



'Social Destruction'

May 26, 2024

by Cara Reiss (Australia)

Prompt: Poetry & Spoken Word Competition 2024



2

S poken-Word Performance:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/wq4hf26c1002gj8vwq7mr/AOw1AulIslaxm3rd8312EHs?rlkey=fcr7fy18uc1lwon468lbtt0t&st=8fjee45z&dl=0>

OR https://studentccgsnswedu-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/25rei10c_student_ccgs_nsw_edu_au/EVL4ftjjJGNOtCCwfnztpkMBM4fQWz0pSkCZutFtlfDRqg

Poem Word Count: 498

'Social Destruction' by Cara Reiss

Phones. Technologies that have the power to take us beyond our real world and give way to the *emergence of our futures*.

Sure.

Itty-bitty devices,

Compacted in small

Metal frames with guises

Of a stronger future.

A smarter reality.

A whole realm beyond

The tips of our fingers that,

Little do we know,

Are taking apart our societies bit,

By Bit,

By Bit.

With a *snap* I can chat to my friends

Befriended by the *click* of a button



Ping! There goes BeReal –
Everyone, let me send you a photo of me,
Right here, right now,
That shows what I am doing because
I am active,
I am busy,
I am *happy*.
It's not a social network,
Rather an **anti**-social network.
Like a phone's disconnection;
Our friends, family, society
Linked through the world of social media,
Built behind a screen
And fuelled by the prospect of
Likes and follows.
Now, we can't have conversation
Without abbreviation.
SMH. (*shake my head*)
Oh, look –
An advocacy for the riots,
Poverty, or gay rights,
Now I feel bad for the turtles,
Koalas and climate
I'll add a donation.
Is that *really enough*?
This is technology-built empathy,
Whilst the REAL WORLD is out there,
Barely breathing.
Our world is so digital
Our phones; the messengers for
Our therapists who wonder why
Anxiety, deadly thoughts, and body image
Are on a rise, but
Isn't it obvious?
Little do we know



That the 'Get Ready with Me's
And '5-Minute crafts' ARE NOT
5 minutes – they are a childhood,
Built on the discipline provided by
12-year-olds in other countries,
Not our own parents.
Society is built on the
Foundations of Apple and Android,
Of smartphones and tablets.
Love is now bought for
\$12.50 a month
Based off looks and written personalities
Rather than true connection and outlook.
Our eyes, which can't look further than
10cm in front of us,
Can't see the damage we are causing.
How this immediate satisfaction
Leads not only to obsession, but...
Addiction.
Let me tell you a story.
One that explores the life
Lived by a child brought up
with the earth.
A child that explored the habitat of
Reality.
Now our young generations,
taught through the digital world behind touchscreen,
don't experience what it's like
To make mistakes and learn from what's seen
In the *real world*.
Instead of through books,
Our children are paging through the phones that WE provide
For them.
Opening up their realities
Of make-believe, explored through idealistic versions



of lifestyles that *aren't theirs*.

We have failed you, young generations.

Our societies have made it so that

16-year-olds have to write poetry on our mistakes,

Because we didn't have the foresight to see

That we were taking away

Your right to freedom.

And this, we cannot autocorrect.

I wait for a world where we don't

Take photos to create memories,

But rather remember our experiences.

Where we laugh and smile with expressions,

Not emojis.

Because with that,

We will be one step closer

To humanity.

Tags:

First Piece

Competition

Runner Up

Australia

Poetry

Footnotes

Please note: my total submission is over the word limit as this is due to the inclusion of my spoken-word performance link. The total word count of my poem 'Social Destruction' is 498.

Message to Readers

It has become increasingly prevalent that phones are not the best thing for us. News and media coverage explain the consequences of phone usage for extended periods of time, such as anxiety, depression, body dysmorphia... I'm sure the 'effects' have all been drilled into us. However, still, we all have one - we all get sucked into the technological social media vortex until hours of our days are passed staring at a single screen. It is a form of silent addiction, one that we don't even realise until we try and go a few hours without touching the screen, checking for notifications, our fingers just itching to get in a few more scrolls. I know the feeling. My poetry, 'Social

Destruction', interrogates the extent to which phones damage our social networks and the way we function within our societies through using MY voice, as a 16-year-old, to advocate for change - because this affects me, and it affects you too.

Other Pieces by Author