

## solutions

So what is to be done? How can we channel the Web 2.0 revolution constructively, so that it enriches rather than undermines our economy, culture, and values? What can we do to ensure that our most valuable traditions—celebrating knowledge and expertise, fostering creative achievement, sustaining and supporting a reliable and prosperous information economy—aren't swept away by the tsunami of the cult of the amateur?

I'm neither antitechnology nor antiprogess. Digital technology is a miraculous thing, giving us the means to globally connect and share knowledge in unprecedented ways. This book certainly couldn't have been completed without e-mail or the Internet, and I'm the last person to

romanticize a past in which we wrote letters by candlelight and had them delivered by Pony Express.

Digital technology has become an inescapable part of twenty-first-century life. Kevin Kelly told Silicon Valley's TED Conference in February 2005, "You can delay technology, but you can't stop it." And that is true. For better or for worse, Web 2.0 participatory media is reshaping our intellectual, political, and commercial landscape. We can't outlaw Wikipedia, or resurrect Tower Records, or change the realities that have made sites like MySpace and YouTube enormously popular and increasingly profitable. Our challenge, instead, is to protect the legacy of our mainstream media and two hundred years of copyright protections within the context of twenty-first-century digital technology. Our goal should be to preserve our culture and our values, while enjoying the benefits of today's Internet capabilities. We need to find a way to balance the best of the digital future without destroying the institutions of the past.

### Citizendium

In January 2000, thirty-year-old doctoral student Larry Sanger came to Internet entrepreneur Jimmy Wales with the idea of building a cultural blog. As I've described in Chapter 2, Wales hired Sanger, and the two men first created a peer-reviewed encyclopedia called Nupedia, then, in January 2001, founded Wikipedia.