Weekly Reading Response

Please respond to class readings **before** the class for which they are assigned. The reading schedule is posted here: `https://github.com/sblodgett/ai-ethics/blob/master/README.md`.

Your response should be:

1. A one paragraph (at least five sentences) summary of the reading(s).

   - What are the main points or findings of the reading?
   - If there are multiple readings, how do the two compare?
   - Do the authors present multiple points of view? If so, what are they?
   - Do you find the reading subjective or objective?

2. A one paragraph (at least five sentences) reaction to the reading(s).

   - What points do you agree with?
   - What points do you disagree with?
   - What questions did you have about the readings?

You can gain extra credit by responding to the challenge readings.

Example response for `The code I'm still ashamed of`:

The article's author, a developer, describes a work experience that he later comes to view as unethical. In 2000, he was responsible for writing the code for an online quiz aimed at teenage girls. At the end of the quiz, (almost) no matter what the person input, the quiz would recommend the same drug. At the time, the author was happy to have made some money and success as a developer. Only later did he discover that a girl had died as a result of the drug's side effects; the author describes his remorse and his view that "[a]s developers, we are often one of the last lines of defense against potentially dangerous and unethical practices."

   I find the situation that he describes deeply tragic, and I find it admirable that he now advocates for developers to be ethically engaged. I absolutely agree that we as a field should encourage developers pay attention to what they are asked to write, and to speak up when they discover something they believe to be unethical. Moreover, I think software designers

and data analysts are often in the best position to recognize logical or statistical issues with what they're working on. That said, it is not always easy for developers to speak up; we don't live in a world where whistleblowers are treated well, and individual developers who try to bring up such issues may find themselves out of a job. Therefore, I believe the author's call to developers is perhaps too narrow; instead of just ethically engaged developers, the world needs ecosystems of ethically engaged businesses, where everyone from CEOs down the line to project managers and developers are encouraged to be open and skeptical.