

# A SURVIVOR LEARNING TO THRIVE

BY TODD RUTHERFORD

Bay Area author Derald Hamilton calls himself “a survivor learning to thrive.” Hamilton’s life experiences lend themselves to his stories, giving them humor and insight. The master storyteller offers readers something our generation does not often see: truly literary work that combines unforgettable characters with resonant thematic elements.



As a young man, Hamilton received what he believed to be a call to the ministry; after working to save for seminary, his studies and experiences at Phillips Graduate Theological Seminary left him disillusioned, believing the church to be a “hotbed of politics and competitive showmanship.” In *The Call*, a coming of age story circa the generation of the 1960s and 1970s, Hamilton uses his own experiences to write the fictionalized account of a young man, Ishmael O’Donnell, pursuing his own calling to the ministry. Hamilton blends satire and the supernatural in his “humorous but disturbing” account of divinity school and the people who are drawn to answer “the call.” *The Call* chronicles the events leading up to Ishmael’s entry into seminary and his quest, once there, to obtain the key to his purification.

*Twice Upon a Prequel and Three Shorts* is an anthology comprised of two novellas, *The Astonishing Elmo Piggins* and *The Rebirth of Reginald Dexter*, and three short stories: “Taken Up Before the General,” “The War Comes Home,” and “A Litter Bit of Wisdom.” *The Astonishing Elmo Piggins* is a story of drugs, sex, rock ‘n roll, and religion in 1960s and 1970s Southern culture, and *The Rebirth of Reginald Dexter* is a story of reinvention and self-affirmation.

His stories offer the important themes that life begins where you are, that the social order will attempt to suppress anyone who tries to be his/her own person, and that, for better or worse, life happens, among other lessons. For anyone who has ever questioned authority, been subject to authoritarian powers, or sought freedom from bondage, the characters and events portrayed in his novels are certain to hold appeal.

For more information on Derald Hamilton, please visit [www.dhamiltonbooks.com](http://www.dhamiltonbooks.com) or like him on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/communitystandards#/profile.php?id=100002](https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards#/profile.php?id=100002)