



## A brief history of the US

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### **A creature of habit**

When he was in his mid-sixties he developed an unusual habit. Many mornings—if he got down the stairs before his wife—he would go out to his car, take off his pants, and, naked from the waist down, drive around the small town in which he lived. Returned home, he'd put his pants back on and go in and have his breakfast. Sometimes his wife's schedule and his would mesh, and they'd breakfast together. Sometimes she'd already be up and off to this or that activity or errand. Sometimes he'd convince her to slip into the bedroom for a caress or two. She'd want the Venetian blinds turned down, lights off, covers over. "It's too horrible," was how she once put it, meaning their loose flesh and wrinkled skin. In any case, he always felt better on those mornings when he drove around the town.

*A collection of Eaton's essays, [Surviving the Twenty-First Century](#), was published in July 2015 by Serving House Books. For more, see [Surviving the website](#).*

## **Notice to Western journalists reporting on civil wars in Africa**

We do not need to read about how this gang or these child soldiers or this local leader, nor about this peace process or these heinous acts. We need to read about:

- the value of the natural resources;
- what companies and countries are receiving these natural resources and how much they are paying local workers, state officials, and other influential people for these resources; and
- what companies and countries are supplying or paying for the arms being used in the civil war.

## **A brief history of the United States of America**

In the beginning there were DJs who chose songs to play on the radio. If it was a Monday, for example, they might choose a song that had to do with Mondays. On top of this, listeners might call in, requesting that a particular song be played, and this perhaps as a way of sending a personal message to another listener.

During an intermediate period, the DJs remained but they played songs, or classical music compositions, that had been selected by a programming director or, say, by a corporate consultant. Occasionally, in between some of the songs, a DJ might add a few non-committal remarks about the music, the day, the weather.

When the country was fully developed, DJs were no longer needed. The consultants prepared mix tapes, collections of songs that could be and would be played over and over again, irrespective of day or weather and without intervening commentary. As these tapes were not only used for broadcasts, but also played in many restaurants, stores, airports and other public places, Americans became quite used to hearing the same groupings of songs, much as, in another era, crickets and cicadas could be heard in the countryside.

After the demise of the United States, which some have called tragic and others inevitable, its history was lost for quite some time. As, out of various artifacts, historians began reconstructing the past, precious few realized the centrality of the progression outlined above.