On Sunday the 1st, I decided to try being less masculine than normal for Option #1. I quickly realized that the only resources I had to do so were some very geeky T-shirts, so I figured my best option was to try to be as geeky as possible. I put on my Blizzcon t-shirt (a video game convention), wore my dirty pants and didn't comb my hair, as many people in my Computer Science classes do normally. The results from doing this was decently surprising.

The reaction I got from my roommates was interesting. Being Computer Scientists themselves, they didn't react any differently towards me than any other day of the week. I felt as though we were the definition of what Best Buy would hire a few years ago, as seen in Liedtke's article "Best Buy Faces Allegations of Discrimination". Best Buy would "routinely ignore applications from people " who do not conform to the (company's) young, white, male culture" (RCGUS, Liedtke, pg 269), and me and my roommates fit perfectly into that definition. I could see from a business perspective why Best Buy would want to appeal to people like me and my roommates, and when we walk into a Best Buy store it feels like it is full of people just like us. The issues happen when anyone else goes to a Best Buy, as seen from what happened when our neighbors visited.

Our neighbors across the way are all non-computer science girls, so they represent how most of the world would have reacted to how I dressed that day. They didn't understand my t-shirt, where my roommates did. I feel that the dirty pants also made the impression that I was too lazy to keep up good hygiene and wash my clothes, which was hard to gather from the girls' reactions. I definitely felt more awkward around them, I felt that they didn't understand why I would wear a shirt like that and why I wouldn't comb my hair to look nicer. The t-shirt was also a little larger than normal, so it didn't portray my masculinity as much as other shirts would. Just as Higginbotham notes in her article, I felt that my neighbors were heavily influenced by the fashion magazines. In the magazines, the ideal was to have "older, cooler, all-star boyfriends, multiple mentions and pictures throughout the school yearbook, and seasonal dubbings as makeshift teen royalty" (Higginbotham, PDF, pg 87). With my geeky t-shirt, dirty pants, and messed up hair, I didn't fit that perfect boy image.

Going back to the Best Buy case, I could see how having a store full of people that were like me on Sunday would be a problem to some people. If all the people in Best Buy wore Blizzcon t-shirts and had messy hair, I'm sure it would turn some people away from Best Buy because they wouldn't find the people representing the store very approachable.

Overall this super-geek transformation really tied into what we are doing in class, but in a different way. Instead of focusing on race or gender, it was more of a culture change. To geeks, Blizzcon t-shirts are normal, and I am fairly geeky which is why I own one. To some extent, some sub-cultures have some of the positives and negatives of being of a different race or gender. Going into an interview all geeked-up will invoke some biases from the person interviewing you in the same way race or gender does. I think ethnic studies scholars would find sub-cultures an interesting point of study as well.