'VEEP' DID TRUMP BEFORE TRUMP: "In some ways Selina Meyer was the most Trump-like character for the last five years in terms of somebody in over her head, bitter, petty and all of those things and doing all of those screw ups. In some ways, the entire run of 'Veep' is sort of a precursor in some ways to a Trump presidency, which is why we don't have to do Trump. Maybe we invented Trump, I don't know."

HE FEARED PEOPLE WOULD BE SICK OF POLITICS: "In my mind I had to believe, no, people still wanted [political comedy] and as the year went by and as we were making the rest of the episodes and in our little social media contact and world it did seem like -- again, this is purely anecdotal -- but people definitely seemed like with everything going on in D.C. it made them want to laugh at politics even more."

WEST WING COMEDY WRITING IS NOW HARDER: "Half our job [when Selina was] in the White House was sort of thinking of the craziest ways to embarrass her. What's the worst thing a member of her staff could do, what's the stupidest thing she could do ... and then we would try and come up with those things and now they are happening on a daily basis so I've never been happier that she's not in the White House. I think that distance allows us to still be relevant ... I'm so glad people can't watch the show and aren't watching the show and saying [Sean] Spicer is funnier than ['Veep' White House spokesman Mike] McClintock ... It's a weird thing when you are challenged that way by reality."

ADVICE TO WHCA COMEDY WRITERS: "In my mind whoever does it should act like Trump is just sitting there ... That's how I would do it. I would play the entire thing, I would get up there as if he was there, I would say, 'Mr. President, Madam First Lady, you look lovely tonight.' In fact, I would play it like they are all were there. I would go out of my way to introduce the dias and introduce Bannon and Kushner and Ivanka and pretend like they are all sitting there. I would spend a tremendous amount of time, almost so much time that it started to not seem funny until it seemed funny again just pretending he was there."

BONUS GREAT WEEKEND READS, curated by Daniel Lippman:

--"Crimetown USA," by David Grann in The New Republic in July 10, 2000: "The city [Youngstown] that fell in love with the mob." http://bit.ly/2oeqG3V (h/t Longform.org)

--"Club Meds," by Alex French on Aug. 28, 2014 in BuzzFeed: "Boasting 100,000 residents over the age of 55, The Villages may be the fastest growing city in America.

It's a notorious boomtown for boomers who want to spend their golden years with access to 11 a.m. happy hours, thousands of activities, and no-strings-attached sex, all lorded over by one elusive billionaire." http://bzfd.it/20TeGmj

--"What Tyler Cowen thinks of pretty much everything," by Vox's Ezra Klein: "The war on drugs, basic incomes, Trump, cashless societies, superhero movies, NATO, geoengineering, transhumanism, and more." http://bit.ly/20Oq4Qu

--"Michael Haneke, The Art of Screenwriting No. 5," by Luisa Zielinski in The Paris Review: "We, in our protected little worlds, are lucky not to experience danger on a daily basis. But that's precisely why the film industry is in such a rut. There is just so much recycling. We don't have the capability to represent authentic experiences because there is so little we do experience. At the most basic level, all we're concerned about here are our material possessions and sexual urges. There really isn't much more to our lives." http://bit.ly/20OimG1

--"Gilbert the father, and Gilbert the son," by Ron Fournier in Crain's Detroit Business: Quicken Loans chairman and founder Dan "Gilbert's rat-a-tat cadence made it hard for me to keep up with his hot flurry of thoughts and images. Including this chilling story: 'My dad is 12 years old, and his brother is 10. (He) was born and raised in Detroit, a very poor neighborhood. He is delivering newspapers with his brother, and it's a foggy day, and his 10-year-old brother gets run over, and it's a priest who runs him over and kills him. It wasn't the priest's fault, and the priest is doing last rites over the body.'" http://bit.ly/2nRHZoe

--"Digging Up Troy," by Eric H. Cline in Lapham's Quarterly: "Heinrich Schliemann and the search for archaeological evidence of Homer's Troy." http://bit.ly/2079FIy

--"Somerdale to Skarbimierz," by James Meek in London Review of Books: "All factories must close one day, but there's something particularly brutal about a factory being closed because its owners have found cheaper labour elsewhere. The five hundred workers at Cadbury's Somer-dale chocolate factory near Bristol learned that most of their permanent, solidly pensioned jobs were to be moved to a new factory in Poland, not because they had done anything wrong, but because their Polish replacements could do the same job for less than one fifth of the money." http://bit.ly/2nhLZCh (h/t TheBrowser.com)

--"The Spiritual, Reductionist Consciousness of Christof Koch," by Steve Paulson in Nautilus Magazine: "There's nothing inherently magical about the human brain. It