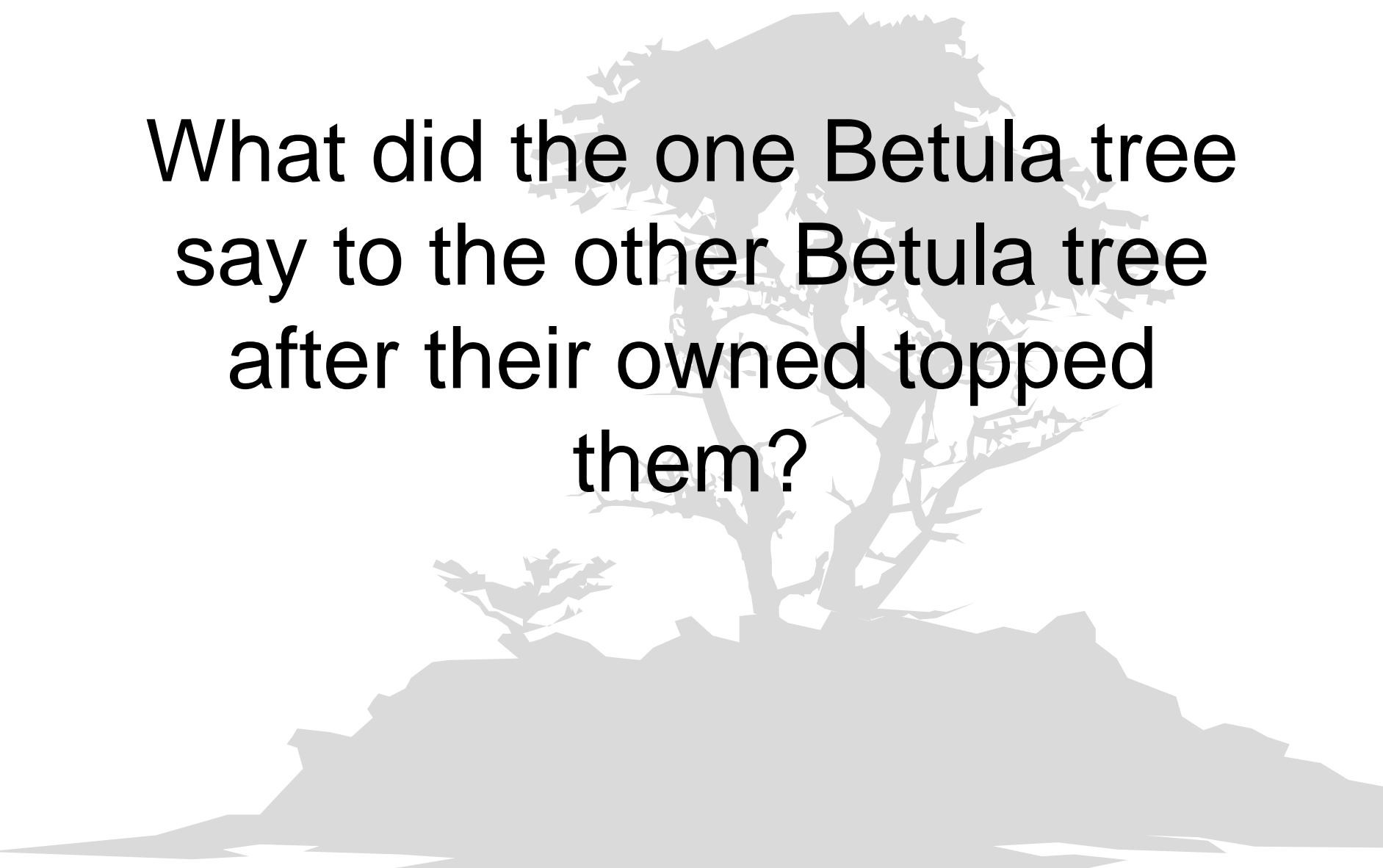


Oh, Those Terrible Things We Do To Trees!



by Bill Homyak

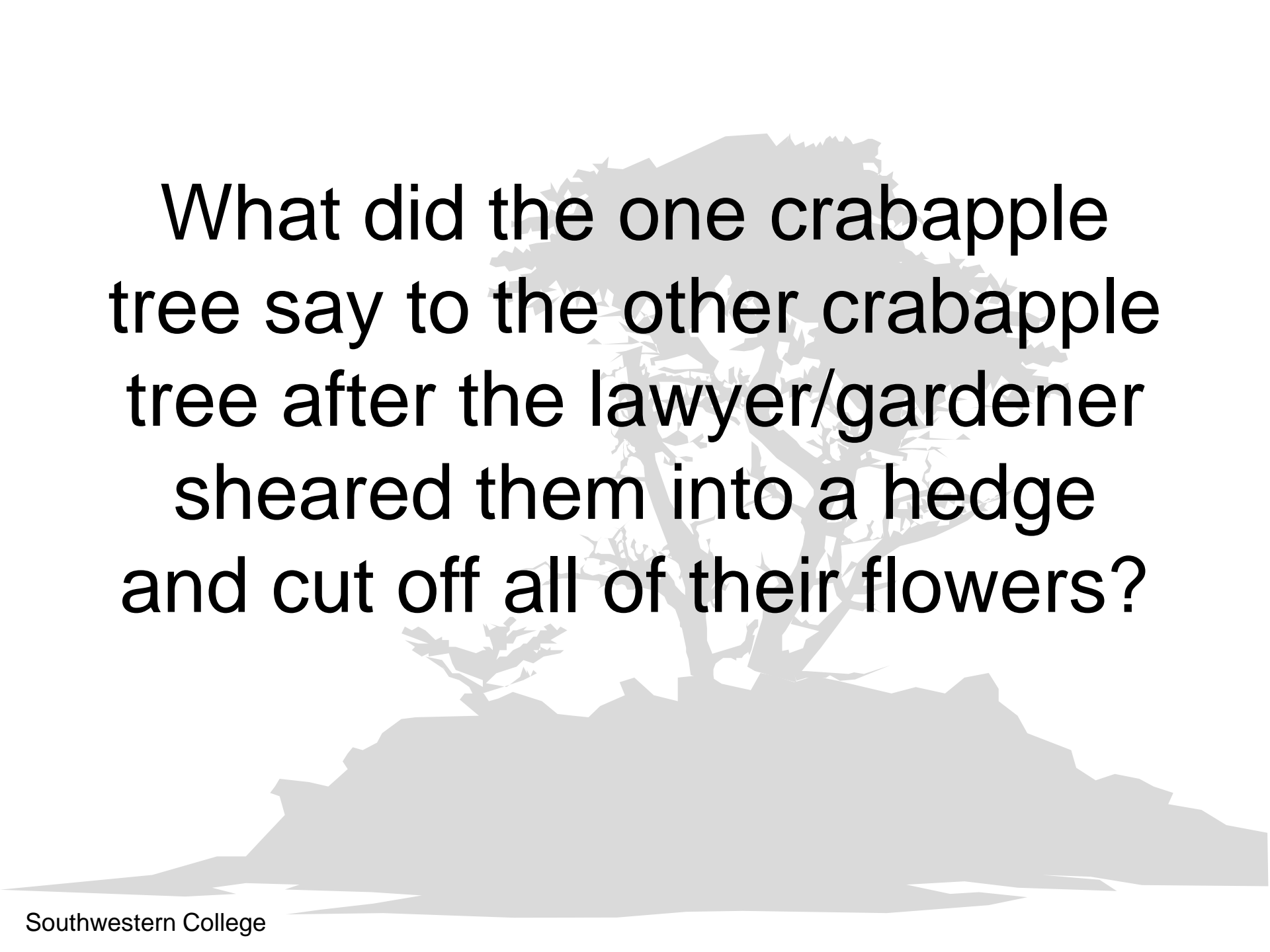
Landscape and Nursery Technology
Southwestern College



What did the one Betula tree
say to the other Betula tree
after their owners topped
them?



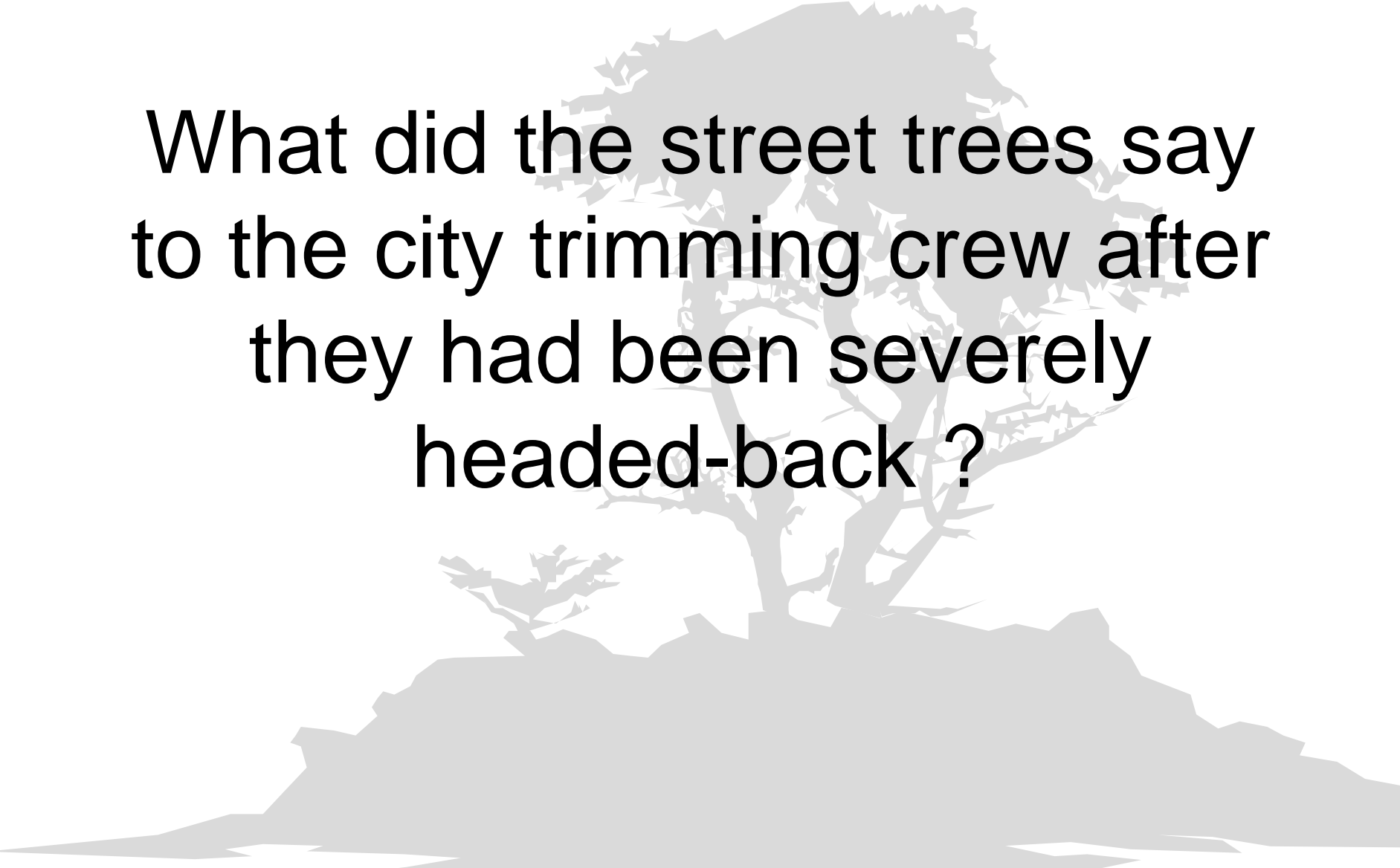
Life's a birch and then you die!



What did the one crabapple
tree say to the other crabapple
tree after the lawyer/gardener
sheared them into a hedge
and cut off all of their flowers?



Boy, she sure used Malus
aforethought!




What did the street trees say
to the city trimming crew after
they had been severely
headed-back ?



Eucalyptus!!!

(you clipped us)



Eight Ways to Effectively Eliminate the Entire Evolutionary Efforts of Our Environmental Arboricultural Woody Companions

Or:



8 Ways to Kill a Tree!

Strangulation



- ☞ Tree ties improperly attached
- ☞ Tree ties that are never adjusted
- ☞ Tree ties that are never removed
- ☞ Nylon trimmers that girdle the trunk
- ☞ Lawn mower blight on tree trunks
- ☞ Examples:





Hog-tied and Forced Traction

- ☞ Trees staked too tightly
- ☞ Trees staked for too long
- ☞ Trunks that have no movement
- ☞ Trunks in nursery stock spaced too closely

Decapitation



- ☞ Tree gets too tall, whack it back
- ☞ Heading cuts done to old branches
- ☞ Planting the wrong tree in the wrong place - forces landscaper to top the tree!
- ☞ Examples:



Southwestern College







Drowning



- ➡ Planting a tree too low to the existing soil line
- ➡ Planting trees in lawns with frequent irrigation and poor drainage
- ➡ Planting trees in planters with no drainage
- ➡ Planting trees in low spots
- ➡ Examples:



Southwestern College

Being “Culturally Insensitive”

- ☞ Picking a tree that is ill suited to its location
- ☞ Forcing a tree to attempt to live in a climate, soil, or exposure not suited to their millions of years of adaptation
- ☞ Picking the wrong tree “just because”:



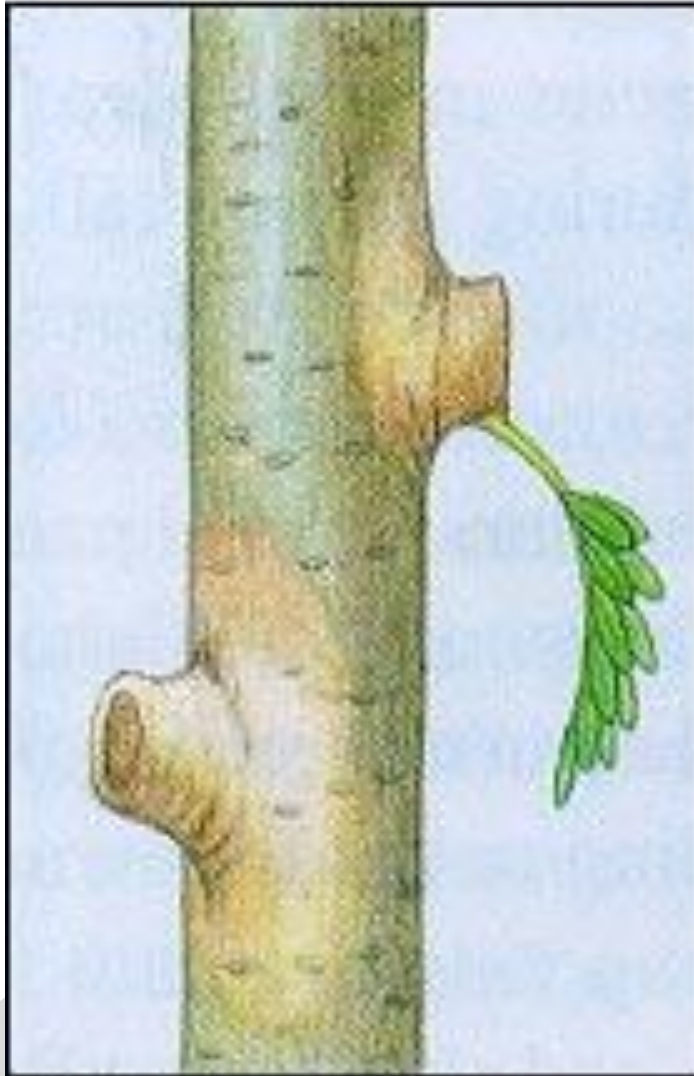
Just because:???

- ➡ It is soooo pretty!!!
- ➡ But it grows so well back in New York!!!
- ➡ I want a fast tree!
- ➡ Yes, I know it gets too big for that spot but I'll control it!
- ➡ It is sooo small, I think I will plant 5 of them in a 10' circle.
- ➡ It was only \$6.95 at Home Depot.
- ➡ My friend, who has a friend who has a gardener, said it was a good tree.
- ➡ City ordinances say each lot must have a tree - who cares if there is no room for it!

Amputation of Extremities



- ➡ Pruning of lower branches to encourage height
- ➡ Pruning off shallow roots
- ➡ Lopping back branches that dare to get larger than expected
- ➡ Pruning branches that overhang your property
- ➡ Examples:



E. Stub cutting

Extermination

(for just being a tree!)

- ☞ The tree is too messy.
- ☞ The tree drops leaves in the fall.
- ☞ The tree shades my roses.
- ☞ The tree is way too big.
- ☞ The tree grows way too slow.
- ☞ The roots won't let plants grow under it.
- ☞ All kinds of icky bugs and spiders live in it.
- ☞ My ex-wife planted it, get rid of that monster!

Poor Tree Location and Maintenance Results in More Pest Problems

- Stub pruning results in weak, succulent growth more susceptible to insects and disease.
- Poor pruning cuts open up pathways for bores and other bark/trunk insects.
- Lack of early corrective pruning leads to trees that split in the wind - this leads to damage later that results in a weaker tree less able to combat insects and disease.
- Trees planted too closely or trees that are headed back result in dense growth ideal for disease and insect problems.





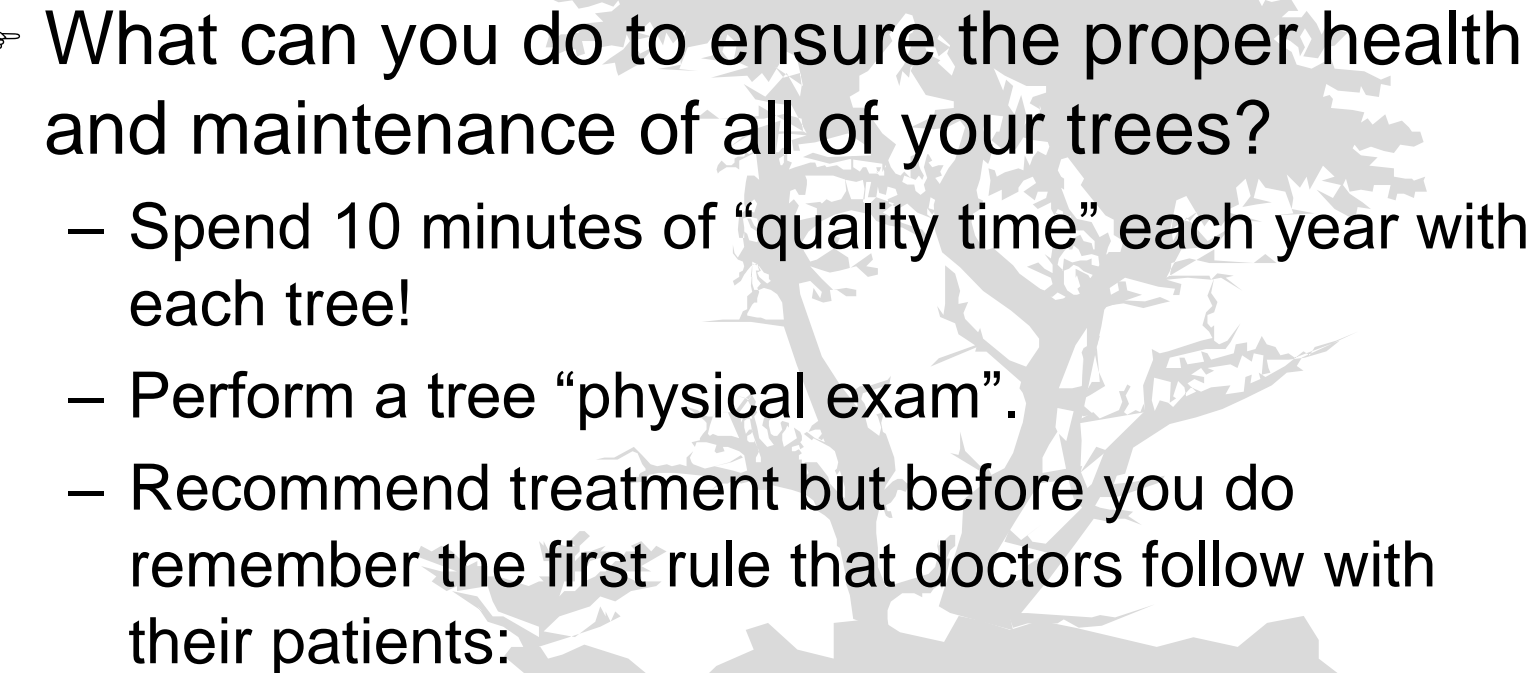
Southwestern College

Poor Tree Maintenance Results in More Pest Problems (cont)

- ☞ Trees that have poor root systems can be harmed by root rots, root damage from machines that can lead to root infection, root girdling from poor potting and planting methods, etc.
- ☞ Trees with weak trunks that require staking results in possible later damage to trunk.
- ☞ Trees planted in the wrong location only force the poor gardener to do all kinds of maintenance techniques just to get the tree to grow:
 - fertilizing, staking, thinning, topping, spraying, injection of nutrients and insecticides, aerification, praying, and more!



Just one more point to make!

- 
- ☞ What can you do to ensure the proper health and maintenance of all of your trees?
 - Spend 10 minutes of “quality time” each year with each tree!
 - Perform a tree “physical exam”.
 - Recommend treatment but before you do remember the first rule that doctors follow with their patients:

The First Step is to “Do No Harm!”



A “Quick” Tree Physical



☞ Environment

- nearby tree health, soil type, irrigation method, recent construction

☞ Leaves

- healthy, yellow, margins burned, insects present, excessive leaf drop

☞ Branches

- dead, diseased, broken, crossing, hazardous, heavy

☞ Trunk(s)

- narrow crotches, bark damage, borers, galls, rot, tree ties, girdling

☞ Roots

- shallow, causing damage, roots injured by equipment, soggy or wet soil

☞ Location

- crowded, wrong spot, wind, salt, dust, smog