*Out for Blood in Silicon Valley*

In *Out for Blood in Silicon Valley,* the film explored many facets of Theranos, which swindled both innocent customers and investors who neglected their due diligence upon investing in Theranos’s technology. Throughout its reign in Silicon Valley, Theranos manipulated the media and the entirety of the market to believe it had created wonderful technology that could change not only how blood-based medical tests were performed but also the customer’s ability to access medical testing and resources.

Elizabeth Holmes, founder and CEO of Theranos, noticed several issues in modern medical technology and accessibility. She compared drawing blood to a torture technique, which for some, may be less of a dramatization than others, but I considered it to be a stretch. She detailed the lack of access the general population had to medical information that was pertinent to their well-being and survival. Elizabeth perfected the telling of her story in which she detailed the painful loss of her uncle due to cancer which could have been detected and potentially removed if he had access to adequate technology. This story was so well constructed that each time she told it, she managed to repeat the precise tone, inflection, and pace each and every time. In fact, Elizabeth masterminded such a fantastic story that organizations like Walgreens and other large investors with good records of innovation and growth completely neglected to ensure the technology existed, worked as promised, and the financials of Theranos were well managed and organized. Her story of telling someone goodbye too soon was enough to get investors and customers knocking down her door to access her technology.

Elizabeth was primarily focused on technology she called “The Edison.” This machine was supposed to take microcapsules of blood from a finger prick and perform an array of medical tests which have historically required several tubes of blood from a blood draw. She was hyperfocused on creating technology with the ability to run an array of tests using microtechnology on a tiny vial of blood. She could not grasp the impact her failure could have on society and her customers, so she launched Theranos prematurely using the capital she raised from enthusiastic investors.

The technology upon which her whole organization was founded did not work. It was inaccurate, unsafe, and ineffective in solving the problems she had identified. Her employees stated in the movie that her fantastical solutions were ineffective. Everything in the lab, tests, and technology broke repeatedly. The promises Theranos made to its investors and the public were not deliverable because, in the simplest terms, they violated the laws of physics and thermodynamics. No matter how hard she and her employees worked, she could fool the market, but she could not fool physics.

There is no end to what I would do differently from Elizabeth. The guilt of altering hundreds of thousands of lives would eat me alive. I agree with her mission to make healthcare more palatable and accessible, but I would never offer harmful services for my customers, even if all the money from my investors had dissipated in my research. I would be honest with the public and investors about my progress and not take on partnerships that could damage other organizations and larger populations. The unforgivable act, I believe, is that Elizabeth took Theranos to market too soon. Her product “The Edison” was incomplete, with no concrete results or solutions to ensure customers’ safety, or the organization's longevity, which all entrepreneurs must consider when undertaking any venture.

Elizabeth did not start her journey as a bad person, but she will rightfully be remembered by history as one. Her mission was right, but her method was not. She lied to, manipulated, and betrayed her shareholders and customers to get ahead in Silicon Valley. She meddled with people’s livelihoods and could potentially play a role in their inadequate medical literacy, illnesses, or deaths. Elizabeth knowingly decided that despite her technology’s ineptitude, she would go to market with an opaque, dangerous product and market plan with long-lasting negative effects. She valuated thousands of lives at less than her potential success, so she betrayed the entire public to attempt her professional and financial rise. Elizabeth should not be remembered as a good person because good people do not play God.