

# Read Or Die: Daphne Russell, a Literary Heroine for the Digital Age



In William Gibson's seminal cyberpunk novel, *Neuromancer*, a character named Molly Millions declares, "The future is already here—it's just not evenly distributed." This sentiment rings true in the world of digital literacy, where access to technology and information is too often determined by factors such as race, class, and gender.

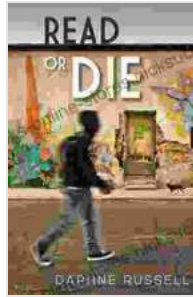
**Read or Die** by Daphne Russell

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 3817 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 204 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Daphne Russell is a librarian and activist working to bridge this digital divide. Through her organization, Read or Die, she provides free Wi-Fi and access to digital books to underprivileged communities. She is a powerful advocate for digital literacy, arguing that it is essential for empowerment and social justice.

## **Daphne Russell's Early Life and Education**

Daphne Russell was born in Chicago in 1978. She was raised in a poor neighborhood and attended underfunded public schools. Despite the challenges she faced, Russell was a voracious reader and excelled in her studies. She went on to earn a degree in English from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## **The Founding of Read or Die**

Russell founded Read or Die in 2010 after witnessing firsthand the lack of access to books and technology in her community. She started by setting up a mobile library out of her van, which she drove to underserved neighborhoods. In 2012, she opened a permanent location for Read or Die in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood.

Read or Die provides a variety of services, including free Wi-Fi, access to digital books, and computer training. The organization also hosts reading groups, workshops, and other events designed to promote literacy and community engagement.

## **The Importance of Digital Literacy**

Russell believes that digital literacy is essential for empowerment and social justice. She argues that in today's world, access to information and technology is essential for civic engagement, economic opportunity, and personal fulfillment.

"Digital literacy is not just about being able to use a computer or access the internet," Russell says. "It's about being able to critically evaluate information, solve problems, and communicate effectively."

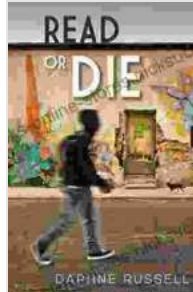
Russell's work is particularly important for underprivileged communities, who are often disproportionately affected by the digital divide. By providing free access to technology and resources, Read or Die helps to bridge this gap and empower people to improve their lives.

## **Awards and Recognition**

Russell's work has been recognized with numerous awards and honors. In 2013, she was named a MacArthur Fellow, also known as a "genius grant." She has also received the American Library Association's Equality Award and the National Book Foundation's Literarian Award for Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community.

Daphne Russell is a visionary leader who is working to make the world a more just and equitable place. Through her organization, Read or Die, she

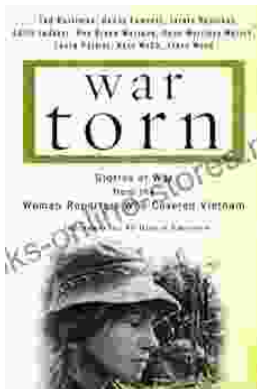
is providing access to technology and resources that are essential for empowerment and social justice. Russell is a role model for us all, and her work is an inspiration to continue striving for a better future.



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