

## **2025 Fall Sociology Book Award Statement**

**Clayton McCutcheon**

**November 21, 2025**

### **Link to project:**

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/6dp2ezibph1d1lpawxssi/ABloWJoDOkjHwejipy\\_mAk4?rlkey=gired9azgbop6iks3ajg91fmi&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/6dp2ezibph1d1lpawxssi/ABloWJoDOkjHwejipy_mAk4?rlkey=gired9azgbop6iks3ajg91fmi&dl=0)

I am submitting a painting, its original journal sketch, and four songs that all explore similar themes of isolation, technology, consumerism, and true human experiences we are potentially missing out on as a result of our blind acceptance of these “norms.”

### **These People Are Extensions of Their Phones,**

Acrylic on Canvas (24” X 36”) Clayton McCutcheon, 2025

Earlier this year, I was at the wine bar watching a band play when a flock of viewers rushed to the front, immediately filming different versions of the same happening, crowding and crouching and screening and straining to get the best angle. In this moment I saw a disgusting display of arms and heads and phones all entangled and mixed around, fighting for a perception that consists of 1s and 0s, a perception that belongs to no one. So, disgusted and concerned for the state of our consciousness as humans, I started drawing these people and wiggled my thoughts into art. I ended up with an image sort of similar to flowerpots and their respective flowers growing from the soil. Instead, this dystopia sings phones instead of flowerpots, the internet instead of soil and our minds instead of flowers.

I did this large acrylic painting, “These People Are Extensions of Their Phones,” on canvas (24” X 36”) of phone people, those who are incapable of living life if not lived through their phones. These poor slaves lose more and more of themselves every day and in no time at all, they are merely extensions of their phones... lacking personality, social skills and independent thoughts. A pesticide to our mind gardens, Pandora's box in our pockets, the world's most popular pacifier... The Phone.

### **Four Song EP, How Big Is Life?** Clayton McCutcheon, 2025

I’m also including several songs that explore similar themes of technological isolation that I’ve written and recorded this year. “Only in Tomorrow” explores how people are losing their ability to be intuitive and connect with each other on a personal level, relying on technology and social media to define themselves and to perceive the world. “How Big is Life” considers what we are potentially missing out on in life when we limit ourselves to

accepting ideas and patterns of thought and speech that are created for us without our awareness and often go unquestioned. “Tennis Table Rag” was written after I sat between two friends, my own age, talking about work, car payments and debt, as if they were proud to be “all grown up” and part of this “club,” which is really nothing more than them willingly giving into the consumerist culture that is going to consume them and define who they are for the rest of their lives. I literally felt like I was stuck in the middle, watching a meaningless game of ping pong that I had to escape from.

Finally, “Green World” was written in the early morning hours after an intense mushroom trip while watching the sunrise. I was unable to go to sleep because the melody kept playing through my head, so I figured it out on guitar and piano and then wrote most of the lyrics later that day after I finally got some sleep. This song serves as an anthem of hope for a different kind of existence while still considering the dangers of a world on the verge of its own destruction, environmentally, sociologically, and spiritually, a world where “stateside shopping malls are riddled with despair” while “the love of all the world is sitting on a desk” and the “big red button pressed, sent us all to death.” Despite all that, this song tries to “picture a new world that’s greener than today. No greed, no hunger, war, it’s over for the day.”

Visual art and music are how I process and deal with the problems I see in the world. I hope that by creating visual and musical pieces that address these issues, I can make better sense of my own place in the world and by sharing them with others, they will serve as windows into a world of different and hopefully better possibilities.

### **Artist Bio**

Clayton McCutcheon is a visual arts major at COC, and he is also a singer/songwriter. His art and music both reflect everyday situations and questions the acceptance of our modern world. He is inspired by artists like Elliott Smith and earlier artists from the 60’s and 70’s such as Donovan, Love, Nick Drake, and Cat Stevens. His music is acoustic in nature but often incorporates elements of electronic music and is inspired by pioneers of the genre like Brian Eno. After completing a workshop with Eno earlier this year, Clayton has adopted new techniques that have pushed him into more spontaneous methods of creation. He is currently working on a new album that he hopes to release early next year.