[Assignment: Divide a specific group of people into types using some clear principle and be sure to provide enough detail to make these types seem real. Remember that the essay needs to be truly informative, truly entertaining—or both.]

(1) We look like you. We talk like you and act like you. We live in the same residence halls as you do. We shower in the same showers and eat in the same cafeterias. We even go to the same classes. We are just like you. We are out there. We are many. Who are we? We are Trekies.

(2) The stereotypical picture of a Trekie is a person dressed in a uniform, wielding plastic communicators and making funny hand signals at Star Trek Conventions and movies. However, Trekies are a much more diverse people than this picture implies. Trekies are composed of five main groups: Closet-Trekies, Fans, the Warped, Trekers, and the Obsessed. Each group has its own unique qualities. Beneath this uniqueness, each group shares a common love of the Star Trek experience.

(3) The Closet-Trekies are people who are unwilling to tell their friends about the joy they find in Trek. The typical Closet-Trekies will, if caught watching Star Trek (or The Next Generation), deny that they were watching it and claim that they were only flipping channels during the commercial break of a football game. It would be ill advised to try and get a Closet-Trekie to admit his or her television habits; such people bear deep emotional scars from their childhood which prevent their acknowledgement of Star Trek as an adult drama. Pressing such a person on this issue would only cause deeper and more painful wounds to manifest themselves. With proper treatment, the Closet-Trekies can go on to lead normal lives, admitting their love of the Great American Icon known as Star Trek.

(4) The Fans are by far the largest group within the Trekies. They can be found gathering around television sets on the weekends involved in the ritual of “Trekwatch.” This ritual usually involves gulping down large quantities of carbonated beverage, ingesting massive volumes of snack foods and discussing the social relevance of the episode being watched. Fans can also be found in small groups attending Star Trek movies and are occasionally seen at Star Trek conventions. They are seldom noticed at these functions due to the higher visibility of the other groups. Fans see themselves as having “real lives”—something not claimed by the other groups; Fans do not possess a need to see every episode of Star Trek like the following groups do.

(5) The Warped are a very interesting and a highly visible group. In public, they can be easily identified by their use of hand signals to greet one another. Their speech is full of Trektalk—acronyms such as YATI (Yet Another Trek Inconsistency) and ST:TNG (Star Trek: The Next Generation.) Their speech is laden with quotes from each of the six movies. It is the relentless drive of this group to memorize each and every line in each and every one of the Star Trek movies which
demonstrates this group's lack of a "real life." Usually well versed in the theory and application of Trek technology, The Warped will often discuss new ideas for further technological developments. The Warped will sometimes be seen at conventions, but will seldom be in uniform, though pointy ears are not uncommon.

(6) Trekers form the group which has inherited the stereotypical Trekie look. They are the ones who frequent conventions, wearing uniforms and pointy ears. Plastic communicators, toy phasers and fake tri-corders are wielded by the Trekers. Although they have inherited the look, they have shunned the name of Trekie because it is too "Sixties" for this decade. The Trekers are Nineties through and through.

(7) One of the more interesting characteristics of Trekers is their mastery of Star Trek-related trivia. They can tell you the stardate on which each of the five Enterprises was commissioned, the physical law governing warp drives, Gene Roddenberry's shoe size, the chemical formula of the plastic used for Mr. Spock's ears and William Shatner's brand of toupee glue. Trekers are unique in their knowledge of trivia since the other groups seldom have the time on their hands to learn it.

(8) The Obsessed are the smallest group of Trekies and by far the least understood. It is generally thought that the Obsessed have lost their sense of reality and believe that Star Trek is real. Several of them have been taken to Bellevue for study, but somehow they have always managed to disappear without a trace before they could be questioned. Everything that the Obsessed do tends to have some connection with Star Trek. For example, they would probably choose Star Trek as a topic for an English paper....

(9) Trekies are a diverse lot of people. They look like everyone else. They act like everyone else--most of the time. In fact, Trekies make up a majority of the population; over half of all Americans say that they are fans. So my advice to you Non-Trekies is to start conforming to the norms of society. Otherwise, you'll never "boldly go where no one has gone before."