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| **Essay 3 – Case of the Killer Robot**  Name: Jessica Hoffman  Course: CIS150-77  Date: 3/29/2016 |

**Public Enemy Number 1**

Considering all evidence, it is apparent that every stakeholder is at fault for the death of Bart Matthews except himself. Out of everyone involved in the tragedy, Ray Johnson holds the most responsibility not only because his actions were unethical, but also because many of his actions directly caused other people to make unethical actions. Specifically, Johnson forced Sam Reynolds to cut corners in order to meet the deadline by the end of the year. Although Reynolds should not have been appointed as Project Manager, he should not have been forced to choose between making an unethical decision or losing his job. Johnson has a track record of threatening other people by mentioning they could lose their job. This type of terrorism resulted in a tense, impossible working atmosphere and put Reynolds and Randy Samuels under deep pressure to deliver. Perhaps most compelling, Johnson is most responsible for Bart Matthews’ death because told Cindy Yardley to fake the software testing results. When she questioned the morality of this action, he continuously reassured her that the robot is safe. Even worse, he used terroristic tactics on Cindy as well when he told her that if she did not comply, everyone would lose their jobs. Samuels, Reynolds, and Yardley may have made major mistakes, but Johnson caused each of them to make those mistakes, which makes him most responsible for Matthews’ death.

**Lesser of All Evils**

Despite petty claims that Bart Matthews entered the codes wrong, he is least at fault for his own death. Most importantly, Matthews had no part in creating the robot. Silicon Techtronics had an obligation users of RobbieCX30, outlined in the contract with Cybernetics, to provide a robot that is completely safe and to train users for 40 hours with focus on safety training. Furthermore, the contract with Cybernetics states that the training will emphasize safety procedures in the case of exceptional conditions, such as the one Matthews faced. He was trained for 8 hours in one day and there was no mention of how to deal with exceptional conditions. Had Matthews been fully trained to operate RobbieCX30 and warned on the shortcomings of the robot, he would be alive. His lack of training played a big part in his death, but it was not the root of the problem. This accident could have happened to any user of the robot because it was doomed before it was shipped. Matthews’ death was a result of faulty programming, lack of physics knowledge, falsified unit-tests, inefficient and confusing UI, inexperience with mechanical engineering projects, and a tense work environment in which employees thought they would lose their job. Corruption of this level is a recipe for disaster and any of these components could have singlehandedly led to Matthews’ death. There is no question that Matthews didn’t stand a chance against RobbieCX30, and he holds no fault in the cause of his own death.

**Normative Recommendations and Analysis**

Based on the available evidence, it is clear that no single entity was solely responsible for the death of Bart Matthews. While everybody at Silicon Techtronics played their part in the tragedy, Ray Johnson played the biggest part of all. If he had not forced the Robots Division employees to cut corners to meet the deadline, they could have spent more time on producing a quality product with little shortcomings. He prevented Cindy from performing her job by downplaying the importance of unit-testing code. Software testing is especially important when risk of injury is involved as it is with all robots and machinery. Johnson lied to Cindy and burdened her with guilt that could only be lifted by providing fake test results in order to deceive their clients and keep her job. First and foremost, Ray Johnson should resign in light of the evidence piled against him. He should relieve Randy Samuels of his unfair situation and take the blame for Matthews’ death. Since he refuses to admit the extent of his involvement, Johnson should be fired by the CEO of Silicon Techtronics, Michael Waterson. Waterson may have made a few mistakes, including the appointment of Reynolds to the RobbieCX30 project or funding the election of the prosecutor against Randy, but his actions did not directly cause Matthews’ death. Cindy should resign because she could have prevented this death if she refused to contribute to corruption. Her purpose in the company is to test software and prevent this type of situation from occurring. She would have caught Randy’s error and refused to move forward with production until the issue was resolved. While Sam Reynolds was unfit to manage this project, he did not play a big part in the death of Bart Matthews. Reynolds was wholly unaware of the shady situation involving faked unit tests or faulty code. Reynolds should keep his job, but in the future, he should not be appointed to big projects that rely on a prototyping method of production instead of the waterfall method. The CEO needs to pursue a major reform on the company environment because the unethical actions of Waterson’s employees were the product of an oppressive working environment. Employees were constantly concerned about losing their jobs, and these worries impacted their work ethic. Waterson also needs to do an overhaul on their UI design team for future projects because RobbieCX30’s UI was unacceptable and unusable. The fact that the robot has to be terminated from the stationary control panel and cannot be stopped with a remote control is outrageous. In a life-threatening situation, how can the user be expected to stand still and type command codes? This design flaw also led to Matthews’ death. Last but not least, the Robotics Division needs to realize that programmers with physics and engineering knowledge are necessary to build a robot; simply knowing how to write code doesn’t cut it. As can be seen, the culprits of Matthews’ death are endless, but ultimately Ray Johnson must resign and plead guilty to Matthews’ death if Silicon Techronics hopes to save their reputation.