outcome is used with the lower court direction variable to generate the affirm/reverse prediction. If both of these trees predict a unanimous outcome (1), or neither of them do, then we move to the nine justice-specific trees to produce the forecast.

Each justice has his or her own tree, some of which depend on the prediction of other justices (the Rehnquist tree, for example, uses the Thomas prediction; others, such as O'Connor, do not rely on other justices). It is thus important to generate these predictions in the proper order (Scalia comes first, then Thomas, then Rehnquist). When forecasting a non-unanimous case, one uses the observed variables to forecast a conservative (1) or liberal (0) vote for each justice, which can then be translated into affirm/reverse using the lower court direction variable.

When reading all of these trees, if the particular outcome appears after the variable name, then follow the tree to the left. Otherwise, follow the tree to the right. The variables used in these trees are as follows. Please consult the project write-up for a description of how the variables are coded.

Votes of Other Justices

rehnpred, stevpred, oconpred, etc.

1	conservative
0	liberal

(Geographic) Circuit of Origin

circum

1st-11th, DC, and FED

Issue Area of the Case

value

CP criminal procedure

CR civil rights

FA first amendment

DP due process

PRIV privacy

AT attorneys

UN unions

ECN economic activity

JUD judicial power

FED federalism

IR interstate relations

TAX federal taxation

MISC miscellaneous

Argument for Unconstitutionality

unconst

0 petitioner did not argue unconstitutionality

1 petitioner argued unconstitutionality

Lower Court Direction

lctdir

conser

liberal

Petitioner and Respondent

petitnum, respnum

DEFINDIP criminal defendant, Indian, injured person

EE employee

CITSTAT city, state

OFPOL government official, politician

US United States

BUSER business, employer

Please email admartin@wustl.edu if you have any questions.

Unan. Conservative

circnum: 10th,11th,1st,4th,5th,6th,8th,DC

value: AT,CP,FA,MISC,TAX,UN

0

0

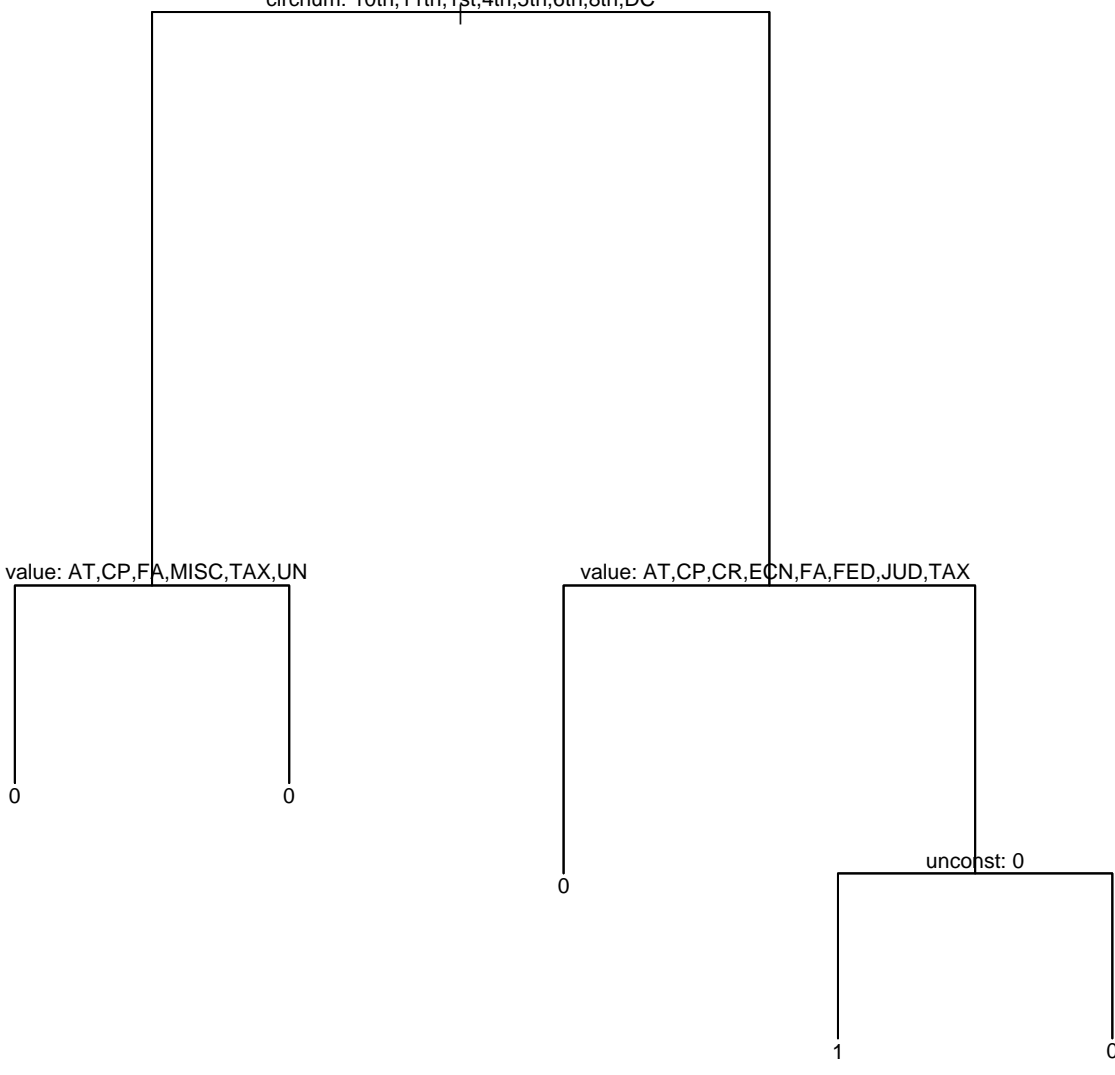
value: AT,CP,CR,ECN,FA,FED,JUD,TAX

0

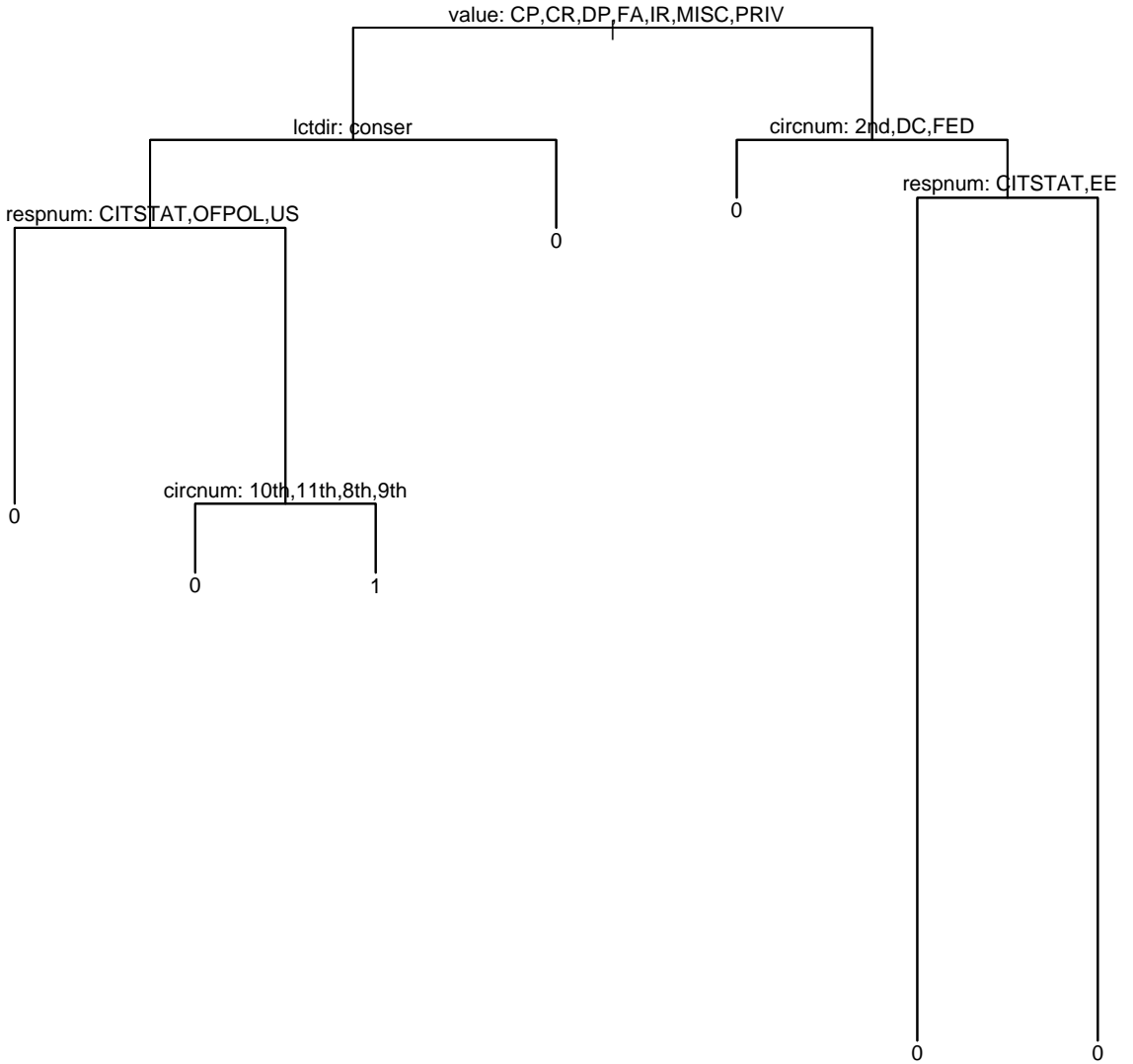
unconst: 0

1

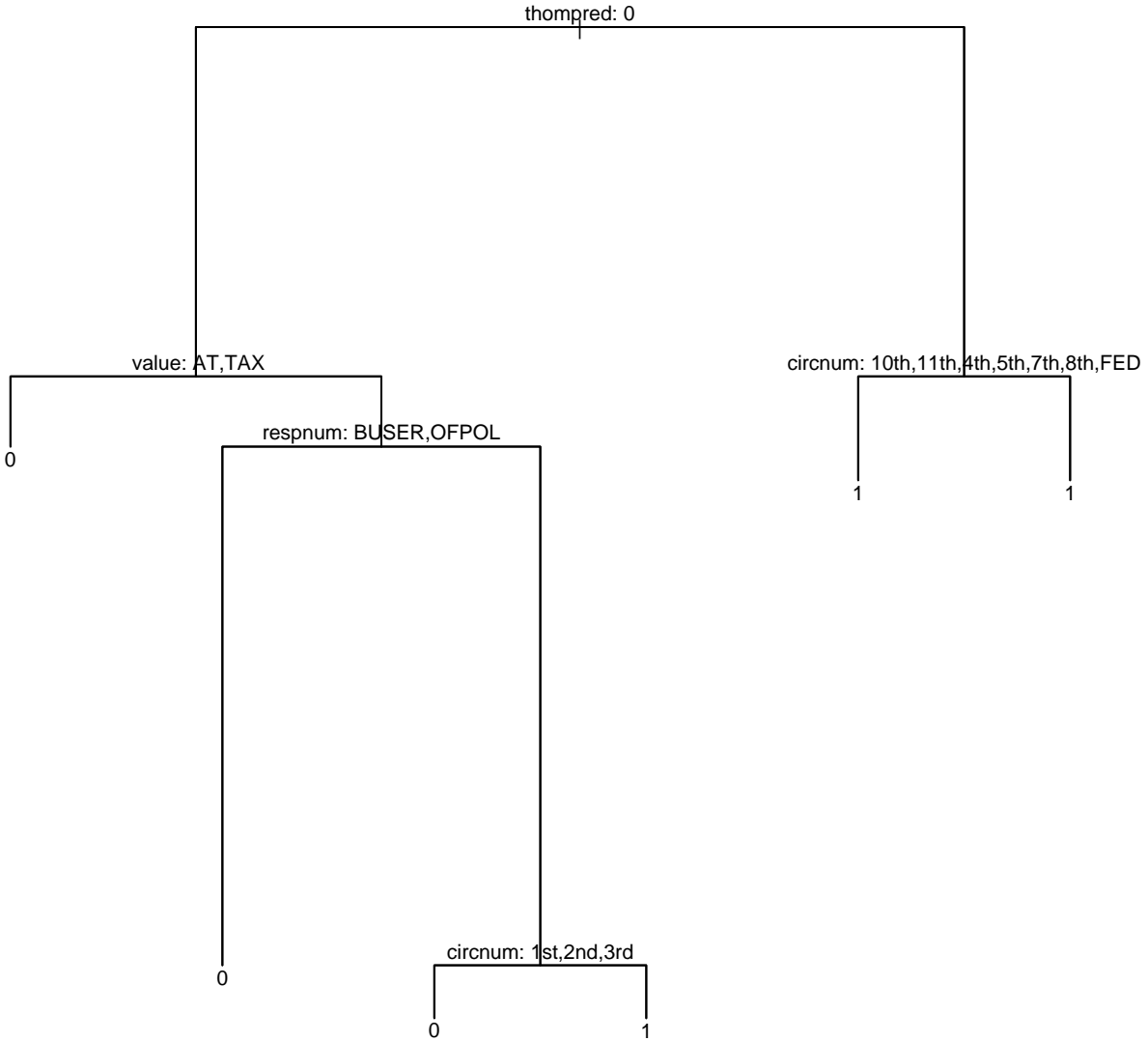
0



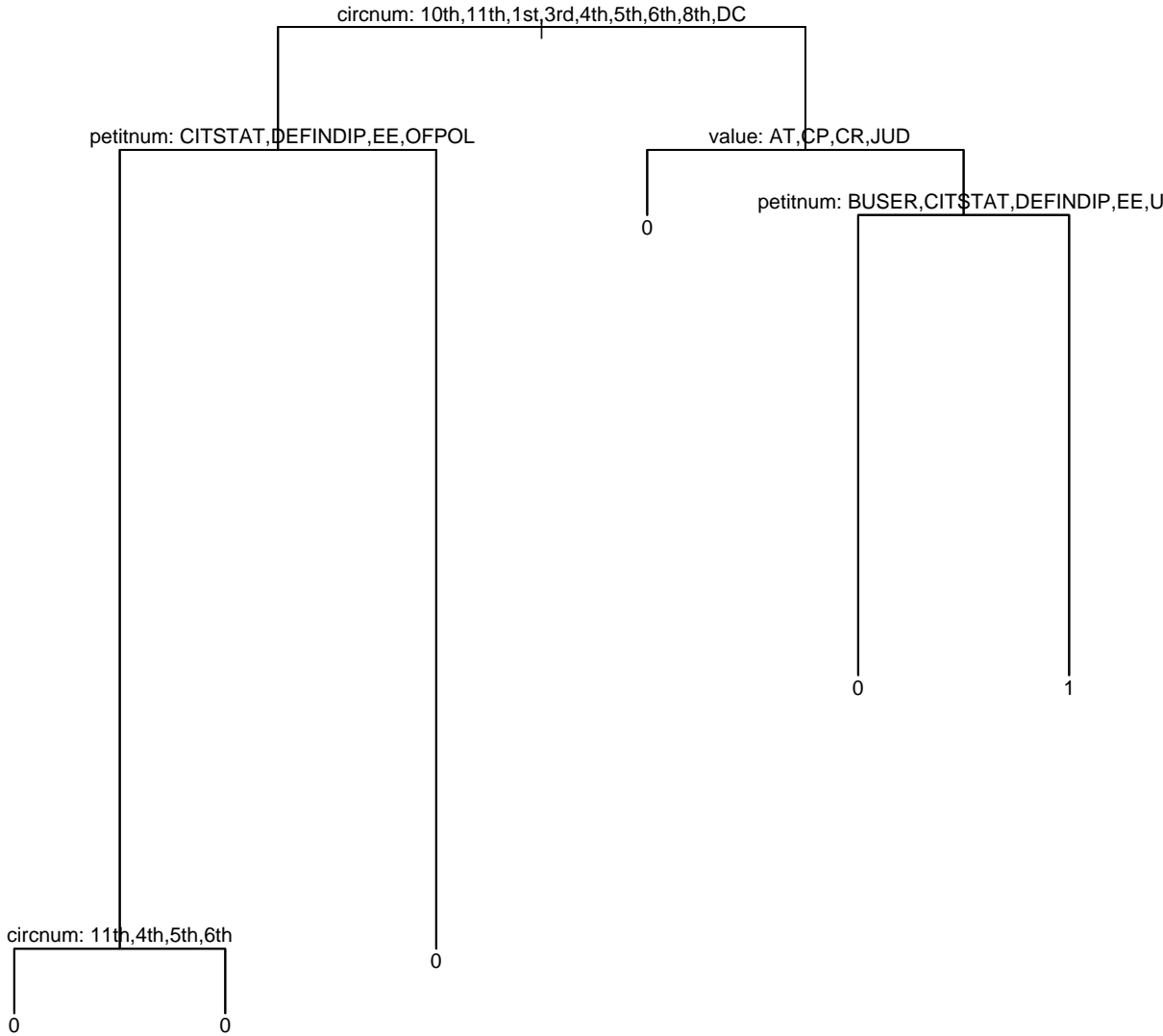
Unan. Liberal



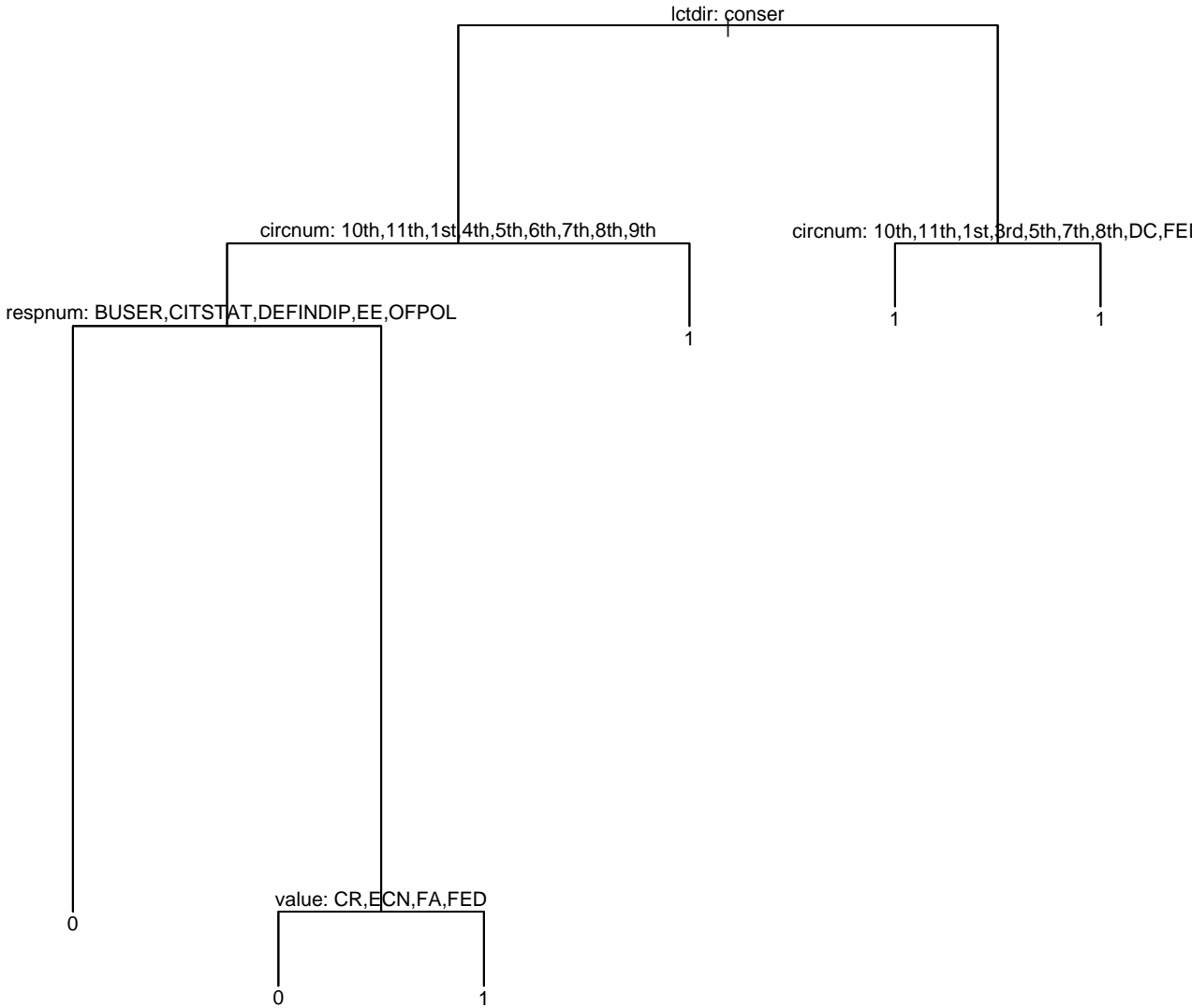
Rehnquist



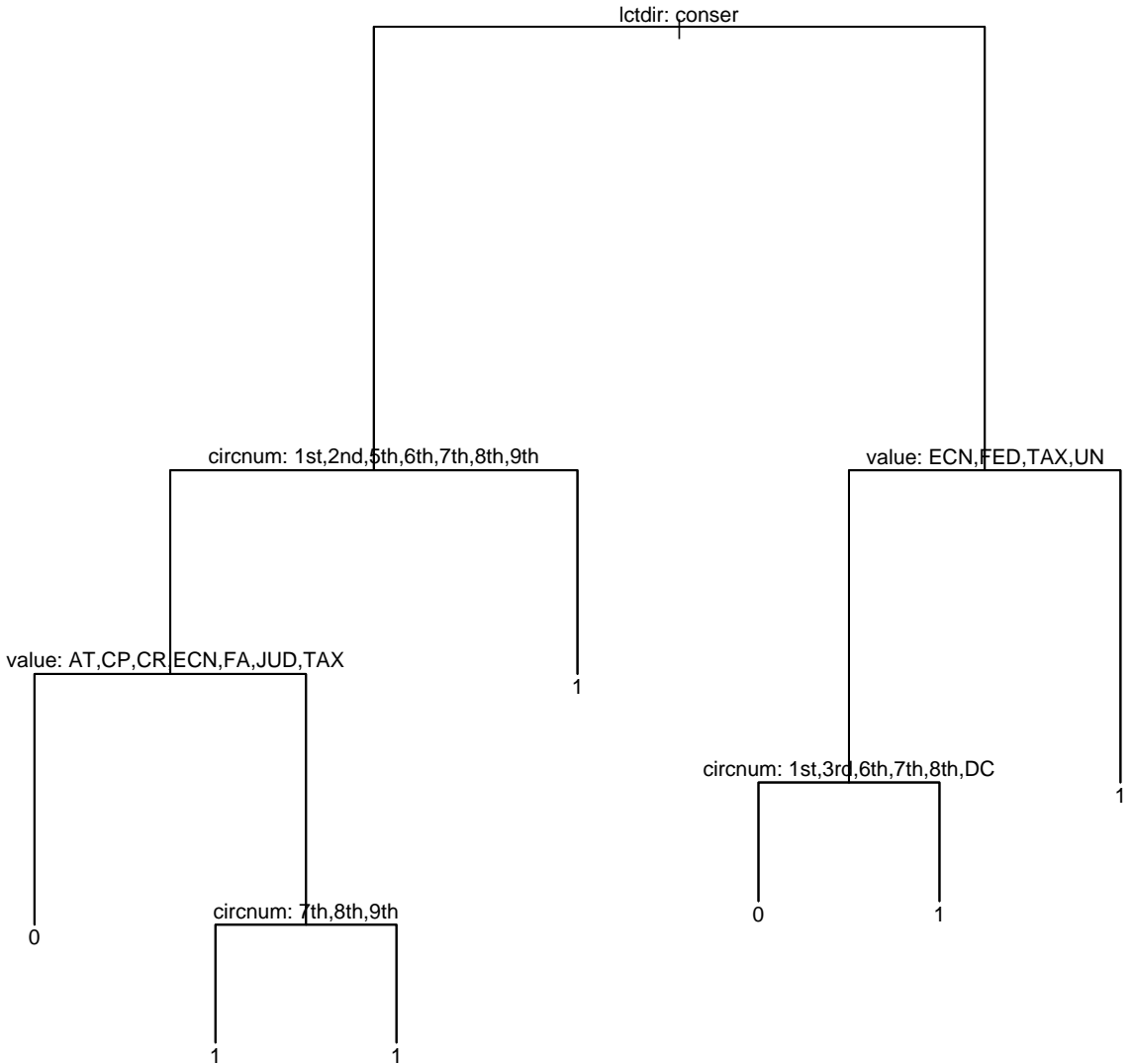
Stevens



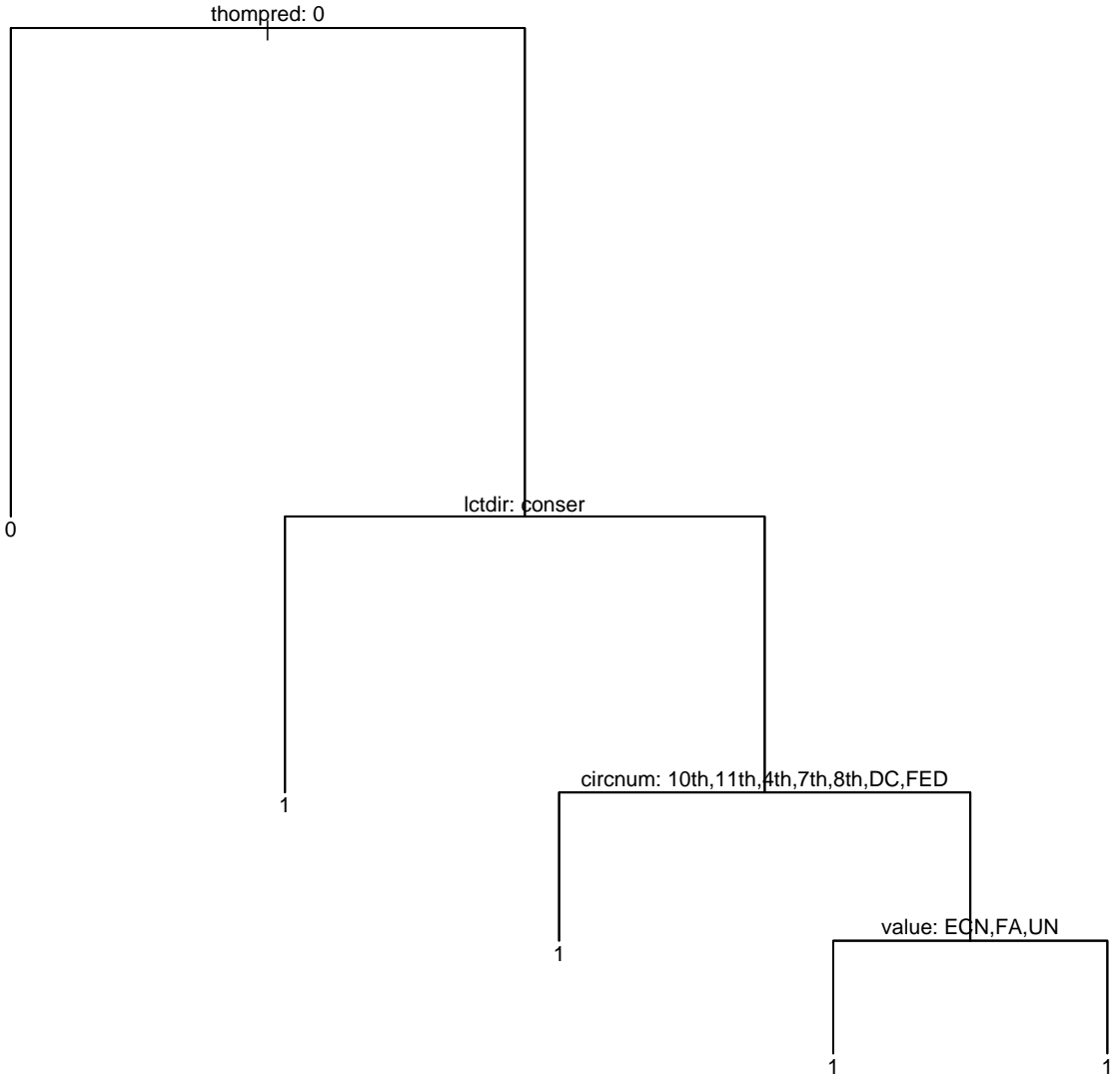
O'Connor



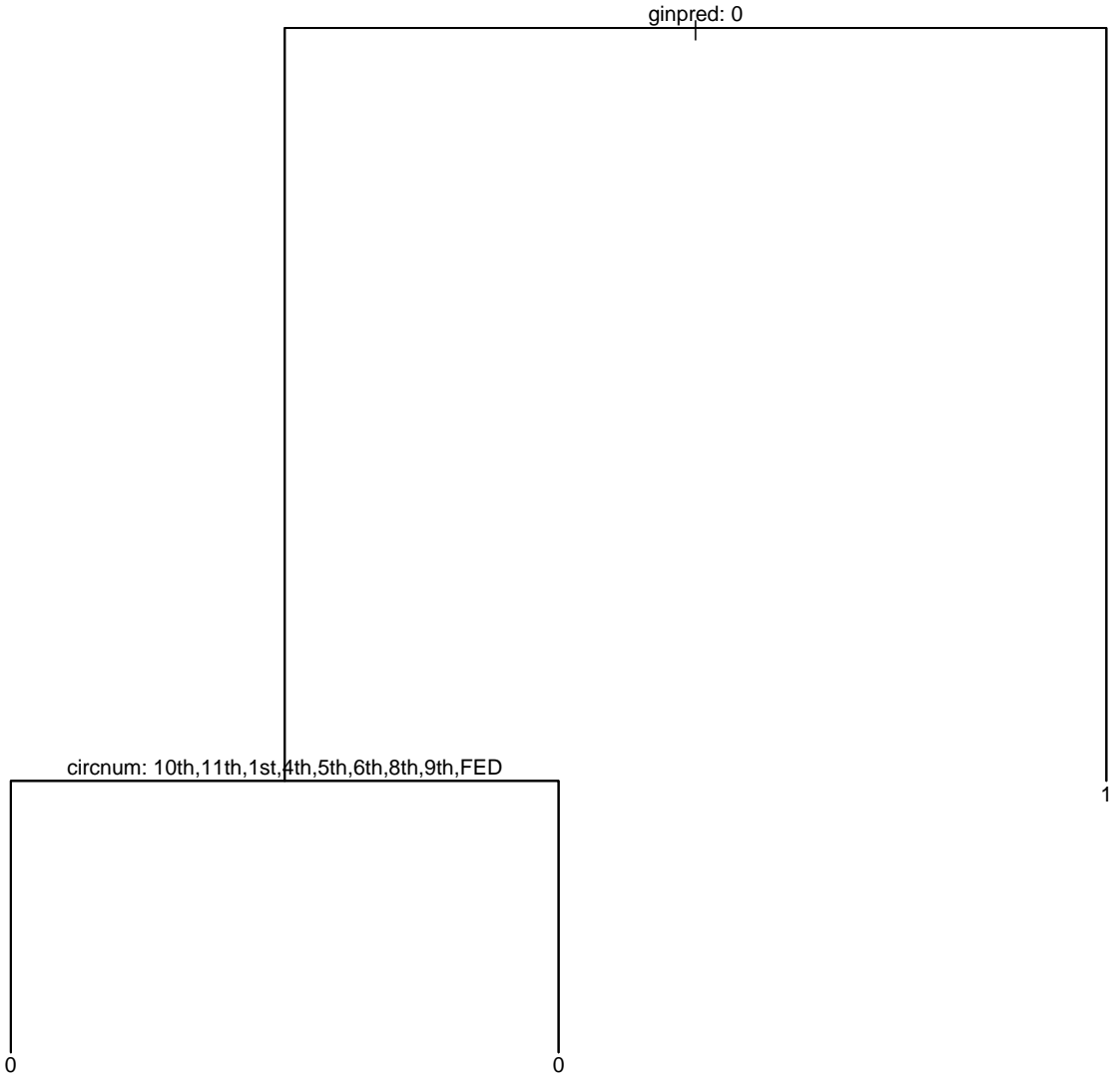
Scalia



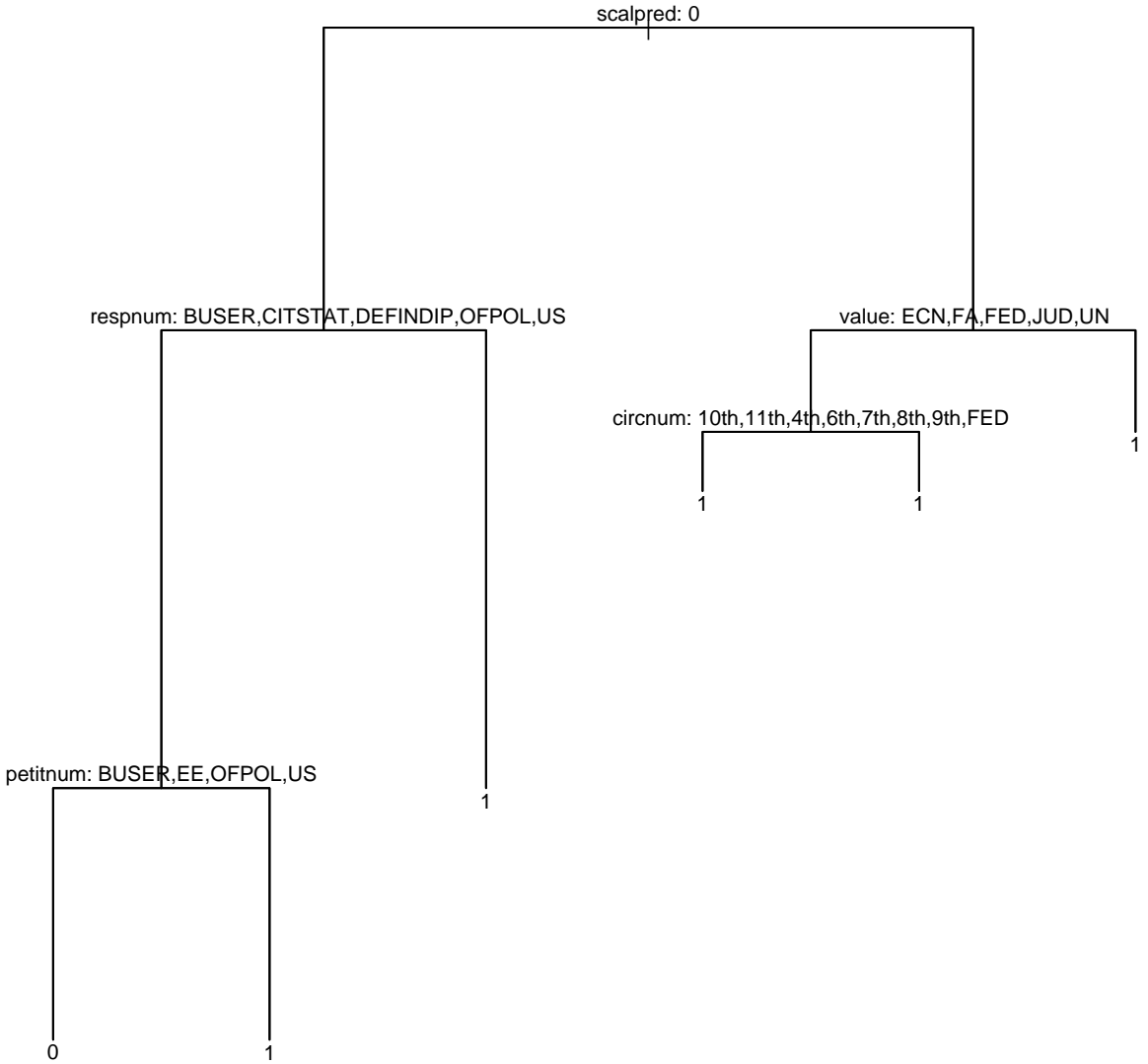
Kennedy



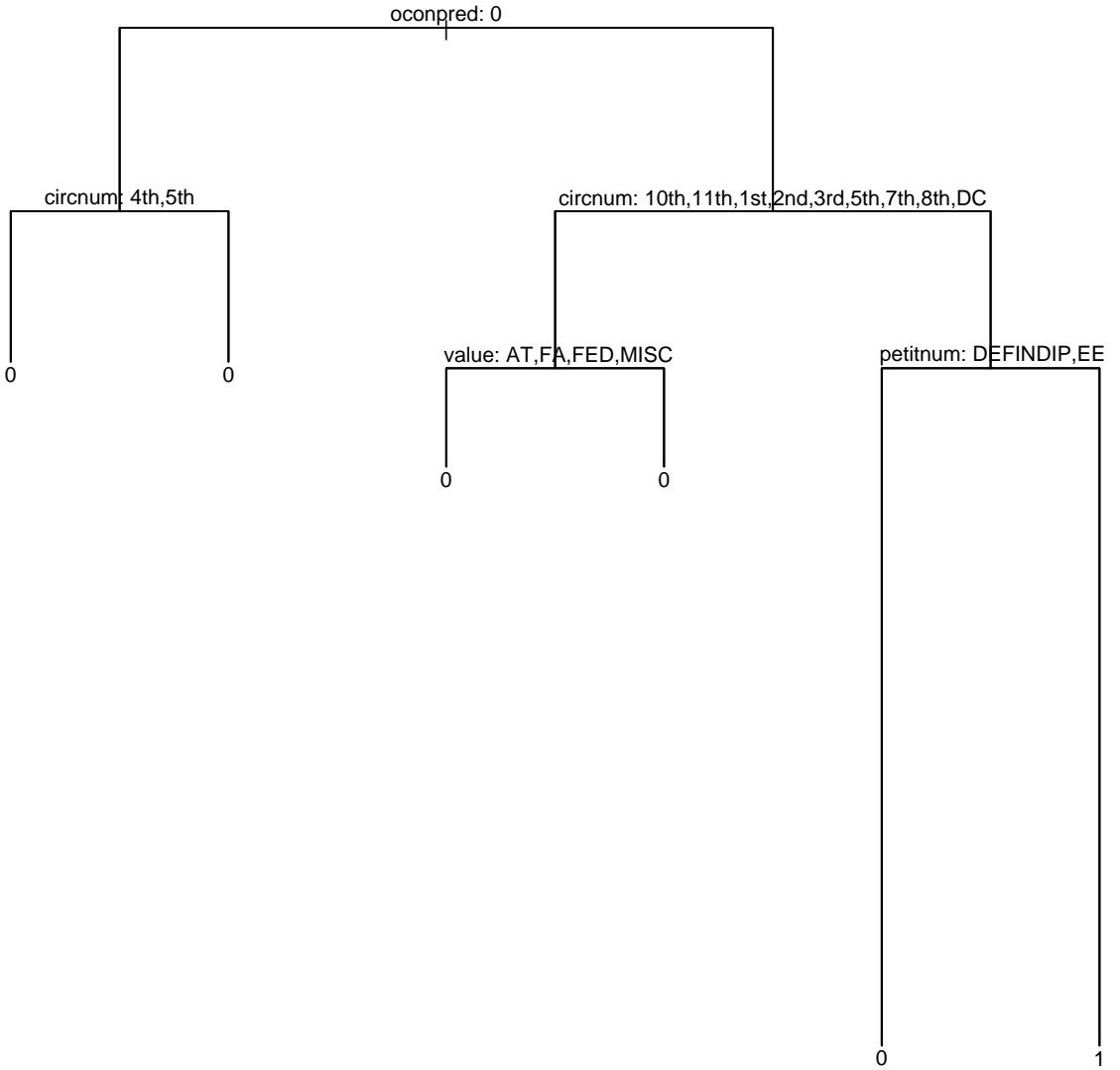
Souter



Thomas



Ginsburg



Breyer

