

A professor of computer science applied for and received a grant from the Strategic Defense Initiative Program (Star Wars) to engage in a software assurance research project of a theoretical nature. The goal was to determine the methods by which error free software might be produced on a large scale basis. The professor does not believe that SDI (Star Wars) is a viable Department of Defense program. She does believe, however, that her work could add measurably to the body of scientific knowledge concerning the development of error free software.

Should the professor accept the grant money? If so, why? If not, why not?

ANSWER: The professor should not accept the grant money. Acceptance of the grant indicates at least an implicitly endorsement of a project the professor believes will not work. In this case the professor's implicit endorsement is likely to influence others. This sends a message the professor herself believes is erroneous to the public (i.e. that Star Wars is a viable program) Furthermore, for similar reasons the professor is not being honest with the funding agency.

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