First Reactions to “Women on the Breadlines”
These are notes from our class discussion on Wednesday, January 24. It includes questions that people asked, reactions, things people noticed about the way it was written, and, most important for the assignment, different themes that were identified in the essay.

Questions (words, concepts, situations...)
- Do they still have places where you can go and wait for a job?
  - Yes—temp agencies, informal labor markets, online markets, union labor halls, government-run unemployment agencies.
- Where does she fit into the dichotomy of “lick-spittle” vs. “proud.”

Reactions
What did you think of the article? Why?
- Liked the physical descriptions of the women.
- Interesting descriptions of women as a whole—their role, their reactions. Younger women refuse to have kids.
- Le Sueur’s question: Where do the women go?
- Bleak viewpoint—brought everything together. Not all bleak.
- Colorful descriptions elsewhere

Aspects of the Writing
What’s it about? Why did she write it? How does it work? What do you notice about the way it’s written? What stands out in her style, story telling, structure, etc.?
- Interesting descriptions of women as a whole—their role, their reactions. Younger women refuse to have kids.
- Le Sueur’s question: Where do the women go?
- Bleak viewpoint—brought everything together. Not all bleak.
- Colorful descriptions elsewhere
- Women still dependent on men
- Does not tell the reader what to do—evokes the emotion leading to the conclusion that it should not be that way
- Refers to herself very little but puts herself in the scene

Themes
- Psychology of money
- Hunger (for food, job, money, security, life, pretty things...)
- Oppression
  - Repression of what people want or could be
  - Attitudes of the employed to the unemployed
  - Capitalist relations of employment (exploitation)—relations of capitalism and prostitution—when humans shift from being producers to being the product
- Not having a dream (Dreams)
- Desperation
• Dependency on others (men, charity, etc.)
• Gender
  o What women are capable of
• Shame/Humiliation/Pride
• Attitudes of the employed toward the unemployed
• Depression
• Age
• Dehumanization (what does it mean to be human?)
• Futility/meaning, purpose, empowerment
• Adaptability