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TWO

CULTURES OF OUR FUTURE

The “copyright wars” have lead many to believe that the choice we face is all or nothing. Either Hollywood will win or “the Net” will win. Either we’re about to lose something important that we’ve been, or we’re going to kill something valuable that we could be. Whoever wins, the other must lose.

This simple framing creates a profound confusion. For there need be no trade-off between the past and the future. Instead, all the evidence promises an extraordinary synthesis of the past and the present to create a phenomenally more prosperous future. This future need not be either less RO or more RW: it could be both. And much more interesting (to those focused on the economy, at least), this future could see the emergence of a form of economic enterprise that has been relatively rare in our past, but that promises extraordinary economic opportunity: what I call the “hybrid.”

In the chapters that follow, I want to map this future. I start with what simply continues the twentieth century—a story of how the Internet extends RO culture beyond the unavoidable limits of twentieth-century technology. I then show just how the same technologies that encourage RO culture could also encour-

age the revival of the RW creativity that Sousa celebrated. Finally, I describe the most interesting change that I believe we're going to see—the “hybrid”—that will increasingly define the industries of culture and innovation. All three changes, if allowed, will be valuable and important. All three should be encouraged.