CHAPTER 4

AFTER A DECADE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: ABSTAINERS AND EX-USERS

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Early research on social media in rhetoric and composition frequently focused on analyses of particular social media technologies, such as Facebook and MySpace (Balzhiser et al., 2011; Maranto & Barton, 2010). Similarly, small-scale studies offered detailed case studies of social media users (A. Buck, 2012; DePew, 2011). Fewer studies gathered quantitative and qualitative data about social media use and impact at a larger level; while some early exceptions exist (e.g., Vie, 2007, 2008), the field's push toward more data-driven research on social media at a national level has intensified only recently (Jones, 2014; Mina, 2014; Pigg et al., 2014; Potts & Jones, 2011; Shepherd, 2015; Wolff, 2015). Indeed, several of the authors in this collection, such as Michael J. Faris and Lilian W. Mina, continue this emphasis on data-driven social media research in rhetoric and composition.

What is apparent from this literature is that our field seems to have reached a turning point in its awareness of social media, one that reflects larger turning points in the United States regarding social media. That is, social media use has reached a critical mass in this country such that those who do not use these technologies may feel left out, unable to share in certain moments common to social media users. This near-ubiquity of social media use illustrates that being a part of social media technologies like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and others is fast becoming a given for American adults. Indeed, other chapters in this collection explore the ways that social media have quickly become embedded into our lives. As a result, greater numbers of faculty are either already incorporating social media into their personal, professional, and pedagogical lives or are feeling the pressure to do so. But as recent research results show, fac-

ulty remain divided about how to incorporate social media into their teaching and for what purposes (Seaman & Tinti-Kane, 2013; Vie, 2015). Similarly, individuals speak of the tensions between personal and private use of social media (see Les Hutchinson's chapter in this collection for an exploration of reasons why anonymity in social media is deeply necessary today as a result of these tensions).

Because early research has painted detailed pictures of social media users and their literacy practices, it is important that we also step back, so to speak, and examine the larger landscape surrounding social media use in our field. As well, it is important to balance pedagogical research about social media in rhetoric and composition (Bowdon, 2014; E. Buck, 2015; DePew, 2011; Williams, 2009) with scholarship that addresses non-academic uses of social media. Indeed, it may be even more important to attend to scholarship that addresses non-use of social media entirely. Social media abstainers and social media ex-users (those who began using such technologies and then stopped, not having returned) are important groups to study. In this chapter, then, we offer a content analysis of recent popular press pieces to analyze how the media depicts abstainers and ex-users.

IMPETUS FOR THE STUDY

The landscape of social media use is constantly changing: Sites rise and fall in popularity, services and features evolve, and users shape new practices like hashtagging and viral memes. This constant change affects research on social media too: Research on social media frequently demonstrates a "pro-innovation bias" (Rogers, 1995, p. 100). The pro-innovation bias occurs in research on technologies when scholars imply that an innovative technology should be diffused and adopted rapidly by all members of society. Indeed, Everett M. Rogers (1995) recommended that researchers should work against this pro-innovation bias by examining the broader context in which innovations diffuse, which "helps illuminate the broader system in which the diffusion process occurs . . . and increase our understanding of the motivations for adopting an innovation" (p. 110).

The study that we report on in this chapter attempts to address the pro-innovation bias that is easy to fall prey to in social media research. In other words, given how social media has diffused throughout American society (and indeed throughout the world), it is tempting to argue that—for example—rhetoric and composition faculty should adopt social media technologies for the classroom because of their ubiquity. And we want to be careful to point out that our aim here is not to argue against the value of social media; as Vie (2007, 2008, 2015) has argued elsewhere, social media technologies can offer significant advantages

for the rhetoric and composition classroom, especially given the rhetorical and compositional elements at play in such technologies. Instead, we offer here a discussion of some of the broader context within which the innovations of social media technologies have diffused in our field; this context allows readers to see the complex landscape surrounding social media use—personally, professionally, and pedagogically—in the field of rhetoric and composition at this moment. As a result, readers are afforded as well a glimpse into the spaces in between, the spaces where non-users and social media abstainers can be found. Current research in rhetoric and composition and beyond does an excellent job of paying attention to social media, exploring its benefits (both personal and professional) and critiquing various elements of its spread. However, this scholarly research tends to default to a focus on social media users, examining topics such as user personalities (Correa et al., 2010) and motivations for using specific networking sites (Guadagno, Okdie, & Eno, 2008; Hargittai & Hsieh, 2010; Hughes et al., 2012; Joinson, 2008; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). What the current research in rhetoric and composition lacks is attention to those who choose not to use social media.

THE UBIQUITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is now ubiquitous in our "always on" culture. According to a 2013 Pew Research report, 73 percent of online adults use at least one social networking site and 42 percent use multiple sites (Duggan & Smith). In the past decade, social networking sites have exploded in popularity. Facebook grew to over 1.3 billion monthly active users since its inception in 2004. In 2015, Twitter users sent 500 million tweets a day, an impressive increase from 20,000 a day when launched in 2006. Social media now permeate American culture, with the Pew Internet Research Center estimating that 74 percent of online adults use social networking sites. However, this is not just an American phenomenon: Fast-growing social networks like WeChat, Weibo, and Qzone dominate Asia, while India records remarkable social networking growth and was projected to have the world's largest Facebook population by 2016.

Like other pervasive technologies such as the telephone, the television, and the car, participation in social media has permeated our collective culture so deeply that it is now considered de rigueur for today's global citizen. Indeed, it is often assumed and even taken for granted that someone else is a social media user. Much like having a cell phone (and today, even having a smartphone) is taken for granted, having a social media presence is taken for granted as well. But as Alice Marwick (2011) has asserted, "Cellphones have gone from luxury product to necessary object in a decade" (para. 5). Not owning a cell phone

"puts one at a serious disadvantage," so much so that programs like SafeLink offer cell phones to those without them for safety reasons (Marwick, 2011). Similarly, social media have moved from niche product to necessary technological tool for participation in today's global marketplace. This perspective—that social media is necessary and participation is expected—then raises the question, what about the non-users and those who choose not to participate in these technologies? As researchers like Cynthia L. Selfe (1999) and Dennis Baron (2009) have argued, the pervasiveness of technologies renders them invisible; we would argue here that the ubiquity of social media now renders non-users nearly invisible as well.

Specifically, non-use or refusal of social media technologies requires scholarly attention. Social media non-use has consequences in today's society. Non-users may feel a sense of disconnect from friends and family; they may miss out on updates, family photos, and invitations to social events. Pavica Sheldon (2012) argued that non-users are frequently "significantly older and score higher on shyness and loneliness, [are] less socially active, and [are] less prone to sensation seeking activities" (p. 1960). Because of the significant impacts on non-users' and abstainers' social lives and even mental health, it is important to examine the discourse surrounding social media non-use—either those who have never adopted (abstainers) or those who have quit using social media (ex-users)—in order to assess larger trends surrounding social media use and preferences. A better understanding of the nuanced spectrum of motivations surrounding non-use could help developers create better social media tools and users think more carefully about the inclusion of social media into their personal, professional, and pedagogical lives.

USERS, ABSTAINERS, AND NON-USERS

When rejecters of technology are considered, they are frequently considered "anti-users," merely the opposite of users of social media. In other words, a binary emerges: Individuals are either users or non-users of social media, and there is little opportunity to expand beyond that simple dichotomy. However, assessing the discursive trends that frame a dichotomous conception of individuals as users or non-users has important rhetorical implications for social and cultural frameworks. Much of the current research regarding social media use has maintained this binary—studies are concerned with the factors that mark and distinguish users from non-users or are predictive of use/non-use (Choudrie et al., 2013; Hargittai, 2008; Lampe, Vitak, & Ellison, 2013; Ljepava, Orr, Locke, & Ross, 2013; Ryan & Xenos, 2011; Sheldon, 2012; Steiger, Burger, Bohn, & Voracek, 2013). Indeed, in an early landmark study, Hargittai (2008) specifical-

ly posed this binary as what she termed the "significant antecedent question . . . that has been largely ignored: Are there systematic differences between who is and who is not a SNS user?" (p. 276).

However, further research is needed to step beyond a simplistic view of user/non-user and instead expand our understanding of social media interaction into a more nuanced continuum. Such a continuum might include a variety of positions individuals could take, from people who rapidly switch among multiple social media and platforms (see Bronwyn T. Williams' chapter in this collection for examples of interviews with such users), to those who tend to stick to the same one or two social media tools because their friends are there, to those who used certain social media tools but quit using them or abandoned their accounts, to those who never adopted social media technologies at all. This continuum can also include those whose level of technological access prevents them from participation in social media technologies.

Emergent research has begun to track users' experiences as they quit social media entirely or otherwise leave certain social media platforms (Azarbakht, 2014; Baker & White, 2011; Baumer et al., 2013; Bobkowski & Smith, 2013), including exploring reasons why they quit (Turan, Tinmaz, & Goktas, 2013). Rivka Ribak and Michele Rosenthal (2011) have argued that "if carrying a Blackberry or iPhone has certain cultural connotations, then not owning one is equally meaningful," especially so if this rejection "requires conscious effort" (p. 2). Studying social media refusal, rejection, or lapses can offer glimpses into users' reasoning behind such rejection, particularly when—as Ribak and Rosenthal have noted—to not participate requires conscious effort. For instance, an individual who doesn't participate in social media may have to deliberately reach out to friends and family through alternative means of communication, such as the telephone or email, and may have to put forth particular effort to keep these lines of communication open. Comparatively, an individual who is already tapped in to his or her networks of friends and family in a social media site like Facebook would be offered an experience curated by the site to maintain connections among users. Prompts like, "It's Bob's birthday today! Why don't you say happy birthday?" are automatic reminders of friendship connections that the technological interface of a social media site provides to keep users connected.

METHODS

This chapter examines how social media non-users (both abstainers and ex-users) are referred to and discussed in general discourse, or what Laura Portwood-Stacer (2013) referred to as "everyday conversation, journalistic coverage (newspapers, magazines, blogs), and conversation within social media platforms them-

selves" (p. 3). Thus, this chapter analyzes current discourse within the popular media surrounding social media non-users and users and the possible rhetorical implications of such a narrative. Specific research questions are as follows:

> RQ1: How do users rhetorically frame non-users in popular discourse?
>
> RQ2: How do non-users rhetorically frame themselves?
>
> RQ3: What are the specific reasons given for not using social media, if any?

This analysis ultimately seeks to reveal how non-users are rhetorically constructed by themselves and by others within the current societal and cultural narrative surrounding social media technology. Identifying and analyzing common rhetorical constructions and motivations across current social media discourse is important to better understand how technology refusal, and more specifically social media refusal, is framed within larger cultural narratives. By revealing the language that circulates around social media non-use and abstention, we can reveal more about those users along the continuum that we often forget.

This study was comprised of a content analysis of current online media regarding social media non-use (as opposed to social media use). While technological access and digital divide issues remain of concern in global Internet and social media use, we paid attention particularly to discourse around voluntary non-use rather than non-use related to lack of technological access. In order to attend to popular conceptions of social media non-use, our search results were limited to online news and general media, including blogs, online magazines, and other social media sites.

To ensure that the search results were relevant, publication years were limited (i.e., published on or after 2010), though of course even limiting to a current date range at the time of research may still produce dated results given the constant change associated with social media research and the slow academic publishing cycle. The results were limited to online posts or articles concerning social media non-use in any of its forms: quitting, abstaining, taking a hiatus, detoxing, etc. Also included were discussions framed from individual non-use as well as business or corporate non-use (so long as the content did not devolve into social marketing advice).

An initial literature search of "social media AND refus*" was conducted using the University of Central Florida (UCF) Library's OneSearch function. This search produced several applicable results and helped reveal additional relevant search terminology. Search terms included social media, social network*, SNS, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Pinterest, non*use, refus*, resist*, reject*,

avoid, abandon*, delet*, quit*, drop+out*, non*adopt*. Various combinations of these terms were used to search LexisNexis, Google (not Google Scholar), and specific news media sites (*The New Yorker, The New York Times, The Atlantic, Newsweek, Time*, and *NPR*). Applicable media were then reviewed for citations or links to other potentially applicable media.

After applying the inclusion criteria, 73 articles (including blog and forum posts as well as online newspaper and magazine articles) were deemed applicable and reviewed for coding themes. Six major themes were identified and used to code the reviewed literature: (1) *quitting/fatigue*, (2) *non-use* (individual or business), (3) *cons of social media*, (4) *ubiquity of social media*, (5) *costs of non-use*, and (6) *social media and professional writers*. These themes helped provide a framework for the analysis as well as guide the discussion of the findings in the following section.

FINDINGS

Social Media: Inevitable, Ubiquitous, and Addictive

One consistent theme across the corpus of results was the perception that social media, in whatever form it may take, is fully entrenched in our society and culture. In other words, social media use is normalized, and non-use is consistently framed as abnormal. As commenter Michael Quinlain put it, "it bugs the sh*t out of me when people assume that EVERYONE has an account on Twitter or Facebook, and when they find out you don't they look at you *like you have two heads*" (as cited in Martin, 2013, emphasis ours). Conversely, users repeatedly describe interactions with non-users as "awkward" because users are forced to find common ground outside social media: e.g., "You have to try to find a way to converse with the non-Facebooker" (Wind, 2012). Despite the knowledge that social media is still optional in society, users may "still look at a person like they are speaking some sort of indiscernible language when they [say] that they don't use Facebook" (Wind, 2012). Another author succinctly summarized the disconnect between users and non-users in terms of collective experience: "The social media abstainer does not . . . share in the Facebook eye of [her] social collaborators" (Davis, 2012, March 6, para. 10).

Repeatedly across these articles and posts was an acknowledgement (tacit or explicitly stated) that social media is everywhere, it is overwhelming, and it is inescapable, whether one is a user or a non-user. As one author put it, "even if you unfriend everybody on Facebook, and you never join Twitter, and you don't have a LinkedIn profile or an About.me page or much else in the way of online presence, you're still going to end up being mapped and charted and slotted in

to your rightful place in the global social network that is life" (Salmon, 2013). Such a perception gives individuals a feeling of inevitability, making them feel as though it is impossible to truly quit or abstain from participating in social media. This perception also notes the nature of social media in allowing individuals in today's society to make decisions about others—determining hierarchies, connections, and relationships based on social cues and markers found in social media technologies. In the absence of these cues and markers, individuals must then do the more difficult work of reaching out to learn more about a person through targeted face-to-face interactions.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, despite the fact that many users recognize the less desirable nature of certain social networking practices and norms (e.g., its always-on nature, its promotion of self-centered posts and updates, its ability to categorize and hierarchize users), social media use is still perceived as "inevitable" (Zhang, De Choudury, & Grudin, 2014, p. 1). The following excerpts from the corpus of literature gathered help illustrate this point:

> We have allowed [social media] to change us, such that *there's no going back.* Even the people who resign in style generally find their way back sooner or later. They may switch from Twitter to Facebook, but *it's hard to live without social media nowadays.* (Lu, 2013, emphasis ours)

> I salute these quitters and dream of a world in which I could also drop off the grid and return to a time when my phone didn't feel like an extra appendage. . . . *But is quitting the digital world a realistic option? No way.* (McGuire, 2013, emphasis ours)

> That's why I wonder if I can get away from social media. . . . Nobody really escapes social media. . . . I feel no different than the five-year-old who threatens to "run away from home" and doesn't get any further than three houses down the street. (Comm, 2014)

> You can't get away from it. It's everything. It's everywhere. . . . The moment we're in now is about trying to deal with all this technology rather than rejecting it, because obviously *we can't reject it entirely.* (Timberg, 2012, emphasis ours)

> Social media's efficacy could hold the seeds of something quite dark, a tipping point where an individual feels it is less an option and more an obligation to be present on a social media platform. Could it effectively become compulsory—if not in

law then in civic and practical terms—to join in the "conversation"? (Avocado Sweet, 2013)

These excerpts underscore the "point-of-no-return" metaphor with use of terms like "there's no going back" and "tipping point." (This theme was further reinforced by the repeated references to The Eagles' song "Hotel California" and joking reminders that "you can check out but you can't ever leave.")

Moreover, the literature gathered repeatedly discussed the issue of addiction; that is, social media (Facebook in particular) was discussed as especially addictive. Social media was described as "mental junk food" that lacks the nutrition provided by other, healthier communication modes as well as metaphors likening social media use to a drug addiction: "Facebook [is] the gateway drug to hyper-connection" (Hoium, 2012). Again, depictions in the popular media of social media as an inevitable and addictive element reflects not only the ubiquity of these technologies in the day-to-day lives of many worldwide, but also how seamlessly they have been incorporated into activities related to building and maintaining relationships between people.

The Abstainers and Disenchanted Ex-Users

The two non-user typologies gleaned from this study were those (1) completely abstaining from social media and (2) those quitting social media (some of whom described their "social media fatigue")—the abstainers and the ex-users. These two typologies emerged throughout various online genres, including rants about just having quit (or an intention to do so), reflections on lessons learned from having quit, essays on the high costs of quitting and/or not using social media, and posts about being jealous of those who never used or were able to stop using social media. Several motivations for non-use were repeatedly cited across the literature that support findings in previous research (Azarbakht, 2014; Baumer et al., 2013). Baumer et al. (2013) codified these according to the following six "interpretive themes": privacy, data use and misuse, banality, productivity, addiction, and external pressures.

Non-use in general (whether an abstainer or ex-user) was often met with negativity or disappointment on behalf of users. More specifically, non-users were often referred to in terms of simply not existing to users: "If you're not on Facebook, it's possible you don't exist" (Hill, 2012). Moreover, this user-based discourse generally reinforced an oversimplified view of non-users. For instance, one blog post posited only two possible motivations to stop using social media: either due to inaccessibility or voluntary shunning of "the orthodoxy of society" (Avocado Sweet, 2013). Additionally, in the instances of users discussing social

media non-use, users typically framed discussions according to the costs associated with non-use. These costs include the perception of non-use as "suspicious" or somehow indicative of deviance (Hill, 2012) and the "missed opportunities for self-expression, personal growth, learning, support, and civic exchange" (Hartzog & Selinger, 2013).

ABSTAINERS: THE SOCIAL MEDIA HOLDOUTS

The abstainers (also known as the non-users, the resisters, or "refuseniks") were typically discussed from a third-party point of view, such as stories documenting why individuals or certain professions have not (yet) adopted social media. That is, unlike the many posts written by social media quitters, there were few posts or articles written from a non-user's perspective (see Rollheiser, 2013, for an example of a non-user perspective). This may be the result of the focus on digital tools within this study—non-users may be less likely to use blogs or forums, whereas quitters might simply be using other online services. Indeed, many authors documenting their abandonment of social media were often explicit that they were only quitting one tool but would continue to use other social media services (e.g., quitting Facebook but not Twitter or their blog).

QUITTERS: THE TIRED, THE PROUD

Articles and posts regarding quitting social media were generally separable into either those discussing (a) completely deleting one's account and quitting social media or a specific service or (b) taking a prolonged hiatus due to social media fatigue. The latter often described being tired of tedious activities associated with social media (i.e., account upkeep, or what Zeynep Tufekci (2008) referred to as online "social grooming" activities) or simply having grown tired of social media altogether. Quitters often cited social media (specifically Facebook) as an unnecessary waste of time, tying back to the earlier theme of addiction—some individuals described reaching a breaking point of addiction that then led to a reflective examination of what really mattered to them in their daily use of time, leading to the eventual choice to quit altogether rather than meter out their social media use differently.

Analysis of the literature gathered revealed that, overall, posts and articles by ex-users about their quitting largely supported existing research on the performative aspect of media refusal (see Portwood-Stacer, 2012, 2013). Many were celebratory essays to validate the now ex-user's decision to buck the trend of social media; some were pragmatic cost-benefit analyses; several provided readers links to "virtual suicide" sites and campaigns such as QuitFacebookDay.com and

SuicideMachine.org that would "kill off" one's Facebook or other social media tools. Additionally, many quitters made a point to assert that their opting out of social media (or a specific social media site) did not mean a complete rejection of technology: "Opting out of social networks that are noisy and offer marginal benefits is not the same as opting out of technology" (Shawghnessy, 2012); "Facebook is a website; it's NOT the web" (mmilan, 2010); "disconnecting is not the same thing as being disconnected" (Majewski, 2012).

As noted by Portwood-Stacer (2012), social media quitters are often seen by users as "elitists" who "perceive themselves to be somehow better" than their user counterparts. Within the literature analyzed, several authors explicitly countered this perception in an attempt to preclude such a reading. For instance, one author included the disclaimer: "Please know that I am not placing judgment on anyone who likes or loves social media or blogging or any of the benefits of them. If it's something you enjoy, that's great! It just wasn't a good fit for me" (Mason, 2014). Another clarified to readers that her "intent was not to break up with the social media site to assert some 'I'm too cool to even be on the grid' hipster mentality" (Weaver, 2014). By contrast, one ex-user *did* embrace this elitist perception, noting that she went so far as quitting her job at Facebook and moving to a small town far away from the constant connectivity of bigger cities. She described the constant performative aspect of social media as a tiring activity despite non-use; in other words, she found that even though she had quit using social media, she was nonetheless a performer within it: "Social media makes all the world a stage" (as cited in Timberg, 2012).

Implications for Professionals

Only a few articles and posts were concerned with non-use among professionals. Of those that were deemed applicable for inclusion in this study, several articles discussed non-use within a professional context (e.g., medicine, law). Barriers for professionals revolved around the ethical aspects of social media use. For instance, doctors have largely been discouraged from participating in social media for fear of patient privacy issues, though private social media services are available specifically for doctors. Similarly, pharmaceutical companies and banks have avoided social media given concerns over regulatory compliance and privacy. Even some academics have grown wary after widely publicized cases like that of Steven Salaita. Additionally, there are known costs to non-use: namely, missing out on all of the online interactions. "Society exists where people interact" (Baribeau, 2011) and now those interactions occur ever more frequently online in sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Others specifically discussed social media use and costs associated with non-

use for professional writers and communicators. Overall, for professional communicators, social media was deemed necessary to accomplish career goals. Even those professional communicators who were writing about quitting social media acknowledged the importance of these technologies on their field and careers (though some did warn readers not to use them at the expense of other non-online/digital tools). However, most of the articles that discussed the implications of social media non-use on professional writing framed it from the perspective that social media was unavoidable; these articles assumed that *some* social media would be used, but one's choice of site would vary according to his or her specific needs. Several articles were personal accounts of professional communicators and even some social media consultants quitting social media; these were largely accounts of quitting one specific site (usually Facebook). One author noted that Facebook lacked the control over information that she needed as a professional journalist (Angwin, 2013), illustrating again that social media non-use and abstention is much more complex than simply seeing users as rejecting all social media. Instead, certain technologies and platforms might be refused given an individual's career goals or location (see Hutchinson's chapter in this volume for a discussion of how her previous university set up a chilling social media policy.)

ACROSS THE YEARS, ACROSS THE SITES

After sorting by year, certain trends emerged. Namely, specific topics surfaced at key points, typically in reaction to factors related to social media. For instance, a substantial amount was written in 2013 concerning the supposed "exodus" of teenagers from Facebook (Saul, 2014). Many articles about quitting in 2011 were in reaction to changes made to Facebook's privacy policies, whereas many articles about quitting in 2014 were about personal decisions to stop using the site. These specific acts of refusal in response to particular issues or concerns (e.g., site policy changes) are essentially users' form of protest. This further reinforces existing research concerning the performative aspect of the act of quitting. In the content reviewed in this analysis, such protests were more often framed by (ex-)users as the final recourse in response to being unhappy or otherwise dissatisfied with a site's service. Indeed, one *New York Times* blog post author conveyed the seriousness of what is essentially a protest by almost immediately distinguishing "this [current] round of complaining [about Facebook] from the 'I-don't-care-what-you're-eating-for-breakfast' camp," noting that the reported wave of Facebook quitters "see themselves as *taking a principled stand* on how their data is used even if it means sacrificing an easy way to see a sister's baby photos" (Brustein, 2010). Thus, these users felt the need to push back against social media because they found that the benefits of social media, specifically

Facebook, did not outweigh the costs, and these costs were comprising these users' external values, specifically regarding data ownership and privacy (Morrison & Gomez, 2014).

Additionally, although the literature was not formally coded in any way according to social media site, the prevalence of only a few sites and the small scope of this analysis allowed themes concerning specific sites to emerge nonetheless. For instance, it became evident that many users ascribe different characteristics to different sites. Twitter was consistently described as "different" insofar as it did not induce the same negative behaviors associated with other social media, especially Facebook: "Twitter doesn't enter my mental space like the [other social media sites] do" (Milnor, 2014). Thus, quitters often mentioned keeping their Twitter account despite having deleted their Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, or other accounts. For example, one author noted that she would remain active on Twitter, asserting that Twitter "is the one social media platform I've always used responsibly—and one that doesn't give me angsty, FOUL [Fear Of an Unfulfilled Life]-like feelings" (Turgeon, 2014). These findings about the importance of the specific social media platform reinforce Guo et al.'s (2012) assertion that social media preference plays an important part in the use of a site, which supports a more nuanced approach towards categorizing non-users' motivations. Thus, there are difficulties with making generalizations across social media sites, as each has its own strengths and weaknesses and its perceived usefulness depends largely on a user's individual needs. Some participants may leave Twitter but stay in Facebook; others may lurk in Twitter and Instagram but never bother to join Facebook. Again, the data gathered for this study illustrates that social media use is more complex than simply a binary state of use or non-use.

DISCUSSION

RQ1: How do users rhetorically frame non-users in popular discourse?

The literature written *by* users *about* non-users (including non-adopters or ex-users) largely discussed the costs of non-use. That is, social media users writing about non-use framed their discussions according to the missed opportunities and the perceived liability of not participating in social media spheres. Moreover, non-users were framed as abnormal, suspicious, or deviant. Such a rhetorical framing is not surprising given that social media was almost unanimously perceived as ubiquitous and inescapable. Thus, popular discourse frames non-use as representative of dissent against the now-normalized and institutionalized modes of social-media-based communication and participation. The major ex-

ception to this framing was articles or posts about teenagers leaving Facebook, which was a popular topic among general web-based discourse. In these instances, the non-users (the teenagers) were discussed in terms of the impact of their absence on Facebook rather than on the liabilities incurred due to their non-use.

RQ2: HOW DO NON-USERS RHETORICALLY FRAME THEMSELVES?

Non-users, including ex-users and abstainers, consistently framed themselves as single individuals with legitimate motivations for their specific instance of non-use. Many felt the need to thoroughly explain their decision, and others even included disclaimers and caveats to their confessions so as to anticipate possible rebuttals from users (i.e., the need to justify their deviance). In general, the non-user-authored discourse reinforced the assertion that non-use includes a wide spectrum of individuals and varying motivations. That is, non-users framed themselves differently according to their specific situation: some framed themselves as active dissenters with a deliberately political stance, whereas others were simply individuals making a personal decision to stop using social media. Thus, this analysis further supports the assertion that non-users cannot be as neatly categorized as previously assumed.

RQ3: WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC REASONS GIVEN FOR NOT USING SOCIAL MEDIA, IF ANY?

Specific reasons given for non-use largely followed previous research findings (Baumer et al., 2013; Morrison & Gomez, 2014). These included, but were not limited to, privacy and safety concerns, perceived lack of control over data, context collapse, self-presentation and identity management issues, time constraints, poor quality of online interactions and friendships, dislike of the service and/or site itself, dissonance of values with a specific site's practices, feeling overwhelmed, and addiction concerns. Much of the literature, including that written by users, acknowledged these as undesirable but unavoidable consequences associated with social media use, and most presented their own cost-benefit analysis to justify their decision regarding social media use. For instance, some users noted these concerns but argued that they were not enough to outweigh continued use; on the other hand, non-users found these concerns to outweigh the benefits of use and thus presented these reasons as justification for quitting. Overall, this discourse analysis supported previous findings regarding non-users' motivations for not using or stopping use of social media (Azarbakht, 2014; Baker & White, 2011; Baumer et al., 2013; Bobkowski & Smith, 2013; Turan, Tinmaz, & Goktas, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The current literature on technology refusal asserts that it is vital to assess and understand individual-level rejection because "the reasons why these individual users may reject a technology must also be part of the discourse on sociology of technology" (Murthy & Mani, 2013, p. 4). Thus, research on non-users is important to provide the nuanced motivations that drive non-use decisions. Given the ubiquity of social media as a normalized social tool, it is unsurprising to hear non-users likened to "an outsider, hearing nothing, not being heard" (Avocado Sweet, 2013). However, ensuring that non-users are heard despite this general perception is vital. The goal of this chapter was to explore the larger cultural perceptions of social media non-users and better understand the rhetoric framing these perceptions—that is, to better understand the implications of this constructed cultural and social narrative surrounding social media technology.

This information adds to the existing body of literature by offering a more nuanced discussion of social media consumption and perceptions within general media discourse. Given the tendency to privilege users and marginalize non-users through omission, this research provides valuable data and context to the overall debate surrounding non-use. Based on the findings presented, non-users are a nuanced group deserving of further scholarly attention. Better understanding the legitimate motivations driving non-use is crucial to ensuring non-users are not marginalized or left behind in the coming decades.

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